Self-Control of Special Children: An Exploratory Study of Physically Handicapped

Jahan Ara Shams[1]
Safia Janjua[2]
Muhammad Zafar Iqbal[3]

Abstract

The Purpose of this study was to explore the nature of Self-Control (SC) among special children which were physically handicapped. The study was qualitative in nature. Participants of the research were 15 special children (10 boys and 5 girls). The context of the study was Mirpur AJK, Pakistan. A structured interview protocol was designed to explore the nature of SC. The interview was validated by the experts. Data taken from the interviews conducted on special children was then analyzed by using descriptive coding technique. The study revealed that special children have some of the aspects of good SC like empathy, find easier for others, do not create problems for others, but they lack many of the aspects like controlling anger, working for longer periods, thinking of long term consequences, try to do difficult tasks. It shows the poor SC in them that needs to be developed. So, it is recommended to develop SC among special children through different healthy activities that should be included in the co-curricular activities during school times. Training sessions for the special teachers must include the knowledge of SC so they better able to develop good SC in their students.

Keywords: self-control (sc), special children, Pakistan.

[1] Assistant Professor, Punjab Higher Education Department, Email: jahanarashams@gmail.com
[2] MPhil Scholar, Email: safia.janjua82@gmail.com
[3] Lecture, Department of Secondary Teacher Education, AIOU. Email: mzafar.iqbal@aiou.edu.pk

Introduction

Special Education shapes human lives as per the changing occasions by giving effective and appropriately transformed skills, while it likewise makes the special children tolerant and beneficial at the same time. Enhancing and supporting of value special education is a principal significance of any society in the world. Just the best special education can guarantee people social and psychological development in the correct way.

Special children in the schooling age learn most of the skills which help them to cope with the difficult situations of life. One of the skills that enable them to be successful in life and make them socialize in society is self-control (SC). SC enhances the quality of life. Special children with SC prove themselves in every sphere of life like good grades in school, better adjusted in the job, happy marriages and good condition of health. On the other hand, special children with poor SC engage in criminal activities, can't handle the relationships, and have poor health. These children misbehave in the classrooms and not able to concentrate on the studies.

The healthy development of personality in the form of SC can be educated in special schools with various learning exercises. Special schools adequately monitor the child, can call attention to the problematic behavior, and can reward or punish likewise. Teachers can make the special children how they can control their driving forces, how to follow the rules and to listen to direction with patience to understand, these skills are linked with the SC. These children are better ready to oversee themselves and can accomplish their objectives. School factors, for example, good teacher-student relationship and supportive environment have been observed to identify with good SC in students (Turner, Piquero, & Pratt, 2005). Society settings, including neighborhoods, peer-group association, were likewise identified with improvement after SC of the children (Bennett, Elliot, & Peters, 2005).

If the special child learns to trust adults, follow the rules, delay gratification, control his impulses of anger, find a way to be happy in a sad situation, then there is enhancement of SC in the individual. It helps the special child to differentiate between short-term and long-term outcomes. They choose to delay gratification

as they consider this in their best interest. SC enables the special children to work effectively with others, special child with more SC is more able to fight with stress situation and more able to solve their problems.

Researches have proved that children with good SC are more able to control the desires, direct their feelings, and inhibit the impulses than children with poor SC (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, & Tice, 1998). These children appreciate good mental health, higher academic grades, and show better relationships (Tangney, Baumeister, & Boone, 2004). They can upgrade their proficiency in schools, socialize themselves and are a better adjustment in the society in later years of life.

Poor SC at beginning periods was observed to relate to simultaneous issues, for example, poor focus (Howse, Lange, Farran, & Boyles, 2003), low abstract prosperity (Ronen, Hamama, Rosenbaum, & Mishely-Yarlap, 2016), less academic accomplishment (Tangney, Baumeister, & Boone, 2004). Children with poor SC drain teachers' vitality for showing different students. It likewise adds to teachers' activity disappointment and steady loss ((Moffitt, Poulton, & Caspi, 2013). Practices for the enhancement of SC have to rise in early childhood and keep on developing until adulthood.

Researches concur that SC encourages both the control of undesirable behavior and the rise of desirable behavior. Research centers on the impact of SC on unwanted conduct, for example, impaired thinking (Schmeichel, Vohs, & Baumeister, 2003) and attractive conduct for example academic performance (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005). Special school is a place where the child learns to behave according to the situation, so there is a need to develop SC also in special children in order to make them learn the desirable behaviors and to inhibit undesirable behaviors.

Purpose of the Study

Special children are also part of the society and have equal rights of education like other children of the society. Self-control (SC) is a fundamental skill which empowers people to be glad and effective, and it can and should be enhanced through education. It

inculcates desirable behavior and eradicates undesirable behavior. Previous researches showed the importance of SC. Good SC in the special children can inculcate positive aspects in their personality, whereas poor SC can create problems for them in the later years of life. Keeping in mind the importance of SC, the purpose of the study was to explore the nature of SC among special children. To know about the aspects of the SC which need to be focused for the future interventions. Despite of any disability in special children, they may able to better adjust in the society through the development good SC to them in future.

Literature Review

Numerous researches about have been directed on Gottfredson and Hirschi's theory of SC over the past 40 years. Most surveys found empirical support for the theory, including the connection among SC and misconduct, crime and other problem behaviors, and their relationship was discovered solid all through life in numerous nations and over time. His theory helps in public policy for the decrease of crime as it contends that crimes can be reduced by primarily on prevention. SC theory applies to the wide range of misconducts and problematic behaviors which are school problems, bad actions and substance abuse. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) argued that those individuals who developed a good SC in childhood will have more success in school, get successful employment, higher income, and enjoy better health in later years of life.

The concept of SC is the most widely researched in many fields, like psychology, education, public health and criminology (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996; Cunha & Heckman, 2007; Moffitt et al., 2011; Pratt & Cullen, 2000; Tangney, Baumeister & Boone, 2004; Vazsonyi, Mikuska, & Kelley, 2017). In Dunedin, New Zealand, longitudinal investigation, childhood SC anticipated members' inevitable money related financial position, substance use (liquor, cannabis, tobacco and road drugs), wellbeing and criminal feelings (Moffitt et al., 2011, 2013; Duckworth, 2011). Over 40 years longitudinal study by Moffit et al. (2013) 1000 children from the age of 1 year to 38 years revealed that childhood

SC strongly predicts success in adults, whether the people with high or low IQ, rich or poor.

A meta-analysis of 102 studies by De Ridder et al. (2012) reasoned that SC is identified with a wide scope of behaviors. Good SC is significant to almost all types of conduct helpful for an effective and solid life. On the other hand, poor SC is thought to be at the core of numerous societal issues, including substance misuse, impulsive buying, procrastination and criminality.

Tangney and her associates (2004) recognized five social areas in which SC ought to be especially applicable: academic achievement, drive control, psychosocial adjustment, relational working and good feelings. Steady with their expectations, individuals with good SC had more constructive results in each of the five areas than individuals with poor SC. Given that SC has been proposed to assume a pivotal role in the control and restraint of driving forces.

A meta-analysis of 34 studies was directed to survey the accessible research proof on the impact of SC enhancement programs. The examination demonstrated that SC enhancement programs enhance a kid's SC and these interventions likewise decrease problem behavior and delinquency. Unloading these discoveries yields the general end that SC is malleable, that SC can be enhanced, and that decreases in problem behavior and delinquency pursue from SC enhancement. They reasoned that SC enhancement programs should keep on being utilized to enhance SC and diminish misconduct and conduct issues up to age 10 which is the age cutoff where Gottfredson and Hirschi contend that SC turns out to be generally settled and no longer malleable (Piquero, Jennings, & Farrington, 2010).

Experimental and economic studies suggested intervention programs for the development of SC as it is the predictor of public safety, health and wealth (Moffit et al., 2011). The good behavior in classroom and sufficiency of classroom supplies were the steadiest indicators of enhancement in youngsters' SC and behaviors (Bennett et al., 2005). Cooper et al. (2014) studied on child's dimension of social skills and showed a need for early social skills improvement for their better future. With the importance of SC in the life of the student, this study explored the

nature of SC among special children along with focus on the different aspects that need to be developed.

Research Procedure

The study was qualitative in nature. Exploratory research design was used in this study. Structured and semi-structured interviews are generally valuable for acquiring data in this type of research as they will in general shape reactions to the researcher view of how things are (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2006). In this study, structured interview protocol was used for data collection which was design by the researcher and validated through experts. Participants of the research were selected from a School for special children of Mirpur, AJK. Ages of the students were from 14 to 18 years and the mean age was 14.6 years. Special children were studying in grades 3rd, 5th, 6th and 9th. The researcher collected data by interviewing 15 special children which were physically handicapped out of which 10 were boys and 05 were girls. Their disabilities include Cerebral Palsy (CP), Autism, slow learning, Down syndrome, visual and hearing impairments and polyneuropathy.

Instrumentation

A structured interview protocol was designed to explore the nature of SC of special children by the researcher. Then it was validated by three experts who were Doctorate in Psychology. With their suggestions, interview protocol was modified, and final draft was used for the conduction of interview with special children.

Data was collected by the researcher herself. Researcher visited a School for special children with prior permission of the chairman of the school. In the start, he was hesitating and asked about the research formats. But after knowing the purpose of the research, he was pleased and warmly welcomed the conduction of research. 15 children were selected for the interview as they were only physically handicapped and can easily understand and answer the questions of the researcher. Before interview researcher stay in the

school for 2 days in school timings and during break sessions talked to the special children so they be able to speak freely. On the third day researcher was no more a stranger for them. Out of sample there were 10 boys and 05 girls. Their demographics were collected from the record and interviews were audio recorded and then transformed into word document for analysis. Analysis was done by descriptive coding techniques and results were formed.

Findings

The purpose of the study was to explore the nature of SC among special children; findings of the study were related to the aspects of SC which were gained after getting the responses of the participants through interviews. The findings of the research show that Special children lack many of the aspects of the SC that contributes to poor SC in them. Following are the answers regarding the question done in the interviews with the special children.

Q.1: Do you often work immediately without thinking? 60% of the respondents replied that they do not think for doing something. They start working on it as one of the respondents said, *"It does not matter for me to ponder upon, and I use to work on the things important for me."* Another student said, *"Work is important for me to have fun, I rarely think about its effects."* One of them said, *"Thinking is wastage of time, it's good to start the work as soon as possible and done it in time."* It shows that they have poor control on the thinking aspects of SC as for good SC; thinking is one of the features to do.

Q.2: Do you often do what pleases your immediate happiness even you have to sacrifice a long-term goal?
Most of the respondent replied yes on the statement as happiness is important for them than any of the other thing. One of the respondents answered, *"I can sacrifice anything on having happiness."* Another said, *"Happiness matters to me a lot, I am fun seeker and can sacrifice even a long-term goal."* 86.6% were in the favor of pleasure. As one of them said, *"Pleasurable things*

and moments are worthy so any of the sacrifice does not matter for him."

Q.3: Do you worry more about short term results than long term results?
Special children think about short term rather than long term results as 70 percent of them preferred short term consequences. They care less about long term effects. A CP child answered, *"Present is more important for me to act upon than future, so I try to enjoy my current situation without worrying about its consequences in the future."* A child with hearing and visual impairments said, *"I prefer short term consequences as its easy and accessible rather than long term."*

Q.4: Do you devote much of your thinking and efforts for future?
12 out of 15 special children responded that they thing about future, they did not consider their disability as a barrier and have an aim of life as one of them who was a CP child said, *"I wanted to be an engineer in the future".* Another with Down syndrome replied to this question, *"I wanted to be a police officer in the future likes my mother."* A child with hearing and visual impairments replied, *"I want to join Army in future."* It does mean disability is not a hindrance in their eyes to have any of the position in the society. Special Education enable them to think in the way that they can also serve the nation like other people of the society.

Q.5: Do you avoid difficult projects?
8 special children replied that they avoid difficult projects, 7 of them said that they try to do the task whether easy or difficult. One of them responded, *"I always try to do difficult tasks until make it finish."* Another said, *"I mostly avoid difficult things and try to choose easy work for me."*

Q.6: Do you really dislike difficult tasks that limit your ability?
About the liking of difficult task, 9 respondents said that they dislike doing difficult task if they limit their ability. An autistic child said, *"I really hate difficult task that I would not be able to handle."* Another child having disability of neuropathy answered,

"Difficult things irritate me, I always try to avoid them." It shows that the special children have poor SC on the aspect of facing difficulty as they never wanted to do difficult task and even to try to do them.

Q.7: Do you leave those matters which get complicated?
Most of the respondents were in the favor of leaving the complicated matters as one of them said, *"First I try my level best to do the task, but if things become complicated I try to withdraw it."* 86.6% 0f the respondent answer in leaving the difficult task that becomes unable to handle more for them.

Q.8: Do you like the simplest things in life?
Almost every one of them replied yes to the question with a smile that they like easy task. They said that it gives them satisfaction after completed the task, so they preferred to do simplest things in life. One of them mentioned, *"After completing simpler task, the level of satisfaction increases, so I always prefer them to do."* Another autistic child answered, *"I like to do simple things and also do volunteer work for the simple tasks of my classroom."* A child with Down syndrome replied, *"Arranging the class and organizing the students are seems always easy for me so I used to do it daily during in after the breaks."*

Q.9: Do you often like to put yourself at risk?

8 of them responded that they are adventurous and often put themselves at risk. One of the CP children answered, *"I sometimes try to walk without my supports."* Another said, *"I love to be adventurous so often put myself at risk."* Child with visual impairment replied, *"I used to walk to nearby homes to meet my friend although it is prohibited for me, but I enjoy it."*

Q.10: Would you put yourself at risk for just having fun?
Special children do not try to put themselves in danger just for the sake of fun as 7 out of 15 responded yes to the question. One child of Down syndrome mentioned, *"It's never been good to put yourself at risk just for fun, we must care ourselves."* An autistic

child responded, *"Having fun is good but not on the risk of your life so I try to avoid as much as possible."*

Q.11: Do you get interested in tasks that can get you in trouble?
Special children try not to be problematic for others as they said that least interested in those tasks which can make troublesome not only for themselves but also for others. It means that they are caring about others as well. A child with hearing impairment replied, *"I never be a stubborn boy for my parents and never tease my teachers."* A CP child mentioned, *"I am not problem creator not only for my friend but also for others as well."*

Q.12: Do adventure is more important for you than your safety.
Every one of them shared about the importance of safety for themselves. One of them said, *"I like adventures but if I know that it would be harmful, I always quit it and like to prefer the safety of myself."* another CP child mentioned, *"Safety is always my preference over harmful actions."* 93.3% replied yes to their safety and one child with Down syndrome mentioned, *"I try to care myself because harming me also teases my parents."*

Q.13: What would you like to do if you have a choice in between physical and mental activity?
More than 70% were in the favor of Physical task rather any mental activity. One child with polyneuropathy mentioned, *"I am good student but likes physical work and try to do it if got choice in between physical or mental activity because in this way I am allowed to move around."* A slow leaner child replied, *"I prefer physical work over mental as it is more satisfying for me."* 30% of them voted in favor of mental activity, they like to sit and work for longer period of time.

Q.14: Do you like to walk more then sit and think?
80 percent of the respondent like roaming about as special children are least likely to chance for outdoor activities and always bound with the supervision so they preferred to like to walk more than sitting or thinking about work. One of the students replied, *"I like to go out also when everyone goes for morning walk".* Another

said, *"I feel boring to sit at home always so wanted to go outside whenever offered to me."*

Q.15: Do you like to read for a longer time?
It is difficult for most of the special children to sit and read for a longer time as one of the respondents mentioned, *"I want to move and preferred to do some activity other than reading after sometimes."* One more said, *"It is difficult for me to read for a longer period of time."* 40% replied yes to the question that shows poor SC in special children.

Q.16: Do you think you have more energy than people of your age?
Not all of them claimed to have energy more from their friends but a few. Special children always give importance to others and feel a balanced pressure on each other. A CP child mentioned in his answer, *"I think we all friends have the same amount of energy and can work with equal quantity."* 53.3% claimed to have more energy than other as one student replied, *"I used to put back all the chairs when coming back from music class as I have more energy from my class fellows."*

Q.17: Do your actions create troubles for other people?
Special children try not to bother others; they always find a comfort zone for the people around them. Here is also an observation of the researcher that special children help each other and in a suitable manner. It is due to the education they are getting during the school and devoted efforts of the teachers. One of the students with Down syndrome replied to this question, *"I never forced my parents for something new if I know that they cannot afford that."* Another autistic child mentioned, *"It is very bad to bother others, I always try to think of other on my actions and if they are problematic, I try to quit and excuse for my actions."* One child with the disability of slow learning said, *"I will try to quit my demand if it is causing problem for others."* It shows the aspect of good SC in them.

Q.18: Do you have empathy for others when they are in trouble?
80% of the respondents showed empathetic attitude towards people in trouble. When it was asked by the researcher that the person is not your friend or relative then will you help him, one of them replied, *"Yes, of course as it is our duty to be helpful for everyone."* Another said, *"I first try by myself to help them but if I failed to do then call someone else for their help."* Another child mentioned, *"Helping others is a good habit and I try to help others always unless it limits to my ability."* Having empathy is one of the aspects of good SC in the special Children.

Q.19: Do you get angry very quickly?
More than 60 percent replied that they get angry very quickly. 40 percent said they used to recite verses when have a difficult situation or if the thing went wrong. As one CP child said, *"I become angry if the things do not match with my expectations."* A child with visual impairments replied, *"I get angry very quickly with my friend on disputes and I not talk to them until it resolve."* Getting into anger very quickly is poor aspect of SC in special children.

Q.20: Do you find yourself hurting people when you have anger on them?
Most of the special children have control on them in anger and they do not hurt others. One of the students replied, *"I try my level best to control myself in anger and never hurt the person with whom I am angry with."* Another said, *"It is not good to hurt other even if you are in anger, so I try to control myself in any condition."* 73.3% of the special children showed controlled anger and mentioned that they try to avoid hurting others in their anger that shows aspect of good SC in them.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to explore the nature of the SC in special children as SC is one of the important aspects in personality development of the children (Moffit et al., 2013; Tangney et al., 2004). Research done by Hussain et al. (2013)

claimed that special education can completely change the temperament and actions of the special children. It allows people with disabilities not only to improve their personalities but also to offer those unique skills and expertise in various fields through which they can live a stable, productive and noble existence. This study revealed that special children have some of the aspects of good SC like empathy, find ease for others, do not create problems for others but they lacks many of the aspects like controlling anger, working for longer periods, thinking of long term consequences, try to do difficult tasks that indicate the poor aspects of SC in them.

The results are also consistent with the results of a study done by Hassan (2015) concluded that special children have the emotional and behavioral problems like thought difficulties, poor concentration, lack of attention, lack of activity, lack of contact, lack of self-confidence, decrease in self-esteem, depression and anger. So there is a need to develop good SC in the special children through special education as Landrum, Tankersley & Kauffman (2003) found that special education can be even more special if more efforts are made to implement research-based practices early, with integrity and to sustain these interventions throughout the careers of students.

Recommendations

Following are some recommendations to develop good SC among special children based on findings:
· Teachers of special child's schools must have a knowledge of SC, for this training session must be arranged in schools
· Students should have a big play area with their supports for having outdoor activities during school timings.
· Healthy activities regarding the development of the SC must be included in the co-curricular part of the curriculum.
· There should be exercises having fun other than the physiotherapy in the special schools.

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