

The Comparison of the Spiritual Intelligence and Self-Concept of Blinds and Sighted High School Girl Students in Tehran

Sayeh Semnanian¹, Anahita khodabakhshi koolae*²

1- Department of Counseling, Branch of Science and Research of Tehran, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.

2- Department of Psychology and Education, Faculty of Humanities, Khatam University, Tehran, Iran.

*Correspondence should be addressed to Mrs: Anahita khodabakhshi koolae; Email: a.khodabakhshid@khatam.ac.ir

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Abstract

Background and Objectives: Spiritual intelligence and self-concept could have a positive influence on inclusive development of high school students. The purpose of this study is to compare the spiritual intelligence and self-concept of blinds and sighted high school girls in Tehran.

Materials & Methods: This research is causal-comparative study. The Statistical population of this research includes all the blind and sighted high school girl students in the Academic year of 1394-95 in Tehran. The studied sample consisted of 50 blinds and 50 sighted high school girls. The blinds were selected using the Purposive sampling and the sighted students by the available sampling. Data were collected using the spiritual intelligence questionnaire of Badiie and self-concept questionnaire of Rogers. Two main statistical methodologies were used in data analysis: descriptive statistics by using frequency distribution, percentage, mean and standard deviation, and inferential statistics using ANOVA. In this study, all relevant ethical issues were considered.

Results: Results revealed that there was a significantly difference between the blinds and sighted groups in spiritual intelligence. The blinds reported significantly higher spiritual intelligence comparing to their sighted peers. However no significant difference in self-concept was observed between two groups.

Conclusion: It is concluded that the perception and the attitude of blind students toward their ability are in high level and are in equal rank to their sighted counterparts.

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Summary

Background and Objectives: According to the World Health Organization, nearly 38 million people are blind and 110 million have a severe visual impairment worldwide. Over 90 percent of these people live in developing countries (1-3). The obtained results of a five-year longitudinal study by Warren (4), indicate that the absence of visual and auditory information may show a delay in understanding the physical world. In addition, blind children are different from normal children. Studies indicate that spiritual intelligence (5) and self-concept (6) are two issues influencing the well-being of students with visual impairment. In

general, intelligence includes the capacity of thinking, planning, creativity, adaptability, problem solving, reflecting, decision making, and learning. Spiritual Intelligence is a set of capabilities people use spiritual and value-based resources to form and use them so that they can take advantage of for a good performance in daily life (7-9). Self-concept is the answer to "Who am I" (10-11). Forming intimate relationships with others, especially during childhood and adolescence, is one of the factors affecting the development of positive self-concept. However, if the people themselves have flaws, this problem will be doubled (12). Visual impairment causes personal and interpersonal limitations (13); therefore, the objective of the present study was to compare the spiritual intelligence, self-concept of blind

and sighted female students at the second grade of high school in Tehran.

Materials and Methods: This study is a causal-comparative study. The statistical population of the study included all the blind female students at the second grade of high school at Narjes educational complex in the educational region 3 and the sighted female students at the second grade of high school in the same educational region studying in the academic year of 94-95. The questionnaire of Badee', et al. (14), and the questionnaire of self-concept by Rogers (1951) were used to collect the data. Badee', et al. (14) designed the questionnaire of spiritual intelligence including 42 questions and four sub-scales. The first subscale: general thinking and belief (12 items), the second subscale: the ability to cope and deal with problems (15 items), the third subscale: addressing the moral individualities (8 items), the fourth scale: self-awareness, and love (7 items). Scoring the questionnaire was based on a Likert scale having 5 options of: strongly agree: 5, agree: 4, relatively agree: 3, disagree: 2, strongly disagree: 1. The acquired score range is between 42 and 210. The reliability of the questionnaire was obtained through Cronbach's alpha being 0.85.

Rogers (1951) developed the questionnaire of self-concept to measure individual's self-concept. The questionnaire includes two forms of "A and B". "A" studies the true self and "B" studies the ideal self.

Each of the forms evaluates 25 personality traits. The participants use some signs in one of the scores of the scale to evaluate his personality traits based on the instructions of the form "A" and "B" according to the approach he has on the traits of the questionnaire about himself. Using the Cronbach's alpha, the reliability coefficients of self-Concept for the subscale of true self is 0.71 and it is 0.79 for the ideal self (15).

Results: ANOVA showed a significant difference between the spiritual intelligence of blind and sighted female students ($F = 5.007$, $sig = 0.028$). In addition, there is not a significant difference in the self-concept scores of blind and sighted students based on the results of variance analysis.

Conclusion: The objective of this study was to compare the spiritual intelligence and self concept of blind and sighted female students at the second grade of high school. The findings showed that the spiritual intelligence of blind female students is higher than the spiritual intelligence of sighted female students. The findings are not in line with the study by Khodabakhshi et al. (16), because the higher the spiritual intelligence, the easier and the more intuitive the process of seeking meaning is. Moreover, due to lack of vision blind students can take advantage of their intuition in making decisions and finding the policy and meaning of life better, because it was not inferred that the mental health of blind students was higher in comparison to the sighted ones based on their cooperation. It seems that the spiritual intelligence of blind students is higher. However, due to lack of the necessary social skills and physical conditions compared to their counterparts as

well as too much or unnecessary support by their parents and teachers, blind students cannot use their ability of spiritual intelligence.

Furthermore, there is not a significant difference between the self concept of female students at the second grade of high school in the two groups of blind and sighted groups. This finding is line with the results of the studies by Malekitabar et al. (17), Fischer and Sousa-Poza (18), and Garaigordobil and Bernarás (19). According to the findings, it can be concluded that education programs and facilities of Exceptional Education Department are of a high quality and it could make up the vacuum caused by the impact of disability on self concept and reduce the differences in self-concept of blind students and their counterparts. However, it was expected that the self-concept score of blind students be less than the sighted ones. In general, it can be concluded that the findings of this study provide the blind students and education professionals with promising strategies since according to the results it has been found that the understanding and attitude of the blind students is higher than their abilities and it is the same as the understanding and attitude of the sighted ones. The results of this study is limited to one sex (female), a special academic year (the second grade of high school), a city (Tehran) and an educational region (region 3) and it makes it difficult to generalize the findings of the study. It is recommended that future researchers train teachers and make them familiar with the new methods of teaching as an important step towards preparing the students to live independently and effectively.

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