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## **GENDER DIFFERENCE IN SELF CONCEPT OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED AND SIGHTED STUDENTS OF BARHAMPUR BLOCK OF NAGAON DISTRICT OF ASSAM -A CASE STUDY**

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*Abstract:- The research study entitled "Gender Difference in Self Concept of Visually Impaired and Sighted Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam" has been conducted to find out the gender difference in Self Concept of Visually Impaired and Sighted Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam. The researcher had used Dr. Raj Kumar Saraswati's Self Concept questionnaire obtained from National Psychological Corporation, Agra, India. The scale consists of 48 items of 6 self concept dimensions- physical, social, temperamental, educational, moral and intellectual. As it is a case study, the entire populations were considered as sample. Same number of sighted students were taken as sample. To find out the gender difference of visually impaired and sighted students t-test was implied and found that there existed no gender difference in self concept of visually impaired students and there existed gender difference in self concept of sighted students of Barhampur Block, Nagaon District of Assam.*

**Keywords :- Gender Difference, Self Concept, Visually Impaired, Sighted Students.**

## **I. Introduction :-**

According to the theory known as social identity theory, (Tajfel, 1979), self concept is composed of two key parts: personal identity and social identity. Personal identity includes such things as personally traits and other characteristics that make each person unique. Social identity includes the groups to which a person belongs to including our community, religion, college and other groups (Mc Leod, 2008).

Psychologist Bracken (1992) suggested that there are six specific domains related to self concept:

- Social: The ability to interact with others,
- Competence: The ability to meet basic needs,
- Affect: The awareness of emotional states,
- Physical: Feelings about looks, health, physical condition and overall appearance,
- Academic : Success or failure in school,
- Family: How well one functions within the family unit.

A visually handicapped child may be defined as an individual whose vision is of no use for the purpose of education or normal learning processes (Paul, 1978)

‘Blind’and ‘Visual handicap’ have been used interchangeably. It is not clear whether ‘Visually handicapped’ included blind persons or not. The range of visual impairment has not been specified. ( Jangira , 1990) .

Vision is a concept totally unknown to those who are deprived of it from birth. ‘It is only statistics that people go blind by million. They go blind individually each with their own predicament’. This observation was made by Sir Wilson (1950), Director of the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind.

Sighted adolescents are those who are free from any physical deficiencies with regard to eye sight and continue their studies, co-curricular activities and day to activities with sound physique and mind.

## **II. SELF CONCEPT**

Rogers (1951) defined self-concept as 'An organized configuration of perceptions of the self which are admissible to awareness. It is compared of such elements as the perceptions of one's characteristics and abilities, the percepts and concepts of the self in relation to others and to the environment, the value qualities which are perceived as associated with experiences and objects and the goals and ideals which are perceived as having positive or negative valence'.

Rogers (1951) believed that there were three different parts of self concept:

1. Self esteem: What one thinks about himself/herself.
2. Self Image: How one sees himself/herself.
3. Ideal self: Who we would like to be.

## **III. VISUALLY IMPAIRED**

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

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

'Person with low vision' means a person with impairment of visual functioning even after treatment or standard refractive correction

but who uses or is appropriate assistive device (Persons with Disabilities Act,1995).

Blindness, like most of the socio-economic problems of the country, is a problem of colossal magnitude. The World Health Organization defines blindness as visual acuity of less than 3/60, or a corresponding visual field loss to less than 10<sup>0</sup>, in the better eye with the best possible correction. Visual impairment includes both low vision and blindness (Vision 20-20, WHO).

#### **IV. SIGHTED STUDENTS**

Sighted students are those who are free from any physical deficiencies with regard to eye sight and continue their studies, co-curricular activities and day to day activities with sound physique and mind. For the purpose of present study the students from class VIII to class IX whose eye sight is normal for their academic, co-curricular and day to day the activities are considered as sighted students.

#### **V. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Among all the senses, vision is the most actively used sense by man. At the same time vision is a concept totally unknown to these who are deprived of it from birth. Among various disabilities visual impairment is probably the oldest categories identified for special education. It is always very interesting to know about the visually challenged children: how they develop different concept, acquire different skills, how they perform the day to day activities, the attitude towards themselves and towards normal people, their academic performance, co-curricular performance etc. One of the important aspects to know about them is self concept of visually impaired children.

In this regard investigator has reviewed some related literature to know about theoretical framework of the subject matter and to know what has been done and what is yet to be done in this field. For that, investigator has reviewed some study conducted by

Bharathi (1984) , Kef (2002) , Prasad (1982) , Sarswat (1982) , Bhagyavatry (1983) Lifshiz (2007) , Basavanna (1976) , Kalita (2011) etc and observed that not many studies have been conducted to study the difference between visually impaired and sighted with regard to self concept in physical, psychological, social, temperamental, educational, moral and Intellectual dimensions. The inconsistencies in the results of different studies were also noticed.

Thus it is an indeed a very important aspect to assess the self concept of visually impaired students which is very important to build and individual's personality. These days the attitude towards children with special needs is also changing a lot. They are no longer considered as dependent, helpless and inferior (Parvin, 2015). The typical stereotype which was very predominant in the previous days has really been changed and so investigator wants to observe how these changes influence their self concept. Further, the investigator has not found any such studies in the Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam.

#### **VI. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Hence to study about the said problem, the investigator decided to entitle the study as 'Gender Difference in Self Concept of Visually Impaired and Sighted Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam- A Case Study'

#### **VII. OBJECTIVES**

1. To study the gender difference of Visually Impaired Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept.
2. To study the gender difference of Sighted Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept.

#### **VIII. HYPOTHESES**

Hypothesis<sub>1</sub>. There is no significant gender difference of Visually Impaired Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept.

Hypothesis<sub>2</sub>. There is no significant gender difference of Sighted Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept.

### **IX. OPERATIONAL DEFINATION**

- **Self Concept**

Self concept is the image that one has about oneself. Self concept is generally thought of as an individual's perception about his or her behavior, abilities and unique characteristics. For the purpose of present study self-concept is defined as individual's perceptions about physical, social, temperamental, educational, moral and intellectual dimensions of the students of Barhampur S.S.I. Higher Secondary School and Barhampur Girls' High School.

- **Visually Impaired Students**

For the purpose of present study visually impaired students are those whose vision is of no use for the purpose of academic, co-curricular and normal day to day life activities whose age is of 13-18 years and who are studying in Srimanta Sankar Mission Andha Vidyalaya, Barhampur ,Nagaon.

- **Sighted Students**

For the purpose of present study Sighted Students are those whose vision is worth for academic, co-curricular and normal learning processes and other day to day activities, whose age is between 13-18 years and who are studying in Barhampur SSIHS School and Barhampur Girls' High School.

### **X. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

Self concept of visually impaired children are not much available and thus investigator felt the need to do extensive study

in this field .Yet the investigator collected and reviewed some literature relevant to the topic. Many studies have been carried out on visual impairment, but few studies have been done on self concept on visually impaired and sighted students.

In this regard investigstor has reviewed some studies carried out by Obiakor (1990), Huurre (1998) , kef (2002) , Shapiro (2005), Al-Zyoudi(2007), Lifshiz (2007), Bowen(2010a),Kalita (2011), Dhull and Choudhury(2011), Bolat (2011), Santoshi Halder and Dutta( 2012) , Mishra and Singh(2012), etc . From the research studies it was found that-

The self concepts of normal and visually impaired adolescent students do not differ and the normal and visually impaired adolescent boys and girls are also same with respect to self concept. Majority of visually impaired students has high level of self concept which was followed by low level of self concept. In contrary to this another finding showed that a large number of visually impaired students were found to have low self concept which was followed by poor self concept and high self concept respectively. Totally visually challenged female adolescent are found to be better on adjustment as compared to totally visually challenged male adolescent . There was no significant difference between female and male students with vision impairment in total self concept. In contrary to this some findings showed that there is significant difference between female and male students with vision impairment in total self concept. Sighted students have higher self concept as compared to visually impaired. Young people with visual impairment have lower self concept than their peers without visual impairment, in a number of dimensions.Compared to boys with low vision, girls with low vision scored higher on self concept regarding their physical appearance but lower on self concept in social relationship.

Various studies have been done on self concept of sighted students in different aspect by Basavana (1976) , Chouhan (1982)

Prasad (1982) Saraswat (1982) , Bhagyavatry (1983) , Kulashreshtha (1983) , Bharati (1984) , Panwar (1986), Kling (1999),Vorbach (2002),Frost and McKelvie (2004), Zakriski (2005), Ruble (2006) ,Rose(2007), De Goede (2009), Lawler (2011), Al-Bahrani (2013) etc. conducted several studies on self concept of sighted students indifferent dimensions. An overview of the reviewed literature is given below:

Persons who perceived themselves as having his self confidence had higher general mental ability than those who perceived themselves as low self Confidence. There is no relationship between the factors of self concept and the dimension of sociometric structure and the factors which influence the stability of self concept are anxiety, insecurity, self role incongruence and self satisfaction. Boys self concept was positively and significantly related to political and religious values and girls' self concept was positively and significantly related to home , health , social , emotional , school as well as total adjustment. Global self concept of boys was significantly different from that of girls. In total self concept boys and girls differed significantly and girls were found to be higher in physical, social and moral dimension. In a study to investigate different level of self actualization among post graduate students who perceived themselves as belonging to a high level of self actualization were directed by more internal than by external reinforcement in comparison to those who perceived themselves as belonging to low level of self actualization. Females have a higher use of isolation, self-blame, wishful thinking, rumination and crying, while males rely on physical activity and higher use of aggression. Girls scored significantly higher than males on body dissatisfaction, with 80.8% of the girls reporting a desire to alter their body size.Girls reported a significantly higher level of support from their best friends compared to boys, and this level increased from early to late adolescence. Higher initial levels of support were related to lower



initial levels of negative interaction. Boys, on the other hand, initially perceived more negative interactions with friends than girls. Girls' engage in co-rumination-extensively discussing problems and focusing on negative feelings whereas boys' friendships tend to focus on power, and excitement. Gender differences in adolescents' relationships with their peers have been noted. Girls-only groups displayed more nurturance and empathy than boys-only groups or mixed-gender groups. Boys may choose situations that encourage competition, whereas girls may seek opportunities for self-disclosure. Boys seem to score higher than girls on self-esteem during adolescence. In achievement contexts, girls choose easier tasks, avoided competition, and had lower expectations than boys. Adolescent girls scored significantly higher than boys in social competence, and lower for aggressive behavior and body image. Differences in gender roles and physical development influence adolescent's body image and self-esteem between genders.

## **XI. METHODOLOGY**

The researcher had used Dr. Raj kumar Saraswat's Self Concept Questionnaire obtained from National Psychological Corporation, Agra, India. The scale consists of 48 items of 6 self concept dimensions-physical, social, temperamental, educational, moral and intellectual. In each category total 8 items are included and each item is provided with five alternatives. The five items are provided with 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 marks respectively from first alternative. The summated score provides the total self concept ranging from high self concept to low self concept including 5 levels. As it is a case study, the entire populations were considered as sample. Same numbers of students were taken as sample. In case of sighted students sample was selected by adopting purposive random sampling method. Altogether 90 students were selected with 45 visually impaired and 45 sighted Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam

The analysis and interpretation of data was done objective-wise and by testing the formulated hypotheses. t-test was used to find out the gender difference of visually impaired and sighted students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to self concept.

**XII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

To study the gender difference of Visually Impaired Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept.

Hypothesis1. There is no significant gender difference of Visually Impaired Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept.

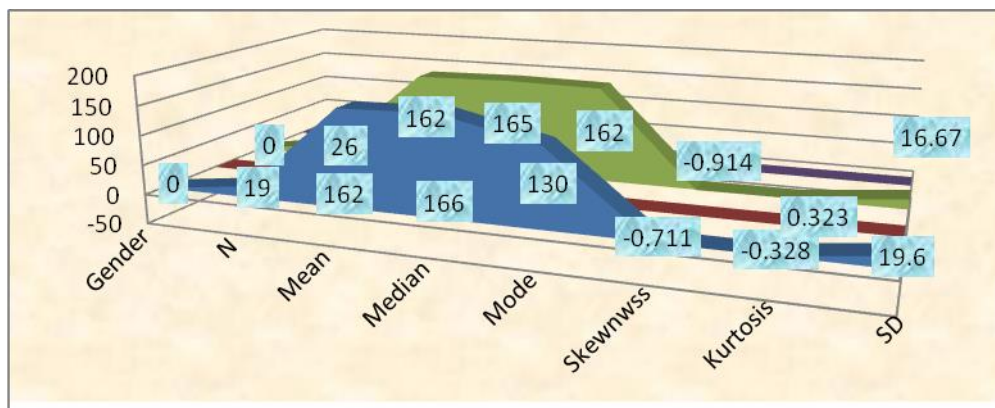
In order to analyze the second objective, the central tendencies like mean, median, mode, divergence from normality like skewness and kurtosis scores and dispersion like standard deviation were used to know the level of self concept of visually impaired students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam as shown in table no 4.2.1

**Table 4.2.1: Self Concept of male and female Visually Impaired Students of Nagaon district of Assam**

Gender	N	Mean	Median	Mode	Skewnwss	Kurtosis	SD
Male	19	162	166	130	-.711	-.328	19.60
Female	26	162	165	162	-.914	.323	16.67

Source: - 1. Field Survey 2018

1. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4321753/>



**Figure 4.2.1 Self Concept of male and female Visually Impaired Students of Nagaon district of Assam**

The table 4.2.1 and figure 4.2.1 depict that the mean, median, mode, skewness and kurtosis of scores of self concepts of visually impaired male students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam are found to be 162, 166, 130, -.711 and -.328. The above table 4.2.1 shows that the value of skewness was -.711. Thus score shows that the distribution of visually impaired male students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam is negatively skewed and majority of visually impaired male students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam scored high in spss 14 scale. Again the value of kurtosis for the sample was found to be positive which was .323. It indicates that the distribution was platykurtic in nature i.e. More flattened than the normal curve.

The table 4.2.1 and figure 4.2.1 also depict that the mean, median, mode, skewness and kurtosis of scores of self concepts of visually impaired female students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam are found to be 162, 165, 162, -.914, .323, and 16.67. The above table 4.1.3 shows that the value of skewness was -.914. Thus score shows that the distribution of visually impaired female students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam is negatively skewed and majority of visually impaired female students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam scored high in spss 14 scale. Again the value of kurtosis for the sample was found to be positive which was .328. It indicates that the

distribution was platykurtic in nature i.e. more flattened than the normal curve in spss 14 scale.

As the mean values of both the male and female students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam are same, no significant difference is found. So the null hypothesis that “there is no significant gender difference of visually impaired students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam with regard to self concept” is accepted.

To study the gender difference of Sighted Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept.

Hypothesis 2.

There is no significant gender difference of sighted students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept.

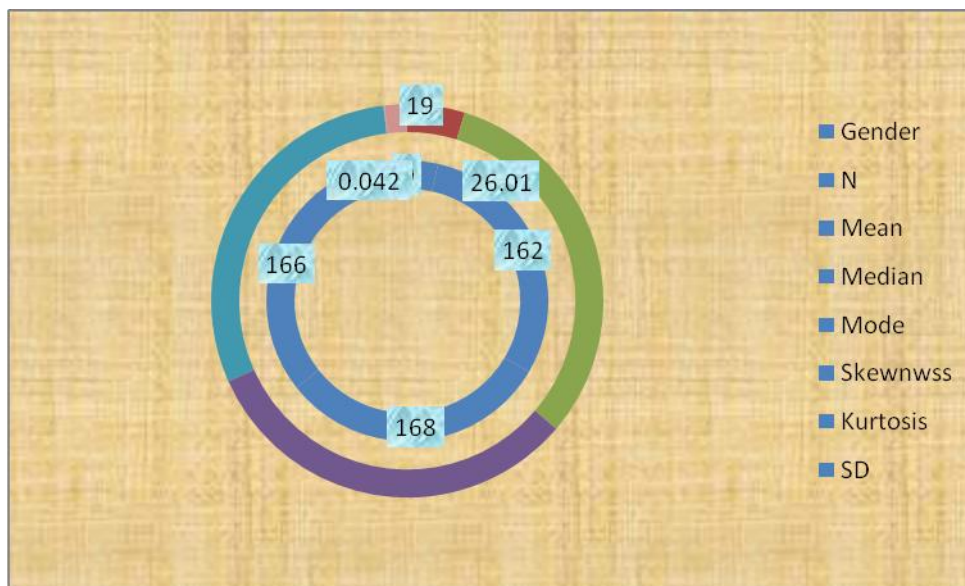
In order to analyze the fourth objective, the central tendencies like mean, median, mode, divergence from normality like skewness and kurtosis scores and dispersion like standard deviation were used to know the level of self concept of sighted students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam as shown in table no 4.4,1

**Table 4.4.1: Self Concept of male and female Sighted Students of Nagaon District of Assam**

Gender	N	Mean	Median	Mode	Skewness	Kurtosis	SD
Male	19	162	168	166	-.452	.042	26.01
Female	26	174	176	164	.117	.417	10.27

Source: - 1. Field Survey 2018

2. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4321753/>



**Figure 4.4.1 Self Concept of male and female Sighted Students of Nagaon district of Assam**

The table 4.4.1 and figure 4.4.1 portray that the mean, median, mode, skewness and kurtosis of scores of self concepts of male sighted student of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam are found to be 162, 168, 166, -.452, .042 and 26.01. The above table 4.1.7 shows that the value of skewness was -.452. Thus score shows that the distribution of male sighted student of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam is negatively skewed and majority of male sighted student of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam scored high in SPSS 14 scale. Again the value of kurtosis for the sample was .042 which was found to be positive. It indicates that the distribution was leptokurtic in nature i.e. more peaked than the normal curve.

The table 4.4.1 and figure 4.4.1 also affirm that the mean, median, mode, skewness and kurtosis and standard deviation of scores of self concepts of female sighted students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam are found to be 174, 176, 164, .117, .417 and 10.27. The above table 4.1.7 shows that the value of skewness was .117. Thus score shows that the distribution of female sighted students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam is positively skewed and majority of

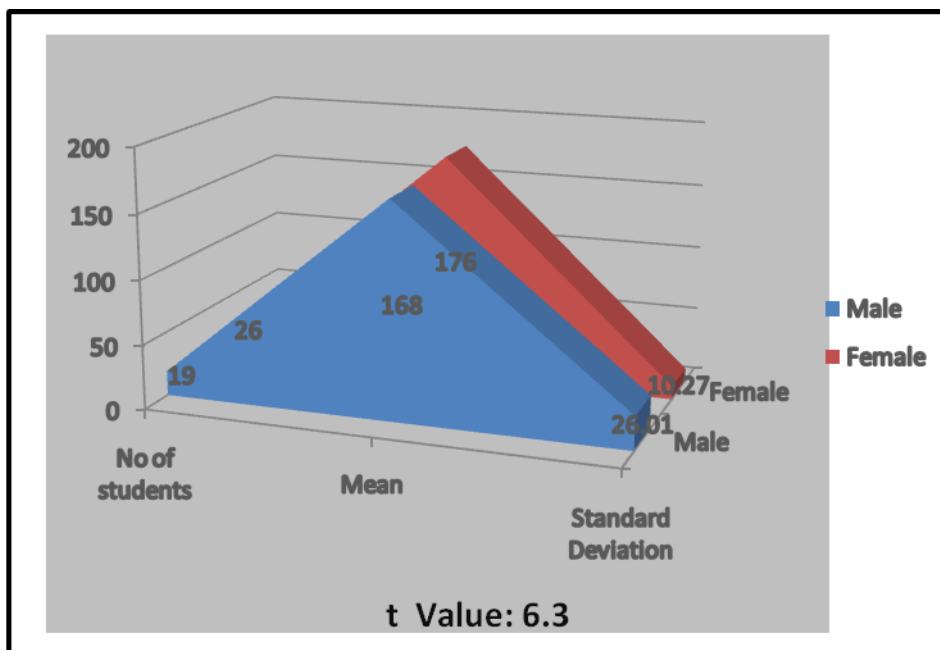
female sighted students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam scored low in SPSS 14 scale. Again the value of kurtosis for the sample was .417 which was found to be positive. It indicates that the distribution was platykurtic in nature i.e. more flattened than the normal curve in spss 14 scale.

**Table 4.4.2: Gender difference of Sighted Students of Barhampur block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept**

Gender	No of students	Mean	Standard Deviation	t Value	Critical value at 0.05 level	Remark
Male	19	168	26.01	6.3	2.18	S
Female	26	176	10.27			

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Note: S indicates significant at 0.05 level of confidence interval



**Figure 4.4.2 Gender difference of Sighted Students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam with regard to Self Concept**

Table 4.4.2 and figure 4.4.2 reveal that the t value to find out the gender differences of visually impaired and sighted students Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam . It was observed that the calculated t value is 6.3 which is more than the critical value (2.18) at 0.05

level of confidence interval. Hence the null hypothesis that "There is no significant gender difference of Sighted students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept" was rejected and thus t value was found to be significant at 5% level of significance. Hence it can be concluded that there is significant difference between male and female sighted students with respect to self concept.

### **XIII. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The first hypothesis that 'There is no significant gender difference of Visually Impaired Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept', was accepted and found that no difference was found in case of male and female visually impaired students with regard to Self Concept.

The second hypothesis that there is no significant gender difference of Sighted Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept was rejected and thus it can be concluded that there is significant difference between male and female sighted students with respect to self concept.

In case of both male and female visually impaired students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam, the distribution was negatively skewed and majority of visually impaired male and female students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam scored high in spss 14 scale. On the otherhand distribution of male sighted students was negatively skewed and female sighted students was positively skewed. The score shows that the distribution of male sighted student of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam was negatively skewed and majority of male sighted students scored high in SPSS 14 scale whereas distribution of female sighted students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam was positively skewed and majority of female sighted students scored lower in SPSS 14 scale.

The value of kurtosis was lower than the normal curve in case of male and higher in case of female visually impaired students. So distribution was leptokurtic and platykurtic respectively. The value of kurtosis for male

sighted students was lower than the normal curve. It indicates that the distribution was leptokurtic in nature i.e. more peaked than the normal curve. The value of kurtosis for the sample was higher than the normal curve in case of female sighted students. It indicates that the distribution was platykurtic in nature i.e. more flattened than the normal curve.

There is no significant gender difference of visually impaired students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam with regard to self concept.

There is significant difference between male and female sighted students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to self concept.

Bowen (2010) found that girls with visual impairment had better scores than boys with visual impairment, but two other did not find gender differences. Datta and Tlukdar(2016); Mishra and Singh(2012) by contrast, Al-Zyoudi(2007) found that compared with low vision, girls with scored higher on self-concept regarding their physical appearance but lower on self-concept in social relationship. Shapiro et al. (2005) found that girls with visually impairment had lower perceptions of their competence than boys with visual impairment. Three studies from Finland showed that girls with visual impairment had lower self-esteem than girls without visual impairment while boys with visual impairment seemed to be well adjusted with respect to their self-esteem (Huurre and Aro, 1998; Huurre and Aro 2000) claimed that the findings are indicative of health differences between boys and girls.

Another finding showed that there is gender difference in self concept of sighted students. The finding was supported by lots of investigator namely ,Basavanna, M (1976) ,Basavanna, M (1976), Chauhan, S.L. (1982) Sarswat, R (1982), Kulshreshtha, R. (1983), Kling KC et al. (1999), Vorbach AM, Foster SF (2002), McKelvie S (2004) ,Zakriski et al.(2005), Ruble DN, Martin CL, Berenbaum SA (2006), Rose(2007), De Goede ( 2009), Lawler M, Nixon E (2011), Al-Bahrani et al.(2013). No contradictory finding was found regarding the difference in self concept of male and female sighted students.



So from the study and above discussion it is clear that there is gender difference in self concept. It may be due to different roles and expectations for boys and girls that adolescents have learnt; for example, parents may accept aggressive and confrontational behavior for males but not for females. Moreover gender role also influences adolescents' self-concept (King 1999).

From the very early years of life the social, emotional, educational and other expectations of boys and girls are different. Self-confidence which is an integral part of developing self concept is a stereotypical male feature, presentation of self-confidence for girls is considered as violation of traditional gender roles (De Goede 2009). Therefore, it is not surprising that boys report higher self-esteem than girls and thus they show difference in self concept. These are the some reasons why there is gender difference in self concept in case of sighted students.

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