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Research Paper

Academic Resilience among Specially Abled Senior Secondary School Students

Firdoos Ahmad Hajam[1]*, Dr. Javeed Ahmad Puju[2]

ABSTRACT

In this study academic resilience was assessed among senior secondary school students based on their impairments. visually impaired, hearing impaired and orthopedically handicapped senior secondary school students were involved in the descriptive survey. The sample was collected through purposive sampling based on criteria of greater or equal to 40% impairment. A sample of 50 senior secondary school students from each category of impairment was purposively selected from different government higher secondary schools of Kashmir valley. Academic Resilience scale by Mallick, M.K. & Kaur, S. (2016) was used for collection of data. Obtained data was subjected to percentile statistics and Kruskal Wallis test to draw inferences. The results reveal that orthopedically handicapped students have higher academic resilience than visually impaired students which in turn have higher academic resilience than hearing impaired students. The results of Kruskal Wallis test reveal significant differences among specially abled senior secondary school students. p values of 0.718 and 0.0168 ascertained that visually impaired & orthopedically handicapped and hearing impaired & orthopedically handicapped senior secondary school students have significant difference in their academic resilience. Further, significant differences was found on the dimensions of motivation & ability to get goals and emotional regulation & physical health. P values of 0.34 and 0.77 ascertained that visually impaired & orthopedically handicapped senior secondary school students have significant difference on the dimensions of motivation and ability to get goals and emotional regulation & physical health respectively and also (p value = 0.41) ascertained that visually and hearing impaired senior secondary school students have significant difference on the dimension of motivation and ability to get goals.

Keywords: *Academic Resilience, specially abled, visually impaired, hearing impaired, orthopedically handicapped*

The crucial time in student's life is senior secondary school stage as it shapes their future job and higher education paths while requiring a great deal of academic efforts. PwD (persons with disabilities) students in this stage face greater difficulties. These Students still frequently encounter obstacles such as inaccessible infrastructure, insufficient teacher training, attitudinal biases, and curriculum misalignment, even though inclusive education policies around the world (UNESCO, 1994; UNCRPD, 2006) require

[1]Research Scholar at School of Education & Behavioural Sciences, University of Kashmir (Srinagar)
[2]Assistant Prof. at Centre for Distance and Online Education, University of Kashmir (Srinagar)
*Corresponding Author

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access (Mizunoya et al., 2016; Singal, 2016). Students with not total loss of function (sensory, physical, learning, or other impairments) are classified as partial disable ones within this heterogeneous group (Haegele & Zhu, 2017). They are susceptible to complicated terrain of obstacles & possible adjustments, and their experiences may diverge greatly from those students with more severe disabilities. According to Masten (2001), academic resilience is the ability of students to attain favourable learning outcomes in the face of severe hardship. It encompasses how external factors, like family support and educational settings, interact with internal qualities, like self-efficacy and problem-solving abilities, to promote success in the face of adversity (Waxman et al., 2003; Martin & Marsh, 2009). It is essential to comprehend the elements that foster resilience in senior secondary students with partial disabilities in order to create focused interventions and genuinely inclusive practices. Does the type of impairment have a significant impact on this group's development and academic resilience? The kinds of barriers and resources required to overcome them can vary greatly depending on whether the impairment is primarily physical, sensory (visual or auditory), learning-related (dyslexia, dyscalculia), or neurodevelopmental (ADHD, mild autism spectrum disorder) (Goodley, 2016). A student with partial vision impairment may require different technology and contextual changes than a student with a specific learning disability. Different sensations of challenge and support efficacy may arise from this (Kritzer, 2012; Poon-McBrayer, 2017). Cultural attitudes and the stigma associated with specific disabilities may have varied effects on motivation and self-concept (Shakespeare, 2014).

This research, therefore, seeks to investigate the phenomenon of academic resilience specifically among specially abled senior secondary school students, with a focused inquiry into whether the nature of their impairment plays a significant differentiating role. By examining how resilience processes might vary across impairment categories, the study aims to move beyond a homogenized view of disability in education. This distinct understanding is essential for educators, policymakers, and support services to design and implement more precise, effective strategies that cater to the specific needs and strengths associated with different types of partial disabilities, ultimately promoting greater equity and success within inclusive senior secondary settings.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the academic resilience among specially abled senior secondary school students.
2. To compare the specially abled senior secondary school students on academic resilience.

Hypotheses

- $H_1 1$: There is significant difference between visually impaired & hearing impaired senior secondary school students on academic resilience.
- $H_1 2$: There is significant difference between visually impaired & orthopedically handicapped senior secondary school students on academic resilience.
- $H_1 3$: There is significant difference between hearing impaired & orthopedically handicapped senior secondary school students on academic resilience.

METHOD AND SAMPLE

The study adopted descriptive survey method. The data was collected through purposive sampling technique based on criteria of greater or equal to 40% impairment in their sense of

vision, hearing and mobility of body parts from different senior secondary schools of Kashmir valley (J & K). One hundred fifty (150) impaired senior secondary school students, comprising 50 visually impaired students, 50 hearing impaired students and 50 orthopedically handicapped students were involved.

Data collection tools

The required data was collected through standardised tool of academic resilience developed by Mallick, M. K. & Kaur. S.(2016). This scale consists of 52 items divided into five dimensions viz, 1. "Academic Confidence". 2. "Sense of Well-being". 3. "Motivation and ability to achieve Goals". 4. "Relationship with Peers and Adults". 5. "Emotional Regulation & Physical Health".

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The collected data was analysed by using MS Excel 2011. Statistical techniques like percentile analysis and Kruskal Wallis test was used to infer data.

a. Descriptive statistics

Table 1: Percentile Rank performance of academic resilience among PwD(persons with disability) senior secondary school students(N=150)

Academic Resilience	N	Percentile Performance
High	29	19.33
Average	104	69.33
Low	17	11.33
Total	150	100%

Table 1 Depicts that total sample (150), out of 29 PwD (Persons with Disability) i.e., 19.33% senior secondary school students have high level of academic resilience performance while 69.33% & 11.33% senior secondary school students have average and low levels of academic resilience respectively.

b. Comparative analysis

Table 2: Summary of Kruskal Wallis H test of Academic Resilience based PwD category.

Kruskal Wallis H test

PwD Category	N	Expected Ranks	$\sigma^2 = n^2 - 1/12$	χ^2 (α=0.05)	H
Visually Impaired	50	4103.5	208.25	5.991	10.76
Hearing Impaired	50	2957.5			
Orthopedically Handicapped	50	4264			
Total	150				

***Significant at 0.05 level*

The data in table 2 show significant difference on academic resilience with respect to PwD category (H = 10.76 > critical χ^2 (α=0.05)). This implies that there is significant difference among PwD senior secondary school students taken for comparison. Thus, stated H_1

hypotheses stands accepted. Since difference in variance was assumed. In order to know academic resilience comparisons between pair of groups Dunn's post hoc test was used.

Table 3 Post Hoc analysis of performed Kruskal Wallis H test

PwD Category	Z	P	Bonferroni Adjust. α/m=0.05/3=0.0167
Visually Impaired Hearing Impaired	2.63	0.008	0.008<0.0167
Visually Impaired Orthopedically Handicapped	-0.36	0.718	0.718>0.0167**
Hearing Impaired Orthopedically Handicapped	-2.39	0.0168	0.0168>0.0167**

***Significance at 0.05 level*

The post hoc analysis results reveal that comparing pairs of visually impaired & orthopedically handicapped and hearing impaired & orthopedically handicapped senior secondary school students have significant difference in their academic resilience with p values of 0.718 and 0.0168 respectively as compared to visually impaired and hearing impaired senior secondary school students. Thus, the stated hypothesis as '*There is significant difference between visually impaired and orthopedically handicapped senior secondary school students on academic resilience.*' and '*There is significant difference between hearing impaired and orthopaedically handicapped senior secondary school students on academic resilience* are accepted. While hypothesis stated as '*There is significant difference between visually impaired and hearing impaired senior secondary school students on academic resilience* is rejected.

Table 4 Summary of Kruskal Wallis H test of Academic Resilience (Dimension-wise).

Dimension	PwD Category	N	Exp. Ranks	Variance ($\sigma^2 = n^2 - 1/12$)	$\chi^2(\alpha = 0.05)$	H
Academic Confidence	VI	50	3894	208.25	5.991	0.5
	HI	50	3599.5			
	OH	50	3832			
Sense of Wellbeing	VI	50	3908	208.25	5.991	-0.9
	HI	50	3728			
	OH	50	3689			
Motivation & Ability to get Goals	VI	50	3935	208.25	5.991	9.33**
	HI	50	3046			
	OH	50	4344.5			
Relationship with Peers & Adults	VI	50	4033	208.25	5.991	4.4
	HI	50	2904			
	OH	50	4388			
Emotional Regulation & Physical Health	VI	50	4110	208.25	5.991	10.10**
	HI	50	2981			
	OH	50	4234			

***Significance at 0.05 level*

The results of Kruskal Wallis H test 9.33 and 10.10 show significant difference among senior secondary school students on these dimensions of academic resilience viz; motivation & ability to get goals and emotional regulation & physical health. In order to reveal which pair of groups differ significantly on dimensions of academic resilience Dunn's post hoc analysis is followed.

Table 5 Post Hoc analysis of performed Kruskal Wallis H test (Dimension-wise)

Dimension	PwD Category	Z	P	Bonferroni Adj. α/m=0.05/3=0.0167
Motivation & Ability to get goals	VI HI	2.04	0.0414	0.041> 0.0167**
	VI OH	-0.94	0.3472	0.347>0.0167**
	HI OH	-2.98	0.0028	0.002<0.0167
Emotional Regulation & Physical Health	VI HI	2.59	0.009	0.009>0.0167
	VI OH	-0.28	0.779	0.779>0.0167**
	HI OH	-2.88	0.004	0.004<0.0167

Significance at 0.05 level

The post hoc analysis revealed p values 0.414 and 0.3472 ascertained that visually impaired & hearing impaired senior secondary school students and visually impaired & orthopedically handicapped senior secondary school students have significant difference on motivation and ability to get goals. It further revealed p values 0.779 determined that visually impaired & orthopedically handicapped senior secondary school students have significant difference on the dimension of emotional regulation & physical health.

DISCUSSION

Results obtained based on descriptive statistics revealed that (11.33%, 19.33% & 69.33%) of the specially abled higher secondary school students show high, low & average performance on academic resilience. Further, the results depicted that there is significant difference among specially abled higher secondary school students on academic resilience & orthopaedically handicapped higher secondary school students were found to have higher academic resilience as compared to visually and hearing impaired students. It was also ascertained that there is significant difference between visually impaired & orthopedically handicapped and hearing impaired & orthopedically handicapped higher secondary school students on academic resilience. The results also depicted significant difference among specially abled higher secondary school students on motivation and ability to get goals dimension of academic resilience. It was ascertained that visually impaired & hearing impaired higher secondary school students and visually impaired & orthopaedically handicapped higher secondary school students have significant difference on motivation and ability to get goals dimension of academic resilience. Further, it was found that significant difference among specially abled higher secondary school students on emotional regulation and physical health dimension of academic resilience. It was ascertained that visually

impaired and orthopaedically handicapped higher secondary school students have significant difference on emotional regulation and physical health dimension of academic resilience.

The studies in support of these findings are: The study of Raj, M. Maria (2016) revealed in the study of resilience among the students with visual impairment in the special schools of Tamil Nadus. Depict resilience correlated positively with perceived social support, positive school environment and positive coping strategies. Environmental & supporting factors plays an important role in resilience but does not provide comparative data against orthopedically handicapped students. Bizuneh, S. M. (2021) revealed in the study of resilience in adolescence, disability and gender that hearing impaired students (deaf adolescents) show lower academic resilience compared to other groups. Thus, it mirroring result orthopedically handicapped students outperform hearing and visually impaired peers.

Freitas, E, Simoes C, Santos AC, Mineiro A. (2022) revealed in the study of resilience in deaf children: a comprehensive literature review and applications for school staff. Depict that deafness introduces risk factors (communication & language barriers) that adversely affect emotion regulation and interpersonal relationships. It was also mirroring in emotional regulation differences between groups (identified risk factors). Solis Garcia P, Real Castelao S, Barreiro-Collazo A. (2024) revealed in the study of trends and challenges in the mental health of university students with disabilities: a systematic review. Depict students with physical disabilities used more positive coping strategies than those with auditory or visual disabilities. Thus, higher motivation or coping ability mirroring motivation and ability to get goals among physical disabled students compared to visually and hearing impaired peers.

The studies in contradict with findings are: Jayasinghe, N.M.A., Kanthilatha, N. et.al(2024) revealed in the study of academic performance and wellbeing of students with disabilities in higher education: (with reference to visually impaired undergraduates in Sri Lanka). Depict academic outcomes need not always be poorer. Because resilience may manifest differently, some groups may compensate via self-advocacy or institutional support. Jayasena, Chandima & Thakur, Abhishek & Gunarahna, Ishari & Hadapangoda, Ridmi.(2024) revealed in the study of resilience in higher education: Analysing academic constraints and coping mechanisms among visually impaired students in Sri Lankan universities of higher learning. Depict significant barriers for visually impaired university students like lack of accessible materials, inadequate pedagogy, technological and infrastructural gaps and reliance on self-directed coping and peer/family support. Thus, such students often develop self-determination and coping mechanisms, the systemic barriers they face challenge assumptions about uniform resilience.

Hence, a significant proportion of PwD senior secondary school students displayed personality characteristics like conscious towards physical health also reflected in their sense of wellbeing, regulated emotions also reflected in their relationship with peers and academic confidence reflected in motivation and ability to get goals.

CONCLUSION

The present study highlights important differences in academic resilience among specially-abled higher secondary school students, with findings indicating that the majority (69.33%) exhibit average resilience, while only 11.33% and 19.33% fall into high and low resilience categories, respectively. A key outcome of the analysis is the significantly higher academic resilience observed among orthopedically handicapped students compared to their visually and hearing-impaired peers. The findings are in accordance with several previous studies

(Bizuneh (2021) and Freitas et al. (2022) confirm that hearing-impaired students face added challenges in emotional regulation due to communication barriers, while Solis Gracia et al. (2024) highlight the more effective coping strategies among students with physical disabilities. Similarly, Raj (2016) emphasizes the positive role of environmental support and social networks in fostering resilience among visually impaired students, even if it does not directly compare them to students with orthopaedic disabilities.

However, some research presents a contrasting perspective. Studies by Jayasinghe et al. (2024) and Jayasena et al. (2024) argue that academic outcomes and resilience among visually impaired students can be enhanced through institutional support and self-determined coping mechanisms. These studies suggest that resilience is not uniformly low among certain disability groups and is heavily influenced by contextual factors such as accessibility, pedagogy, and social support systems.

The current study concludes that academic resilience among specially abled students is not homogenous and varies significantly across disability types and psychological dimensions. While orthopedically handicapped students tend to exhibit higher resilience, particularly in motivation and emotional regulation, this should not lead to deterministic assumptions about ability. Instead, the findings emphasize the importance of tailored support systems, inclusive pedagogy and psychosocial interventions to enhance resilience among all disability groups facing systemic and communicative barriers. The presence of health consciousness, emotional regulation, and goal-directed motivation among a considerable proportion of students further underscores their potential for academic success when provided with adequate support.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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