

Anxiety and Depression Among Hearing Impaired Adolescents: A Comparative Study Based on Gender.

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Abstract: Hearing is the sensory path way through which speech and verbal communication develop. Hearing of spoken language is one of the most important and significant experiences of developing human life. Hindrance in the process of hearing can cause hearing impairment or deafness. A sample of 300 hearing impaired adolescents including both males and females, between 11 to 19 years of age were selected for the present study using purposive sampling. The aim of the study was to investigate Anxiety and Depression among the hearing impaired adolescents. The ADS inventory was administered to obtain the scores of anxiety and depression among hearing impaired adolescents. The results show no significance difference exists between male and female hearing impaired adolescents in anxiety and depression.

Keywords: anxiety, depression, hearing impaired, adolescents

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I. INTRODUCTION

The deaf are those in whom the sense of hearing is non functional for the ordinary purposes of life. (Bala & Rao 2007). Deafness refers to a total or partial loss of hearing ability. It may result from a great variety of causes, like congenital factors, lifestyle factors, environmental factors etc. Diagnosing hearing losses in infants and young children is not always easy. But failing to do so can cause significant hearing problems, including language learning (Benjamin & Jack, 1987). Deaf people are a silent minority. For deaf people, living in a world where one's language is known by few and understood by even fewer influences how deaf people view themselves. For centuries, deaf people had to undergo the treatment of being viewed as incomplete because of their absence of hearing. Research shows that deaf people have more mental health problems than the general population. About 7 per 10,000 people worldwide are severely or profoundly deaf, with the onset of deafness before language development. It is estimated that about 25 percent of deaf students have other disabilities, including learning difficulties, developmental delay, visual impairment and autism (Health.usnews.com2012). Deaf people face many psychosocial problems. Some of them are anxiety, and depression.

Anxiety is an unpleasant, generalized feeling of fear and apprehension accompanied by increased physiological arousal. (Carson Butcher, 1995). Anxiety in deaf adolescents may cause fear, irritability, dependency and make them unable to relax or concentrate.

Depression is an emotional state marked by great sadness and apprehension, feelings of worthlessness and guilt, withdrawal from others, loss of sleep, appetite, and sexual desire, or interest and pleasure in usual activities, and either lethargy or agitation (Davison&Neale,J,1974). Depression in deaf adolescents can affect their thoughts, behaviour, feelings and physical well-being.
Significance of the investigation

The deaf as a minority has to face a lot of problems in today's competitive world. The adolescent stage is one of the most vulnerable periods in the life span. Along with the changing physical and mental status as grownups they have to face various other problems. The deaf children and adults are relegated to a low social status without economic opportunities as a direct result of the poor or nonexistent education they receive, the stigma they face, and the lack of awareness of their full potential as active members of society. If these problems are left unaddressed, they will not be able to deal effectively with the challenges in day today living. Attention to the mental health of the deaf adolescents will improve their life standard. This may also make a positive impact on their academic and personal life achievements. The present investigation makes an earnest attempt to investigate anxiety, and depression among hearing impaired adolescents. Thus the present investigation helps to make the society aware of the mental health of the deaf adolescents and take necessary steps for the proper development of the same.

Objectives

The objective of the study is to find out the anxiety, and depression among hearing impaired adolescents

Methodology in brief

The methodology for the investigation is briefly explained below.

1) Sample

The sample for the present investigation is drawn from different districts in Kerala. The sample consists of 300 hearing impaired adolescents including both males and females.

2) Tools

a. ADS inventory

b. Personal Data schedule

c. Statistical Techniques

The data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social sciences(Version 21). t-test was computed to find the results.

II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to investigate anxiety and depression among hearing impaired adolescents. The sample consists of 148 males and 152 female hearing impaired adolescents.

Table I: Data and Results of t-test for the variables.

Variable	Gender	Total No.	Mean	Standard Deviation	t
Anxiety	Male	148	49.68	5.15	1.83
	Female	152	48.58	5.19	
Depression	Male	148	49.85	6.30	1.90
	Female	152	51.13	5.25	

From the table 1 , we can see that the mean values obtained for the variable anxiety by males (N=148) and females (N=152) were 49.68 and 48.59 respectively and the corresponding standard deviation were found to be 5.15 and 5.19 . The t-value obtained was 1.83, which was not statistically significant. Therefore it was clear that male and female hearing impaired adolescents experience similar level of anxiety in their adolescent period. The mean value obtained for the variable depression by males (N:148) and females (N=152) were 49.85 and 51.13 and the corresponding standard deviation were 6.30 and 5.25 respectively. The t-value obtained was 1.90, which was not statistically significant. This shows that the male and female hearing impaired adolescents had similar level of depression in this adolescent period. The results shows that there is no gender wise difference exists between the hearing impaired adolescents for the variables anxiety and depression . The training of a deaf child requires great patience, deep interest and love for suffering child. The family climate plays a very important role to make the hearing impaired child to overcome their problems.

III. CONCLUSION

The knowledge and awareness attained through the study, in terms of the different variables and results are helpful in understanding the problems faced by the deaf adolescents. Parents, educationalists, teachers, and the government should act in such a way as to reduce the problems faced by the deaf adolescents so as to enhance their mental health. Words of reassurance and sharing stories of successful coping show young people that we believe in their emerging ability to face the uncertainties of life. Parents should also take care not to pressurize their children to achieve beyond their capabilities. Government and educationalists should try to reorganize the educational system so that the children can maximize their potentials in a stress free manner..

LIMITATIONS

Limited number of sample

Comparison was not made with the hearing population

Limited time

The study also hasn't included other relevant variables like parenting style, quality of life, commitment etc.

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