

LONELINESS AMONG HEARING IMPAIRED ADOLESCENTS WITH RESPECT TO GENDER

Anitha kumari.T.T & Dr.Raakhee.A.S

University of Kerala.

ABSTRACT

We live in a world full of diversity. Every form of living and non-living being is quite unique and different from each other. At times we lack words to appreciate the unimaginable creativity of God when we find that no single creation is an exact replica of the other. As a result, a child is born with its own unique abilities and capacities of body and mind. Some are fortunate enough to have extraordinary abilities or capacities, while others are averages or even suffer from so many deficits and deficiencies from birth, onwards. The present study intends to measure the loneliness among hearing impaired adolescents with respect to gender. The ADS inventory was administered to obtain the scores of loneliness among hearing impaired adolescents. The results show that there is significance difference exists between male and female hearing impaired adolescents in loneliness.

Keywords: loneliness, hearing impaired, adolescents

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 loneliness 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 loneliness among the 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.

Results and Discussion

The aim of the study was to investigate loneliness 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.

Loneliness	Female	152	40.00	4.91	5.51 **
	Male	148	36.97	4.66	

Table 4.1 shows that there existed significant differences among the female and male hearing impaired adolescents for all the variable loneliness under study.

The results shown in Table 4.1 indicates that the mean value obtained for the variable loneliness by females (N=152) and males (N=148) were 40.00 and 36.97 and the corresponding standard deviation score were 4.91 and 4.66 respectively. The t value obtained is 5.51, which was statistically significant at 0.01 level. Therefore, it was clear that as in the case of anxiety, there is difference in the feeling of loneliness between the female and male hearing impaired. From the mean value it was clear that, the female hearing impaired adolescents experience more loneliness than males.

Loneliness is associated with many psychological characteristics such as low self-esteem, stress and alienation. Females show more introverted characters. Even in this modern era, they are incapable of coming forward in any social gatherings. Also absence of communication skills may restrict them developing social contacts. They may think that their peers avoid them. This may cause isolated feeling in the female hearing impaired which consequently increases their feeling of loneliness.

The adolescents with hearing impairment often believe that they are unworthy of attention of other people due to the lack of communication skill, peers with hearing ability may avoid them. They may feel empty, alone and unwanted. In Kerala society, boys get more freedom and opportunities for social interaction when compared to girls. Along with that hearing impairment may place barriers to the independent actions, and social relations of female hearing impaired adolescents. Parents who are worried about the safety of their

female hearing impaired ward will also restrict the adolescents interactions. All these factors contribute to the increased lonely feeling among the hearing impaired female adolescents. Contrary to the present result, the study by Waltsand Davis in 1991 found no gender differences in the feeling of loneliness in the hearing impaired population.

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 re organize 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