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## **A Study of Psychosocial Problems of the Parents of Hearing Impaired Students**

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### **Abstract**

Education provides us the opportunity for holistic growth and development. It is an activity as well as a process which modifies the behaviour of a person from instinctive behaviour to human behaviour. It transforms our raw personality into refined personality. In all the stages of education right from nursery to university education, the senior secondary stage, is the most important stage, because, this stage provides the base for further education. In fact future depends on this stage. Healthy parental attitudes results in acceptance of the child's disability and facilitates therapeutic progress. Attitudes of society, families and people with Disability themselves contribute to converting Impairments into disabilities. The attitudes of specific societies are critical in assessing both the intensity of a disability and assessing areas where collective action is likely to fail the disabled community, and hence public action is desirable. Disability is perceived either as a punishment for the misdeeds in the past lives of the person with a disability or the wrong doings of the parents. The parents struggle to cope with their own emotions and the reactions of others. The researcher sought to investigate the parent's psychosocial problems towards their children with hearing impairments.

**Keywords:** Hearing impaired, Students, Parents

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### **Introduction**

Education provides us the opportunity for holistic growth and development. It is an activity as well as a process which modifies the behaviour of a person from instinctive behaviour to human behaviour. It transforms our raw personality into refined personality. We start acting rationally instead of impulsively. It develops our thinking and reasoning power. It is responsible for the

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supply of good citizens who can contribute to the growth of the country. In all the stages of education right from nursery to university education, the senior secondary stage, is the most important stage, because, this stage provides the base for further education. In fact future depends on this stage. Healthy parental attitudes results in acceptance of the child's disability and facilitates therapeutic progress. Attitudes of society, families and people with Disability themselves contribute to converting Impairments into disabilities. The attitudes of specific societies are critical in assessing both the intensity of a disability and assessing areas where collective action is likely to fail the disabled community, and hence public action is desirable. In addition to the attitudes of the general society, the attitudes of persons with disabilities and their families are important. At the same time, different sets of attitudes clearly interact, so that negative views about people with disability in the broader community are likely to be internalized in many cases by people with disabilities and their household members.

### **Objectives**

- To understand the impact of hearing impairment of children on their parents.
- To study the psycho social problems faced by the parents of hearing impaired students in their daily life activities.
- To suggest the remedial measures and coping strategies to reduce psychosocial problems among parents of hearing impaired students.

### **Delimitation of The Study**

The study was delimited to case study of the parents of hearing impaired students. It will be further delimited to psychosocial problems of parents of hearing impaired students only.

### **Research Method**

The method is a non experimental, descriptive method, case study. Case studies can be useful when a researcher wants to collect data with direct interaction with the respondent.

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### **Sampling Method:**

The sample includes parents of ten hearing impaired students from deaf and dumb School from Ludhiana district. The data is collected from the parents of the students of senior secondary school of Ludhiana District.

### **Dependent Variables**

Dependent variables are the assumed effects, which the investigator seeks to study and give explanations to. In this research, the dependent variable was psychosocial problems of hearing impairment. It consisted of the parent's thoughts about hearing impairment, feelings and actions or the way they treat the children with hearing impairment.

### **Independent Variables**

The independent variables are presumed causes. In this study, the independent variables were:

i) Parent's age: This is the aspect of belonging to any of the bracketed chronological years.

That is; 19 years and below, 20-29 yrs, 30-39 yrs, 40 yrs and above.

ii) Parent's level of education: This is the highest level of formal learning attained by a parent.

iii) Parent's marital condition: This refers to whether one is married or not married.

iv) Parent's job: This is the way in which parents earn their livelihood ranging from house wife, casual laborer, small business, employed, or large scale business.

v) Number of children in the family: This describes the numerical number of children in a family.

vi) Birth order: This is the position of the birth of a child whether firstborn, middle born or lastborn.

### **Tools Used**

A self developed questionnaire was used by the researcher in which the questions were asked to the parents of hearing impaired students to assess their psychosocial problems.

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## **Findings of the study:**

### **Language use**

The parents were aware that hearing impaired pupils have a problem of understanding their views through the use of language. These students find it hard to develop the language since they hardly hear when other people are communicating. Most hearing impaired students found were very difficult to express themselves. Most of them have not developed their vocabulary. The Unavailability of sign language interpreters was causing frustrations in parents as well as students with hearing impairment.

It is well recognized that hearing is important to speech and language progress, communication, and knowledge. Children with listening difficulties due to hearing loss or auditory processing problems carry on to be an under identified and underserved population. The earlier hearing loss occurs in a child's life, the more serious the effects on the child's development. Similarly, the earlier the problem is identified and intervention begun, the less serious the ultimate impact. Some of the students fall under this group but they learn in the same class as those with a partial hearing loss. What is serious is for parents to identify such students and as far as possible individualize their learning. There are four major ways in which hearing loss affects children. It causes delay in the development of approachable and meaningful communication skills (speech and language). The language insufficiency causes learning problems that resulted in reduced academic achievement. This was highlighted by parents who stated that it was difficult to encourage their children. There is a tendency for them to leave and not contribute in any activity. Communication difficulties often lead to social isolation and poor self-concept.

### **Vocabulary development**

Vocabulary develops more slowly in children who have hearing loss. Children with hearing loss learn real words like cat, jump, five, and red more easily than abstract words like before, after, equal to, and jealous. The gap between the vocabulary of children with normal hearing and those with hearing loss widens with age. Children with hearing loss do not catch up without

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interference. Children with hearing loss have trouble understanding words with various meanings.

In the light of the above challenges parents were aware of these problems so that they find ways of helping these pupils. The only way that parents can do in order to help these students is to individualize their learning by using visuals to those who cannot learn much through auditory means.

### **Speaking**

Children with hearing loss may not hear their own voices when they speak. They may speak too loudly or not loud enough. They may have a speaking pitch that is too high. They may sound like they are mumbling because of poor stress, poor inflection, or poor rate of speaking.

### **Academic Achievement**

Parents of such children have difficulty with all areas of academic achievement, especially reading and mathematical concepts. The gap in academic achievement between children with normal hearing and those with hearing loss usually widens as they progress through school. The level of achievement is related to parental participation and the quantity, quality, and timing of the support services children receive.

### **Social Functioning**

Parents of such students face problems in social interactions. They feel inferior, neglected and suppressed. They also feel isolated, without friends, and unhappy in such situations, particularly when their socialization with other people is limited. In the light of the above observations there was need for parents to integrate themselves in some activities so that they tackle the problem as a group. Sometimes such an approach will help to develop friendship among other people.

### **Education Level**

Having parents with a low educational level is believed to be a risk factor for more mental health problems. The prevalence of parents having a low educational level is found to be higher amongst deaf and hard of hearing children than among their hearing peers. Family composition might also affect the development of problems.

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### **Affective symptoms**

Depressive symptoms in the parents of these children and adolescents possibly result from the experience of having a handicap, being bullied in the society, lack of important communication abilities and of opportunities to express and discuss their concerns and feelings, being physically disciplined, having peer problems, lack of social affiliation and having a complex challenge in life, compared to their hearing peers.

### **Isolation**

Hearing loss can originally lead to serious emotional isolation and a sense of loss and loneliness, especially as peers and even family members step back as a result of being unable to communicate.

### **Loss of Identity**

Parents sometimes felt loss of individuality as a result of loneliness. They felt frustrated at many times when they had to encounter their personal relationships.

### **Psychological and emotional challenges**

It included being worried by helpful tasks and having worries about the present and future life of their children. They had feelings of depression, and inner pain or anger due to the troubling actions of the children. They also practiced some communication troubles with their children due to their incapability to speak. Social challenges were insufficient social services for their children, stigma, burden of caring task, lack of public awareness of mental illness, lack of social support, and problems with social life. The economic challenges were poverty, child care interfering with various income generating activities in the family, and additional expenses associated with the child's illness.

### **Suggestions:**

- Parents should be made sensitive of problem related to Hearing Impairment and their causes. Educating the parents with regard to welfare, care and cure is very important.
- They should gain suggestions from physician in time to time and also should inform behavioral changes of child to medical doctor.

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- Parents should create a good atmosphere which may help the children to develop their way of thinking.
  - Positive thinking about the problem and having hopeful attitude by the parents will help the children to grow up in a positive way
  - Parents should try to spend more time with their children.
  - Encourage a Sense of Self: Disabilities cause serious problems in social and emotional life, and greatly impact the capacity to connect in activities and duties that the hearing take for granted. It is therefore helpful to encourage the parents to develop a sense of self that incorporates possibly even creates positive associations.
  - The parents of hearing impaired children regularly have to face a variety of emotions over an extensive period of time. They frequently fight with guilt.
  - Awareness should be given to the mothers about the psychological and emotional feelings of their children.
  - Awareness should be given to the parents about the psychological and emotional feelings of their children.
  - Provision of special education and instruction is very necessary. Even parents also should have the skills of taking care of special children. This helps the parents to train their special child to manage their personal affairs without any help.

### **Conclusion:**

Our society has urbanized at a faster rate. But the general approach towards the special children needs to be altered. They are not to be sympathized; protected, ridiculed rather they need to be helped in growing and developing within their strengths and limitations. Their education or training should begin at home, thereafter special schools and institutions may be involved for their education and training. The society and the state, then should take responsibility for their rehabilitation and adjustment. Parents and guardians play a most important role in serving children grow and widen to their full potential. As children grow in the families they most

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significantly depend on their parents or guardians for basic needs support such as food, shelter, education, protection and care at all times but especially during life difficulties and times of crisis. Disability in early days and teenage years can be endless and very disturbing, requiring suitable awareness, help and support from caregivers. Thus, parents or guardians and relatives living with children with hearing impairment have extra responsibilities and roles to care for them as they do for other healthy children. In this study ‘children’ means any male or female persons not more than twelve years of age, and a ‘parent’ is a biological mother or father or anybody who assumes that role. The importance of family support for the growth and development of children and the role it plays as a determinant of whether children will receive health care or not, cannot be overemphasized

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