

DETERMINATION OF FEELINGS OF THE HEARING IMPAIRED OF THEMSELVES IN IBADAN METROPOLIS

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Abstract

The research is to determine the impression hearing impaired individuals have of themselves. 19 congenitally hearing impaired and 19 adventitiously hearing-impaired were selected from four schools based in Ibadan metropolis. Special audition tests were carried out on these candidates to ascertain hearing status. Those with the slightest hearing abilities were eliminated. Only pure totally hearing-disabled were accepted for the research. A questionnaire on concept of hearing impaired of themselves (CHITQ) was administered to respondents. With t-test statistical analysis, no significant differences in both groups of congenitally and adventitiously hearing impaired children were recorded ($P > 0.05$).

Introduction

Hearing impairment is secondary to blindness among those impairments being dreaded, blindness being the first. Hearing impairment according to Ballantyre (1977) echoing the voice of Hellen Keller the dead-blind is worse than blindness (Owolavvi, 1998). This is due to the fact that the individual has multiple impairment. Mba (1989), in his contention, expressed the feeling of loneliness in totally deaf children and stressed that it could not be imagined even with people around how much when there was nothing around. He explained that the sound of music, the singing of birds, the bustling and booming of engine parts and sounds of wind, insects, thunders and talking of people make an area very homely, comfortable and fearless. For the totally deaf they are always feeling lost and lonely.

This paper focuses on the hearing impaired and personal self-perception and esteem arising from the time of onset of hearing impairment.

Purpose of the Study

The major problem of this study was to ascertain the extent the hearing-impaired feel about themselves from the time of onset of hearing impairment.

Rationale of the Study

Issues of impairment, especially hearing impairment, are issues that must always cause anxiety among researchers trying to find out why things changed for the impaired and other scientific reality surrounding the dilemma. It has been argued that most impairments are lately reported in hospitals (Ijaduola, 1982; Holborow, 1985; and Owolawi Williams, Okeowo and Olusanya, 1996). Ovvolawi (1996) further asserted that most parents oftentimes base their assumptions on time factor and a large percentage on "divine intervention" through traditional/religious centres (Owolawi, 1998).

Due to dearth of information this type of research on self-concept of hearing impaired is worthwhile and justifiable. Information from this research can be useful to the clinician in counselling profile for parents, teachers, doctors and nurses.

Methodology

A questionnaire designed by the researcher and named Concept of Hearing Impaired on Themselves Questionnaire (CHITQ) was used and administered to respondents. It consisted of 20 items of two sections A and B. The section A was of personal data while B was mainly on psychological facts especially on self-concept, emotionality, tolerance, temperament and sociability.

A sum of 38 hearing-impaired with severely profound sensori-neural degree were compared on the basis of time of onset of impairment. A portable diagnostic audiometer (Peters, 1969:325) calibrated to American National Standards Institute (ANSI) specification of 1969 was used for audiometric measurement of the total sampled population to ascertain respondents' claim of degree of hearing loss. Audiometric test was preceded by an otoscopic examination to rule out any physical

auditory abnormality. Those whose otoscopic findings were inimical to the study were eliminated from the study.

Results

't' Test Statistical Table of Feeling of Hearing-Impaired of Themselves

Group	N	Mean X	S.D.	't' Observation	't' Critical	P
Congenitally Hearing Impaired	19	30.2	3.45	0.66	1.69	NS
Adventitiously Hearing-Impaired	19	32.5	3.41			

Discussion

The mean scores deduced from the table of analysis did not indicate any significant difference ($P > 0.05$) between the congenital and the adventitiously hearing impaired. Although according to Levin (1960) and Munro (1970) the treatment meted out to an individual affects his/her self concept either positively or negatively, it appears from this finding that both the congenitally and the adventitiously impaired observe themselves to be in a similar world arising from their socio- psychological perception. Owolawi (1996) found that the self-concept of the hearing impaired and their hearing counterparts was found to be at variance. Perhaps the finding of this study may have limitation due to the fact that respondents were few. If they could have been much more, the result could have not be the same. Again, many of the subjects lost their hearing ability at tender age, so may not have remembered the difference to when they were hearing. If condition could have been opposite, that is, that the loss of hearing was when the individual has attained maturity, the degree of impact could have been great. Another reason why the hearing loss is not much felt might be due to the fact that they are all residential in a hostel. If they could have been living in various places in the community or together with hearing people, the impact of loss could have been more on the hearing impaired.

Recommendations

- (1) No matter the self-concept of the hearing impaired, they need counselling, love, understanding of the normal people; cooperation and appreciation of the much they are able to do. These will reduce the rate of frustration and enhance their self-concept.
- (2) They should be looked on with positive concept so that they will have positive concept of themselves too.
- (3) They should be shown that they are worthwhile to be reckoned with in terms of financial, social and educational issues.
- (4) The most important help to be given to the hearing-impaired is to facilitate their communication rate with the society. The sign language for the deaf should be seriously incorporated in the syllabus of primary school in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The deaf are human beings who should contribute their own national role in the nation. The general public, teachers and parents should help in making the hearing impaired acquire the right concept of themselves. This will aid their success and achievement in life. The family, society, community, school and peers have important role of making the hearing impaired acquire positive self-concept that will help them achieve in life.

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