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Differential effects of hearing status on self-esteem among school children in with special reference to Rewa district

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Abstract
A sample of 100 school children was intentionally selected to investigate individual factors influencing the self-esteem of hearing-impaired (HI) and normal-hearing (NH) children, of which 50 hearing-impaired and 50 normal-hearing children (7th grade) were intentionally selected from institutions for the deaf. and mute and ordinary upper primary schools of Rewa district in 2021-22. Heatherton and Polivy's (1991) State Self-Esteem Scale, Aggarwal *et al.* (2005) Socio-Economic Scale were used to assess self-esteem, and a general information plan was used to collect personal information. The results showed that the majority of both the HI (52.00%) and NH (68.00%) groups had a medium level of self-esteem and a significant difference was found between the hearing-impaired and normal-hearing children in their self-esteem, where the normal-hearing children had significantly higher self-esteem than hearing impairment. Hearing impaired children had significantly lower performance (50.00%), social (62.00%) and appearance (72.00%) self-esteem than normal hearing children.

Keywords: Hearing impaired, normal hearing, self-esteem

Introduction
According to the World Health Organization, more than 5% of the world's population – or 430 million people-need rehabilitation to deal with “disabling” hearing loss (432 million adults and 34 million children). It is estimated that by 2050, more than 700 million people-or one in ten people-will have hearing loss.

Disabling hearing loss means hearing loss greater than 35 decibels (dB) in the better hearing ear. Almost 80% of people with disabling hearing loss live in low- and middle-income countries. The prevalence of hearing loss increases with age, with more than 25% of people over 60 having hearing loss. Children with hearing impairments are one of the most diverse groups of exceptional children. They have hearing loss in one or both ears due to damage to the hearing mechanism. The 2011 Census revealed that the number of people with hearing and speech impairments is also estimated at 50.71 million and 19.98 million respectively with a total disability of about 2.68 million (Census, 2011). Although India is developing rapidly, there is still a lot of poverty and a high rate of deafness, so proper education for these people is essential as they can contribute to human resources.

Generally speaking, self-esteem refers to the positive or negative attitude that an individual takes towards themselves. Self-esteem refers to a general assessment or evaluation of oneself, including feelings of self-worth. In addition, an individual with a high level of self-esteem is better able to cope with stressful life events, where as children with hearing impairments show a low level of self-esteem due to their unstable emotions, difficulties in building social relationships and managing their own emotions. greater risk of exclusion and rejection from others due to their limitations in communication, which negatively affects their understanding of themselves.

Children with deafness have lower levels of self-confidence, especially in their social life, compared to their peers. Positive self-esteem is important for successful functioning in everyday life. Therefore, it is essential for hearing-impaired children to develop high self-esteem in order to excel in school life and in future life.

Objective of the study

There is limited research that has investigated the influence of hearing status on self-esteem of children. Hence, the present study has been taken up with the following objectives

- To assess the self-esteem of hearing impaired (HI) and normal hearing (NH) children.
- To analyse the individual factors influencing self-esteem of hearing impaired and normal hearing children.

Hypothesis of the study

The null hypothesis formulated for the present study is

H_{01}: Hearing impaired (HI) and normal hearing impaired (NH) children have difficulty in expressing thoughts/feelings and also have lower self-confidence as compared to children with normal hearing.

H_{02}: Children with hearing impairment have significantly lower self-esteem than children with normal hearing, and there are significant differences in the social, performance, and appearance domains of self-esteem.

Methodology

The population for the study consists of hearing-impaired and normal-hearing upper middle school students from the towns of Rewa, Madhya Pradesh, India. The study included a differential research design. A total of 50 hearing-impaired and 50 normal-hearing children were purposively selected, due to attrition, the final sample consisted of 50 hearing-impaired upper middle school children and 50 normal-hearing children studying in 7th standard from Rewa district. The block education officer and principal of the respective schools were contacted and permission was obtained to carry out the research work. A class list of hearing-impaired children studying in the 7th grade was created and all questions were explained in sign language to the respondents with the help of class teachers and data were collected.

Heatherton and Polivy's (1991) [1] self-esteem scale was used to measure self-esteem across the social, performance, and external domains. It consists of 20 items with five alternative response options, i.e. not at all, a little, a little, very much and extremely with scores of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively. Family socioeconomic status was assessed using a scale developed by Aggarwal *et al.*, (2005) [2]. It consists of 22 statements that assess parents' education, employment and income from all sources, house type and location, family assets and number of earning members in the family, number of children, agricultural and non-agricultural land assets, domestic animal assets and family social status. A structured interview schedule was used to collect information such as the child's name, age, gender, education, office position, degree of loss, onset of disability, communication style, and academic achievement. Descriptive and inferential statistics such as chi-square, t-test, and one-way ANOVA were used to identify differences between hearing-impaired and normal-hearing children's self-reports and related factors.

Results and Discussion

The results of Table 1 showed that a higher percentage of hearing-impaired children had a medium (52.00%) level of self-esteem followed by low (46.00%) and high (2.00%). While among the normal hearing children, more than half of the children fell below the medium (68.00%) level, 32.00% fell below the high level, and none of them had a low level of self-esteem. Chi-square analysis showed a significant association (χ^2 = 50.33) at the 0.01 percent level and a significant difference was found between hearing-impaired and normal-hearing children (Table 2), where normal-hearing children had a higher mean score (45.21±7.58) than hearing impairment (33.26±8.24).

An examination of Table 3 reported distribution and comparison of dimensions of self-esteem of HI and NH children. With respect to performance dimension of self-esteem, hearing impaired children had low (50.00%) level followed by average (48.00%) whereas, in normal hearing group more than half of them had average (58.00%) level and 42 per cent fell under high level category. The t-test revealed significant difference (t =14.18) between hearing impaired and normal hearing children. With regard to social dimension of self-esteem, majority of hearing-impaired children fell under low (62.00%) level and least were in high (2.00%) level, while normal hearing children fell under high level (46.00%) and least were in low (10.00%) level. There was significant difference found between (t =7.40) groups on social self-esteem dimension at 0.01 level of significance. Regarding appearance dimension of self-esteem both hearing impaired and normal hearing groups had average level (HI, 72.00% and NH, 52.00%) and none of hearing impaired fell under low level whereas only one sample from normal hearing group had low level. The t- test analysis found a significant difference (t = 1.92*) between hearing impaired and normal hearing children at 0.05 per cent level of significance.

In this study, hearing-impaired children expressed that they had difficulty understanding, expressing thoughts/feelings, and also had low self-confidence than normal-hearing children. The results of the current findings parallel the study of Damjan (2015), who found that deaf and hard of hearing adolescents had lower self-esteem than hearing adolescents. Findings by Lesar and Vitulić (2014) [3] reported that DHH students from special schools had lower self-esteem in emotional and physical self-confidence and self-esteem than students from regular schools.

This supports the view of Theunissen *et al*., (2014) [4] and Patil and Pujar (2019) [5] who also reported that the domain of perceived physical appearance of children with hearing impairment was moderate, not significantly different, suggesting that children with hearing impairment do not feel insecure about their appearance than other teenagers, where as hearing-impaired children with disabilities reported low self-esteem in the domain of social acceptance, suggesting that hearing-impaired children may have felt less popular and less valued by peers and parents.

Woolf and Smith (2001) [6] reported in their qualitative study that deaf children with deaf parents have higher self-esteem than hearing parents. In the context of 'hearing parents and deaf siblings', children cited that 'My brother is my parents' favorite, he ignores me and my parents ignore me. My brother speaks better than me and hears more than me. My parents talk a lot, I don't understand, and they tell me to mind my own business. He talks more to my brother." There was also a theme of friends such as: 'My hearing friends don't sign, they are the siblings of my deaf friends. I prefer to be with Deaf friends, there is more sign language and empathy. Hearing people can't understand why we use BSL (basic sign language). If everyone is deaf, that means we can understand and get along." Children's self-esteem was strongly influenced by parents' hearing status, and lack of access to conversation can be seen as a barrier to a good sense of self and lead to lower self-esteem.

Table 1: Distribution of hearing impaired and normal hearing children by levels of self-esteem. N=100

Level of self-esteem	Hearing impaired Frequency (%)	Normal hearing Frequency (%)	Total Frequency (%)	Modified χ^2
High	1(2.00)	16(32.00)	17(17.00)	49.08**
Moderate	26(52.00)	34(68.00)	60(60.00)	
Low	23(46.00)	-	23(23.00)	
Total	50(100.00)	50(100.00)	100(100.00)	

Figure in the parenthesis indicates percentage, NS- indicates Non significance.

Table 2: Comparison of self-esteem level between hearing impaired and normal hearing children.

Children	Mean ± SD	't' value
Hearing impaired	33.26±8.24	13.39**
Normal hearing	45.21±7.58	

**Significant at 0.01 levels

Table 3: Distribution of hearing impaired and normal hearing children by dimensions of self-esteem. N=100

S. No.	Dimensions of self-esteem	Hearing impaired (N=50)			Normal hearing (N=50)		
		High	Average	Low	High	Average	Low
1	Performance	1 (2.00)	24(48.00)	25(50.00)	21(42.00)	29(58.00)	-
	Mean ± SD	15.25±3.64			24.66±2.96		
	't' value	14.18**					
2.	Social	1(2.00)	18(36.0)	31(62.00)	23(46.00)	22(44.00)	5(10.00)
	Mean ± SD	17.16±5.02			24.34±4.68		
	't' value	7.40**					
3.	Appearance	14(28.00)	36(72.00)	-	23(46.00)	26(52.00)	1(2.00)
	Mean ± SD	21.18±3.02			22.47±3.68		
	't' value	1.92*					

Figure in the parenthesis indicates percentage, **Significant at 0.01 level, *Significant at 0.05 level.

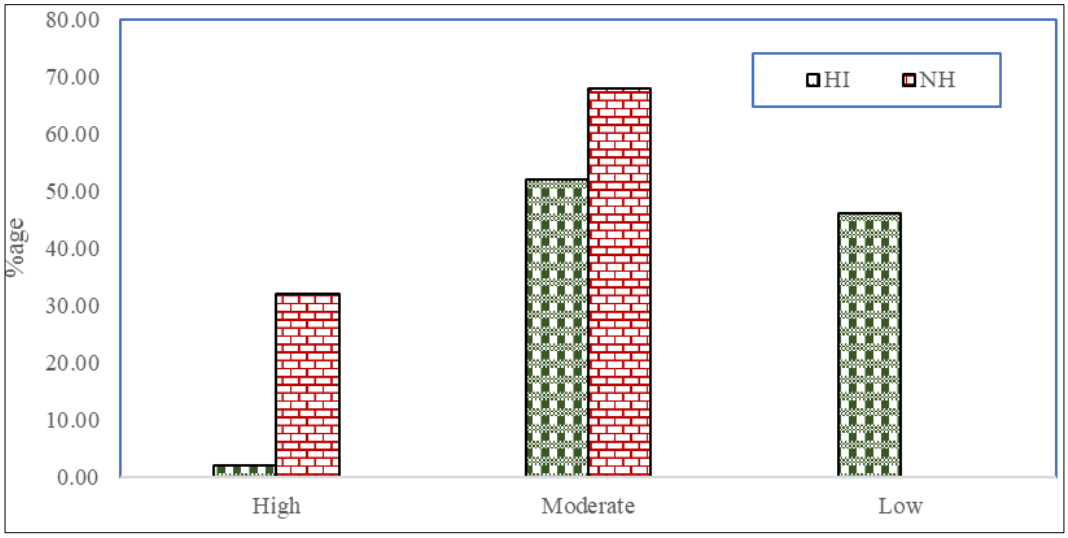

Fig 1: Graph analysis of distribution of hearing impaired and normal hearing children by levels of self-esteem.

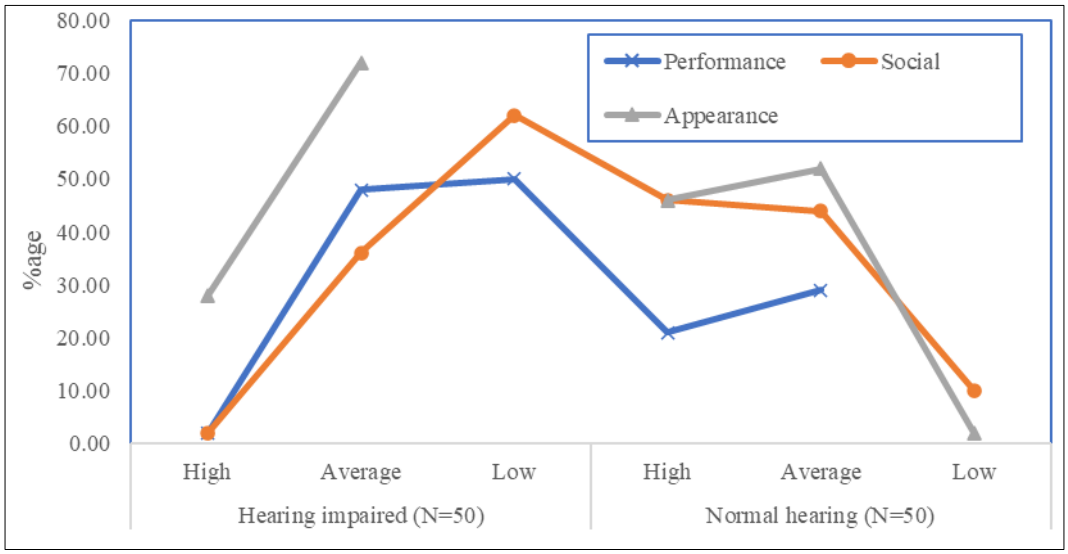

Fig 2: Graph analysis of Distribution of hearing impaired and normal hearing children by dimensions of self-esteem.

The study highlighted that hearing-impaired children had significantly lower self-esteem than normal-hearing children and differed significantly in the social, performance and appearance domains of self-esteem. This call for an early detection and intervention program to minimize the impact of hearing loss on a child's development and focus on their strengths, build self-esteem, emphasize their positivity to maximize self-esteem.

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