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## “A study of the effect of family environment on mental health of hearing impaired and visually impaired adolescent”

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### ABSTRACT:

*The present study has been done to understand the effect of family environment on mental health of hearing impaired and visually impaired adolescents. The study has been carried out on a sample of 100 adolescents (i.e. 50 hearing impaired and 50 visually impaired) who are pursuing their education in special schools for hearing impaired and visually impaired which is affiliated to the Board of Secondary Education, Assam (SEBA) and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is located in Kamrup (metro), Assam. For the purpose of collecting data, Family Environment Scale by Dr Sanjay Vohra and Mental Health Battery (by Arun Kumar Singh and Alpna Sen Gupta) have been used. The scales have been used to find out the family environment with regards to mental health and so an effort has been made to recognize the vital role played by family environment of an adolescent and its influence on their mental health.*

### KEYWORDS:

*Adolescence, Family Environment, Mental Health, Hearing Impairment, Visual Impairment*

### INTRODUCTION

World Health Organisation (WHO) identifies adolescence as the period in human growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, from ages 10 to 19. Adolescence is the period of development between childhood and adulthood. Adolescence is followed by physical, cognitive, social, and emotional changes. Adolescence has been defined as a period of heightened stress (Spear, 2000) due to the many changes experienced concomitantly, including physical maturation, drive for independence, increased salience of social and peer interactions, and brain development (Blakemore, 2008; Casey, Getz, & Galvan, 2008a; Casey, Jones, & Hare, 2008b). Adolescence is characterized by physical maturation of the brain and body, leading to intense psychological and physical change. Adolescents usually have different stressful situations and have to cope with enormous changes in their lives. Stressful life experiences include conflicts with parents, emotional turmoil, academic failure, inability to manage time etc. The family is the oldest and the most important of all the organizations that man has created to regulate and assimilate his behavior as he struggles to satisfy his basic needs. According to Clark (2007), “By family environment, we mean a system of relationship existing between Parents and children.” Van Wel (2000) believes that family environment continues to be of crucial importance throughout adolescence and young adulthood. According to Herman et al. (2007) family cohesion and supportive relationships between family members are associated

with adolescent psychological adaptation and lower depression. According to McFarlane et al. (1994), “family environment plays a very important role on the emotional adjustment of adolescents to understand the social adaptation pattern.”

Mental health is a level of psychological well-being or an absence of mental illness. It also includes a person's ability to attain a balance between different activities of their life and efforts to achieve psychological resilience. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health is “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.” According to Parmod Kumar (1991) “mental health is an indicator which shows a person's ability to meet social, emotional physical psychological demands. However, when the individual finds his or herself trapped in situations and lacks matching coping strategies to deal with stress effectively, mental strain develops”.

Hearing impairment exists when there is reduced sensitivity to the sounds normally heard. According to Dash (2000), hearing impairment refers to a defect in or damage to the hearing mechanism. Depending on the degree of hearing loss, the hearing impaired are categorized into two groups the deaf, and the hard-of-hearing. The total inability to hear is called deafness. Hearing impairment may take place since birth or it may be acquired at any age in life. According to World Health Organisation (2007), hearing loss may affect both ears or be unilateral, it may be a low- or high-frequency hearing loss, and its severity may vary from slight, moderate, severe, to a profound hearing loss.

Visual impairment is an individual's inability to effectively complete the activities of everyday life. It may be due to complete blindness, partial blindness or some other visual defects like light sensitivity, weakness of lens or glasses etc. The National Assistance Act 1948 states that a person can be certified as severely sighted impaired if they are unable to accomplish any task for which eyes are needed. According to Encyclopaedia of Britannica a person is defined as being partially sighted if the vision in his better eye (after correction) is less than 20/70 but better than 20/200 and a person is defined as blind if his vision or visual acuity (after correction) is 20/200 in his better eye.

### **Significance of the study-**

The main aim of this investigation is to evaluate the family environment of hearing impaired and visually impaired adolescent and to find out its effect on their mental health. Every child is born in a family which is a part of the society. It is through the family that a child learns the first lesson of socialization. Therefore, the family has an important impact on the adolescent. Sometime it is seen that even though adolescent has the potential still they cannot perform well due to unhealthy family environment. The findings of the research work will be helpful for different people in the society dealing with hearing and visually impaired adolescents as it will provide an insight to them about the effect of family environment of hearing impaired and visually impaired adolescent on their mental health.

### **Operational definition-**

- Adolescent-Adolescent-In this study it refers to hearing and visually impaired adolescent between the age 10-19 years

- Family environment- In this study it is the family environment of visually impaired adolescents and hearing impaired adolescents
- Mental health- In this study it is the mental health of visually impaired adolescents and hearing impaired adolescents with their parents.
- Visual impairment- Adolescents with all types of visual impairment taken admission in special schools in Kamrup (Metro) district were included in the study
- Hearing impairment-Adolescents with all types of hearing impairment taken admission in special schools Kamrup (Metro) district were included in the study
- Special schools –It refers to selected special schools for visual and hearing impaired adolescents located in Kamrup (Metro) district

#### . Objectives of the study-

- To assess the difference of the family environment of hearing and visually impaired adolescents
- To assess the difference of the mental health of hearing and visually impaired adolescents
- To find out the relationship between family environment and mental health of visually and hearing impaired adolescents
- To find out the relationship between family environment and mental health of total hearing and visually impaired adolescents

#### Hypotheses-

- There will be significant difference in the family environment of hearing and visually impaired adolescents
- There will be significant difference between hearing and visually impaired adolescents in regards to mental health
- There will be significant relationship between mental health and family environment of visually impaired adolescents
- There will be significant relationship between mental health and family environment of hearing impaired adolescents
- There will be significant relationship between mental health and family environment of total hearing and visually and impaired adolescents

#### METHODOLOGY

- Type of research -Correlational research was used in the study
- Research Design-Quasi experimental design was used in the study
- Variable-The following were the variables-
  - Independent variable- Family environment
  - Dependent variable- Mental health

- Sample-The sample size was 100 (50 hearing impaired and 50 visually impaired) and it was collected from different special schools from Kamrup (Metro) district for visual and hearing impaired adolescents from age group 10-19 years.
- Inclusion Criteria-
  - Adolescents (male-female) of 10-19 years of their chronological age with hearing and visual impairment
  - Adolescents pursuing their education in regular mode of education from C.B.S.E and S.E.B.A board
  - Adolescents from Kamrup (Metro) district
- Exclusion Criteria-
  - Adolescents pursuing their education in regular mode of education from I.C.S.E board
- Sampling technique-Purposive sampling technique was used in the study
- Tools-
  1. Family Environment Scale by Dr Sanjay Vohra. It contains 98 items categorized into seven dimensions namely-competitive framework, cohesion, expressiveness, independence, moral orientation, organization and recreational orientation.
  2. Mental Health Battery by Arun Kumar Singh, PhD and Alpana Sen Gupta, Ph.D. It has six indices-emotional stability, over-all adjustment, autonomy, security-insecurity, self-concept and intelligence.
- Procedure- After taking the consent from the school authorities and the participants, data was collected. The data was collected using the appropriate tools.
- Statistical technique-The data was analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. Mean, standard deviation, t-test and person's coefficient of correlation was used to collect the data

DISCUSSION  
TABLE 1

Table showing the Mean, standard deviation and 't'-value of family environment scores of hearing impaired and visually impaired adolescents

	Impaired	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remarks
Competitive Framework	Hearing	50	10.36	1.699	.280	.881	98	.380	Ns
	Visual	50	10.08	1.469					
Cohesion	Hearing	50	9.94	2.064	.420	1.008	98	.316	N s
	Visual	50	9.52	2.102					

Expressiveness	Hearing	50	8.76	1.975	-.460	-1.290	98	.200	Ns
	Visual	50	9.22	1.569					
Independence	Hearing	50	8.34	1.847	-.220	-.636	98	.527	Ns
	Visual	50	8.56	1.606					
Moral Orientation	Hearing	50	8.84	1.476	-.580	-1.906	98	.060	Ns
	Visual	50	9.42	1.566					
Organization	Hearing	50	9.96	2.010	.100	.271	98	.787	Ns
	Visual	50	9.86	1.666					
Recreational Orientation	Hearing	50	6.94	1.671	.320	1.009	98	.316	Ns
	Visual	50	6.62	1.497					
Total Family Environment	Hearing	50	63.14	6.584	-.140	-.119	98	.906	Ns
	Visual	50	63.28	5.091					

Significant level is at \*P<0.05,\*\* P<0.01, NS = Not significant

From table 1 it was observed that hearing impaired and visual impaired adolescents did not differ significantly in any dimensions of family environment. Thus, the hypothesis “There will be significant difference in the family environment of hearing and visually impaired adolescents” is rejected.

TABLE 2

Table showing the Mean, standard deviation and ‘t’-value of mental health scores of hearing impaired and visually impaired adolescents

Impaired	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed -P value)	Remarks
Hearing	50	69.10	8.011	-8.740	-5.969	98	.000	**
Visual	50	77.84	6.560					

Significant level is at \*P<0.05, \*\* P<0.01, NS = Not significant

From table 2 it was found that the mean of visually impaired adolescents which was (M=77.84) was high as compared to the mean of hearing impaired adolescents (M=69.10). The standard



deviation in case of visually impaired adolescents was 6.560 and in case of hearing impaired adolescents it was 8.011. The “t” value obtained is -5.969 (P=0.000) which is significant at 0.01 level. Therefore, the hypothesis “There will be significant difference between hearing and visually impaired adolescents in regards to mental health” is accepted.

TABLE 3

Table showing the correlation between mental health and family environment of visually impaired adolescents (N=50)

	MEAN	SD	Pearson r
Total Family Environment	63.14	6.584	.196
Competitive Framework	10.36	1.699	.252
Cohesion	9.94	2.064	.257
Expressiveness	8.76	1.975	.112
Independence	8.34	1.847	.112
Moral Orientation	8.84	1.476	-0.97
Organization	9.96	2.010	2.92*
Recreational Orientation	6.94	1.671	-.326*

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From table 3 it was found that the relationship between mental health and organization (r=2.92) is positively correlated which is significant at 0.05 level. Recreational orientation (r=-.326) shows the significant relationship at 0.05 level but it is negatively correlated. The dimensions of family environment are positively correlated with mental health except the dimension of moral

orientation and recreational orientation. Therefore, the hypothesis “There will be significant relationship between mental health and family environment of visually impaired adolescents” is accepted only for the dimension organization and recreational orientation.

TABLE 4

Table showing the correlation between mental health and family environment of hearing impaired adolescents (N=50)

	Mean	SD	Pearson r
Total Family Environment	63.28	5.091	-.022
Competitive Framework	10.08	1.469	-.219
Cohesion	9.52	2.102	.012
Expressiveness	9.22	1.569	.003
Independence	8.56	1.606	-.28
Moral Orientation	9.42	1.566	.052
Organization	9.86	1.666	.058
Recreational Orientation	6.62	1.497	.031

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From table 4 it was found that there is no significant correlation between mental health and the dimensions of family environment. The dimensions of family environment are positively correlated with mental health except the dimension of competitive Framework ( $r=-0.219$ ) and independence ( $r=-0.28$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis “There will be significant relationship between mental health and family environment of hearing impaired adolescents” is rejected.

TABLE 5

Table showing the correlation of mental health and family environment of total visual and hearing impaired adolescents

	Mean	Std. Deviation	r
Family environment	63.21	5.856	.101
Competitive Framework	10.22	1.586	.003
Cohesion	9.73	2.083	.071
Expressiveness	8.99	1.789	.126
Independence	8.45	1.725	.079
Moral Orientation	9.13	1.542	.075
Organization	9.91	1.837	.155
Recreational Orientation	6.78	1.586	-.201*

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From table 5 it was found that the relationship between mental health and recreational orientation ( $r=-.201$ ) shows significant relationship at 0.05 level but it is negatively correlated.

The dimensions of family environment are positively correlated with mental health except the dimension of recreational orientation. Therefore, the hypothesis “There will be significant relationship between mental health and family environment of total hearing and visually impaired adolescents” is accepted only for the dimension recreational orientation.

## DISCUSSION

The aim of this research was to see the effect of family environment and parent child relationship on mental health of hearing impaired and visually impaired adolescent. It is very crucial to know about the family environment and parent child relationship when it comes to understand the mental health of hearing impaired and visually impaired adolescents. Family is the first and most unique social institution and the relationship with parents affects the health and satisfaction of members of family.

From table 1 it was observed that hearing impaired and visual impaired adolescents did not differ significantly in any dimensions of family environment.

From table 2 it was seen that the mean of visually impaired adolescents which was ( $M=77.84$ ) was high as compared to the mean of hearing impaired adolescents ( $M=69.10$ ). The standard deviation in case of visually impaired adolescents was 6.560 and in case of hearing impaired adolescents it was 8.011. The “t” value obtained is -5.969 ( $P=0.000$ ) which is significant at 0.01 level. The mean values show that visually impaired adolescents have significantly more mental health than hearing impaired adolescents. The reason for this maybe because as visually impaired



cannot see so the issues in the environment do not affect them much but hearing impaired adolescents can see those issues so it might affect their mental health.

From table 3 it was found that the relationship between mental health and organization ( $r=2.92$ ) is positively correlated which is significant at 0.05 level. Recreational orientation ( $r=-.326$ ) shows the significant relationship at 0.05 level but it is negatively correlated. The dimensions of family environment are positively correlated with mental health except the dimension of moral orientation and recreational orientation. If rules and regulations to do different tasks are given to the adolescents who are visually impaired, then it will facilitate the mental health of the adolescent. However, certain recreational activities to relax themselves in their spare time like watching television, going for campaigning or other sport activities do not have any effect on their mental health because as they cannot see such activities so therefore it does not help in strengthening their mental health.

From table 4 it was found that there is no significant correlation between mental health and the dimensions of family environment. The dimensions of family environment are positively correlated with mental health except the dimension of competitive framework ( $r=-.219$ ) and independence ( $r=-.28$ ). This means there is no significant relationship between mental health and family environment of hearing impaired adolescents.

From table 5 it was found that the relationship between mental health and recreational orientation ( $r=-.201$ ) shows significant relationship at 0.05 level but it is negatively correlated. The dimensions of family environment are positively correlated with mental health except the dimension of recreational orientation. There are certain activities to relax themselves which may not be possible for hearing and visually impaired adolescent to enjoy in their life. So, although the mental health is appropriate but it might not help to develop the mental health of the adolescents.

### Major findings-

- There is no significant difference in the family environment of hearing and visually impaired adolescents.
- There is significant difference between hearing and visually impaired adolescents in regards to mental health.
- There is significant relationship between mental health and family environment of visually impaired adolescents only for the dimension of organization and recreational orientation.
- There is no significant relationship between mental health and family environment of hearing impaired adolescents.
- There is significant relationship between mental health and family environment of total hearing and visually impaired adolescents only for the dimension of recreational orientation.

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## CONCLUSION

In order to improve the mental health of adolescent, it is important to identify the relationship of family environment which might facilitate the mental health of children. It is important for the family to provide them such type of environment which will lead to a positive mental health so that they can amend themselves in today's society by overcoming the various obstacles laid before them in their life.

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