

## Problems Faced by The Teachers Engaged in Special and Integrated Schools for Hearing Impaired Children

\*Swaha Bhattacharya \*\*Monimala Mukherjee

### Abstract

*Hearing impairment is a generic term including both deaf and hard of hearing which refers to persons with any type or degree of hearing loss that causes difficulty in many cases. Hearing impairment is a permanent hearing loss or decrease in hearing that is so significant which negatively affects a child's performance in school or ability to learn. The aim of the present investigation is to study the problems of hearing impaired children as perceived by the teachers of integrated and special school. Accordingly, a group of 40 (20 from Integrated and 20 from Special school) teachers were selected as sample in this investigation. General Information Schedule and Perceived Problem of Hearing Impaired Children Questionnaire were used as tools in this investigation. The findings reveal that communication, lack of accurate information, attendance are the main reasons behind the difference between the two groups of teachers engaged in integrated and special schools for hearing impaired children. Measures may be taken to reduce the problems as*

### **Introduction :**

Hearing impairment in children does not only make it difficult for them to communicate with other people but it also slows down their learning. Hearing is what keeps us in touch with our world. It plays a significant role in expressing and receiving language. Hearing loss creates problems in how an individual expresses and receives language which in turn causing social, communication, and educational problems (Hall et al., 2001). Educators therefore need to consider the short and long term effects of how hearing loss impairs a person's ability to understand spoken language when developing their programs. Teachers need to make special considerations when teaching with the hearing impaired children.

It is commonly held that placing disabled children in special schools leads to their segregation from their non-disabled counterparts, which in turn, can isolate them from day-to-day experiences with other

children, while integrating them into regular schools which will help them to achieve their maximum potential in a more favourable educational and social environment. Integration is an ongoing process of learning to live together, and it also involves increasing knowledge about self and others. For deaf children, the question of integration is more complex than it usually appears. An integrated educational programme with no special methods, prepares the child for a life in a hearing community (Webster and Ellwood, 1985). It is said that integration is the way to provide deaf children with what they cannot gain from their deaf environmental experiences. Social, business and professional contacts in life cannot be fully achieved without effective language and communication skills (Blumberg, 1973). According to Dalvi (1992) success or failure of an hearing impaired child initially depends not so much on whether the child is severely or profoundly deaf, as on his level of intelligence, ability to lip-read, his

language development, the help and training he gets from his parents and his special school, and the availability of a resource teacher to guide him in studies in the regular school curriculum. Integration thus involves the efforts of many people working as a team, such as teachers of regular schools and special schools, parents of the deaf child, other specialists like the resource teacher, social worker, audiologist and speech therapist. The identification, development and co-ordination of this team effort are both a challenge and a critical requirement in meeting the needs of deaf children (La Porta et al, 1978). According to Musselman et al. (1996), although not all results are equally negative, the preponderance of the evidence supports the conclusion that special schools for the deaf foster socio-emotional growth better than mainstream schools. Deaf students in mainstream schools report feeling socially isolated and lonely and have lower self-esteem than those students in special schools. Considering the above the present investigation has been designed to study the problems of hearing impaired children as perceived by the teachers of integrated and special school.

**Objective**

To study the problems faced by the teachers engaged in Special and Integrated School for taking care of hearing impaired children.

**Hypothesis**

Teachers engaged in Special and Integrated School differ significantly in terms of problems faced by them for taking care of hearing impaired children.

**Study Area and Subjects**

A group of 40 teachers (20 from Special School and 20 from Integrated School) engaged in different Special and Integrated Schools of Kolkata and Howrah Districts were selected as

sample in this investigation. The pertinent characteristics of the subjects are :

- a) Age range : 35 to 50 years
- b) Educational qualification : At least graduate with B.Ed in special education.
- c) Duration of service : At least three years.

**TOOLS USED**

- (1) General Information Schedule. It consists of items like name, age, address, education, marital status, duration of service etc.
- (2) Perceived problem of hearing impaired children questionnaire

It consists of 15 statements answerable in a three point scale viz; Yes (Y), Sometimes (S) and No (N) in connection with communication, infrastructural facilities, attendance, accurate information, curriculum, emotional instability etc.

**Administration, Scoring and Statistical Treatment**

General Information Schedule and Perceived problem of hearing impaired children questionnaire were administered to a group of 40 teachers engaged in Special and Integrated school by giving proper instruction. Data were collected and properly scrutinized. Frequency and percentages were calculated for General Information Schedule and also for Perceived Problem of Hearing Impaired Children Questionnaire. Comparisons were made by applying Chi-square test.

**Results and Interpretation**

The General Characteristic data inserted in Table – 1 reveals the characteristic features of the subjects under study.

**Table – 1: General Characteristic features of the teachers engaged in Special and Integrated School.**

General Characteristic Features	Teachers of Special school (N=20)		Teachers of Integrated school (N=20)	
	f	%	f	%
1. Age in years (mode value)	39 years		42 years	
3. Education				
(a) B.A/ B.SC & B.ED in special education	08	40	11	55
(b) M.A/ M.SC & B.ED in special education	12	60	09	45
4. Marital Status				
(A) Married	16	80	14	70
(b) Unmarried	4	20	6	30
5. Duration of Service				
(a) Below 10 years	7	35	9	45
(b) Above 10 years	13	65	11	55

Data inserted in Table – 2 reveals the problems faced by the teachers engaged in special school who are taking care of hearing impaired child. 85% teachers opined that they face problems due to lack of infrastructural facilities regarding proper hearing aids and sound proof rooms. 80% of them have expressed about the necessity of more advanced technologies and aids for hearing impaired children. Less emotional stability, bullied by the normal children are some of the remarkable problems faced by the teachers engaged in special school (70%). They gave emphasis on appointment of psychologists, audiologists and therapists for guiding both the hearing impaired children and their parents about the problems so that they can adjust with the school environment. Social structure for the hearing impaired children is also an important factor in this regard. Besides this, 60% teachers have expressed that due to lack of accurate information about the problems of hearing impaired children sometimes creates problem to cope with properly.

Table – 2: Problem faced by the teachers engaged in Special School

Sl no.	STATEMENTS	Problems faced by the teachers of special school (N=20)					
		Yes		Sometimes		No	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	Difficult to introduce new lessons in the class.	3	15	3	15	14	70
2.	Difficult to communicate with hearing impaired children.	3	15	3	15	14	70
3.	Difficult to handle the student properly.	10	50	5	25	5	25
4.	Lack of infrastructural facilities which creates problem.	17	85	3	15	0	0
5.	Bullied by normal children is difficult to control.	14	70	3	15	3	15
6.	Hearing impaired children always create disturbances.	3	15	3	15	14	70
7.	Inadequate information about hearing impaired children creates confusion.	12	60	4	20	4	20
8.	Faces problems for adjustment between normal and hearing impaired children.	8	40	8	40	4	20
9.	Faces problems due to lack of infrastructural facilities.	16	80	4	20	0	0
10.	Poor attendance in the class.	4	20	4	20	12	60
11.	Lack of cooperation of parents.	10	50	5	25	5	25
12.	Faces problem due to coping.	12	60	5	25	3	15
13.	Lack of emotional stability which creates problem.	14	70	3	15	3	15
14.	Inadequacy of involvement of other professionals for betterment.	14	70	3	15	3	15
15.	Inadequate social structures negatively affect the learning process.	14	70	3	15	3	15

Data inserted in Table – 3 reveals the problems faced by the teachers engaged in integrated school. 85% of them gave emphasis mainly on poor infrastructural facilities viz., proper hearing aids, sound proof rooms etc. 70% teachers opined that they face problems due to bullied by normal children. Sometimes, it is very difficult to communicate properly. 60% of them have expressed about the necessity of more advanced technologies and aids of hearing impaired. Adjustment problem and poor attendance in class are also the significant factors which creates problem for proper handling the hearing impaired children.

Table – 3: Problem faced by the teachers engaged in Integrated School

Sl no	STATEMENTS	Problems faced by the teachers of integrated school (N=20)					
		Yes		Sometimes		No	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	Difficult to introduce new lessons in the class.	10	50	5	25	5	25
2.	Difficult to communicate with hearing impaired children.	10	50	5	25	5	25
3.	Difficult to handle the student properly.	8	40	8	40	4	20
4.	Lack of infrastructural facilities which creates problem.	17	85	3	15	0	0
5.	Bullyed by normal children is difficult to control.	14	70	3	15	3	15
6.	Hearing impaired children always create disturbances.	7	35	7	35	6	30
7.	Inadequate information about hearing impaired children creates confusion.	6	30	6	30	8	40
8.	Faces problems for adjustment between normal and hearing impaired children.	10	50	5	25	5	25
9.	Faces problems due to lack of infrastructural facilities.	12	60	6	30	2	10
10.	Poor attendance in the class.	10	50	5	25	5	25
11.	Lack of cooperation of parents.	6	30	10	50	4	20
12.	Faces problem due to coping.	8	40	8	40	4	20
13.	Lack of emotional stability which creates problem.	8	40	8	40	4	20
14.	Inadequacy of involvement of other professionals for betterment.	10	50	8	40	2	10
15.	Inadequate social structures negatively affect the learning process.	10	50	6	30	4	20

When comparison was made between these two groups of teachers engaged in Special and Integrated school in terms of problems faced by them to handle the hearing impaired children, significance difference was observed for the item number 1 – (difficult to introduce new lessons in the class), 2 – (difficult to communicate with hearing impaired children), 6 – (hearing impaired children always creates disturbances), 7 – (inadequate information about hearing impaired children which creates problems) and 10 – (poor attendance in the class) respectively. On the contrary, teachers engaged in both special and integrated schools face some common problems, viz; poor infrastructural facilities, lack of advancement of modern technologies etc. Thus the Hypothesis,

which states, "Teachers engaged in Special and Integrated School differs significantly in terms of problems faced by them for taking care of hearing impaired children" - is accepted for item nos. 1, 2, 6, 7 and 10 and is rejected for other statements.

**Table – 4: Comparison between perceived problems of teachers engaged in Special and Integrated School for taking care of hearing impaired children.**

Item Numbers	Chi – square value	Item Numbers	Chi – square value
1.	8.52**	9.	2.06*
2.	8.52**	10.	5.54**
3.	1.02*	11.	2.76*
4.	0.00*	12.	1.64*
5.	0.00*	13.	4.06*
6.	6.40**	14.	3.14*
7.	3.74**	15.	1.80*
8.	1.02*		

\* Difference is insignificant

\*\* $p < 0.05$

### Major Findings

1. Teachers of both Special and Integrated schools have faced some common problems to take care of hearing impaired children properly.
2. The problems are mainly due to poor infrastructural facilities viz., proper hearing aids, sound proof rooms, lack of advancement of modern technologies etc.
3. Teachers of Special school gave much emphasis on appointment of psychologists, audiologists and therapists for guiding both the hearing impaired children and also for their parents so that they are able to adjust with school environment properly.
4. According to the teachers of integrated school it is very difficult to communicate with the children in the class mainly because hearing impaired children are bullied by the normal

children. They also face difficulty to maintain the curriculum properly.

5. Comparative picture reveals significant difference between these two groups for item no 1, 2, 6, 7 and 10 respectively.

### Concluding Remarks

In conclusion it can be said that teachers engaged in special and integrated school have expressed some problems which they face to take care of hearing impaired children. Teachers of special schools gave emphasis on infrastructural facilities viz., proper hearing aids, sound proof rooms and necessity for more advanced technologies and aids. On the other hand teachers engaged in integrated school gave emphasis on communication problem. Attendance is also an important factor in this regard. To reduce the problem appointment of psychologists, audiologists and therapists are required for

guiding not only for the children but also for their parents so that they can understand the problem properly which will ultimately help to adjust with the school environment and teachers are able to do their duties properly.

Webster A, Ellwood J. (1985.) The Hearing impaired Child in the Ordinary School. London : Croom Helm.

### References

- Blumberg C. (1973) A school for the Deaf Facilities Integration. In: Northcott W (Ed), The Hearing Impaired Child in a Regular Classroom: Pre-school, Elementary and Secondary Years. Washington: The Alexander Graham Bell's Association For Deaf.
- Dalvi K. (1992) The Study of the Experiments Done In Oral Education of Deaf Children Through the Conversational Method. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Mumbai,
- Hall, B. J., Oyer, H. J. and Haas, W. H. (2001). Speech Language & Hearing Disorders: A guide for the teacher (3rd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- La Porta M., (1978). Mainstreaming Pre-schoolers: Children with Hearing Impairment- A Guide for Teachers, Parents and Others who Work with Hearing Impaired Pre-schoolers. Washington : US Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Human Development Services.
- Musselman, C., Mootilal, A., and MacKay, S. (1996). The social adjustment of deaf adolescents in segregated, partially integrated, and mainstreamed settings. Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education, 1, 52-63.

---

\*Associate Professor, Department of Applied Psychology, University of Calcutta

\*\*Lecturer, Department of Psychology, Women's College, Calcutta.

