SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION
CHAPTER - V

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

This study “Social Assessment of Hearing Impaired Students” was undertaken by the researcher by administering questionnaire in Indian Sign Language, to 555 students from Nine Higher Secondary Schools for the Deaf, in Tamil Nadu.

Karl Pearson’s Chi-Square Test, ANOVA Test, Multiple Regression Analysis and Inter Correlation Matrix, were used to identify the influence of personal data over the key variables: Social Adjustment, Self-Image and Emotional Adjustment.

The findings of the study are summarized in this chapter as follows:

PART – A: PERSONAL PROFILE

- Majority of the Hearing Impaired students (80.2%) are aged around 19 years.
- Boys constitute more percentage of respondents (70.5%).
- Most of the students (72.3%) are studying in Class XI & Class XII.
- More than half of the total respondents’ (58.7%) fathers work as day labourers.
- A whopping majority of the respondents’ (89%) parents live together.
- Almost an equal percentage of respondents (35.9%) are first born compared to those born second.
- A little over half of the Hearing Impaired students (53.9%) used gestures combined with sounds in local language Tamil to communicate at home with their family members.
- Almost Three quarters of the respondents (74.6%) witness arguments/fights between parents.
- A little over half of the Hearing Impaired respondents (57.8%) are informed of the happenings in the family by the family members.
A good number of the respondents’ (79.5%) parents spend time with them on a regular basis.

Majority of the respondents (89%) participate in social gatherings / family functions.

Most of the respondents (90.3%) have siblings in their families.

A little less than half of the sample respondents (41%) of Hearing Impaired students use the local language Tamil, by means of short words and sounds, to communicate with siblings.

Almost Three quarters of the Respondents (74.4%) face disturbances with siblings.

Majority of respondents (95.7%) are interested in spiritual matters.

A little over Three Quarters of Respondents (79.8%) believe in morality.

Around three quarters of the Hearing Impaired students (75.3%) have the habit of reading newspaper.

Over one quarter of the Respondents (37.8%) have friends in numbers ranging anywhere from 1 to 5.

A majority of Hearing Impaired students (43.8%) communicate via signs with their friends.

An overwhelming majority of Respondents (95.9%) prefer group play to solitary play.

The Respondents were unanimous in their group study preferences.

A good majority of respondents (61.3%) prefer to study in groups as they can sign to their friends and share a language and have fun together while studying.

A huge majority of Hearing Impaired students (97.1%) state positively their dependency upon others.

Over half of the sample respondents (68.8%) state that they tend to compare themselves with Hearing people.

A little less than three quarters of the respondents (72.8%) state that they get ridiculed / mocked for their hearing disability.

Majority of respondents (82.2%) are average performers in academics.

Huge majority of respondents (91%) have aspirations in life.

Vast majority of respondents (87.9%) have role models.

Sports are special skills for over three fourths of respondents (76.8%).
Almost half of the total respondents (48.3%) communicate in sign with their friends at school.  
Almost three fourths of respondents (74.4%) participate in extracurricular activities.  
Playing is the main hobby for majority of respondents (63.8%).  
Almost half of the sample respondents (49.4%) maintain a satisfactory level of interaction with teachers.

PART – B: RATING OF KEY VARIABLES

Social Adjustment

More than half of the sample respondents (51.9%) have a low level of social adjustment.

Self Image

Majority of the respondents (54.7%) have less positive self image.

Emotional Adjustment

A little over half of the respondents (51.0%) show less positive emotional adjustment.
PART – C

TABLE NO: 96

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF HEARING IMPAIRED STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
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<th>S.No</th>
<th>Personal Variables</th>
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### TABLE NO: 97
FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH SELF IMAGE OF HEARING IMPAIRED STUDENTS

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## PART – E

### TABLE NO: 98

**FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT OF HEARING IMPAIRED STUDENTS**

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<td>Class of Study</td>
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<td>Birth Order</td>
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</tr>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Spiritual Interests</td>
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<td>Belief in Morality</td>
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<td>Special Skills</td>
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<td>Interaction with Teachers</td>
<td>Chi-Square</td>
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DISCUSSION

Some of the key points highlighted through the findings of the present study of Hearing Impaired students of Classes X, XI & XII, titled the “Social Assessment of Hearing Impaired Students”, are as follows:

- They witness arguments at home
- They face disturbances with their siblings
- They get ridiculed /mocked by others
- They prefer group play and are unanimous in their preference of group study
- They have special skills, are actively engaged in hobbies, and participate in extracurricular activities
- The marital status of parents affect the emotional adjustment of Hearing Impaired children
- They believe in morality, have role models and aspirations in life
- They have poor interaction with their teachers
- The father's occupation has played a role in the self image of the student

Among the above points, the researcher wishes to highlight a few points for discussion.

SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

*Students in Grade XII demonstrate less social adjustment than students in grade X.*

As children grow older, the way they adjust to society seems to change. In this study, it has been observed that as students get into the crucial grades such as Grade XII, they became less socially adjustable, possibly due to the pressures of the exams, catching up with the syllabus, and study demands, which may leave less time for social activities.

There may be various levels of complexity that the Deaf individuals experience as they enter adolescence. They may be engulfed by feelings of uncertainty of what is to meet them, after XIIth grade, overwhelmed as to what to pursue further, with limited options for education, and many more.
Witnessing arguments at home has shown to have negative effects in the social adjustment of the respondents.

Children tend to show symptoms of anxiety and depression when they witness turbulent situations at home. Though verbal arguments may not be heard by the Hearing Impaired adolescent, the scene surrounding an argument/fight can tend to get graphic and disturbing, in turn, making the child socially withdrawn and reticent, thereby affecting their social behaviour, stressing the importance of a calm and peaceful family atmosphere.

Izaguirre, A., & Calvete, E. (2015), have stated that exposure to any kind of domestic / violent issues, has damaging effects on children's emotional and behavioural problems and results in psychological and social problems.

The respondents' preferences for group play seems to play a key role in their social adjustment.

Respondents who prefer to play in groups are better adjusted socially than those who play on their own. Brice, P. J., & Strauss, G. (2016) reported through their review of factors associated in psycho social adaptation of deaf adolescents in a hearing world, that when Deaf youth have a group that they can identify with, and associate with, their adjustment is better.

Having a shared language also contributes to a healthy level of adjustment. Most commonly in special schools for Deaf, signed language is used to communicate. Deaf students in mainstream programs reported social isolation and loneliness and lower self-esteem than those students in special schools according to Nunes, T., Pretzlik, U., & Olsson, J. (2001), as they ventured out to study Deaf children's social relationships in mainstream schools.

SELF IMAGE

Hearing Impaired girl students seem to have lower self-image than boy students.

Gender differences play a major role in one's self-image. Girls to be on a step lower than boys is considered culturally appropriate and adherent, in India. Hearing
Impaired girls do tend to feel inferior to boys and given the limited opportunities to learn or to work, they portray less positive self-image. Most Deaf girls are not allowed to pursue higher education and most are not even allowed to go outside the house, owing to fears and apprehensions by the parents due to the hearing disability.

**Bat-Chava (1994)** in his research on group identification and self-esteem of deaf adults, argues that an individual’s self-image is often threatened by membership in a group of persons with a disability, or from a low-status minority.

*The first-born Hearing Impaired students have a lower self-image than those born second or third.*

Being born first in the family with a disability, may be one of the reasons for the respondent to wear a less positive self-image. Feeling incapable, isolated and unneeded, the Hearing Impaired adolescent might be reminded of his / her inability to fulfill the responsibilities as the eldest child in the family, especially if he/she has siblings that are hearing. They may compare themselves with their siblings in their accomplishments and achievements and also in the way they are treated at home by parents and relatives. There are also chances of them facing ridicule and mockery and that can hurt their self-image. The lack of communication or communication-lag may make them withdrawn.

*The Hearing Impaired students with more number of friends exhibit better self-image.*

The well-known proverb from 14th century, seems to be apt in this context. *The more the merrier.* The number of friends a Hearing Impaired student has, the better the self-image. More interaction, more communication and more sharing of experiences results in better "me".

Self-concept, Global self-worth, Self-esteem are all terms very closely associated with Self-image. **Van Gent et al., (2012)** found that signing in childhood and signing with peers predicted self-worth. When there is clear and easy communication, it has been found that self-concept develops with better quality of life. *(Deselle D D (1994) & Bat-Chava (1993))
EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

*Parents' marital status is a key factor in ensuring the Hearing-Impaired students' emotional adjustment.*

Whether the parents are separated or divorced or living together, impacts the child's emotional adjustment. A family is a whole unit with a structure following a set of rules, symbolic of oneness and togetherness. Family members such as the parents and children share feelings of belonging to one another. The significance of a close-knit family is vital to a healthy emotional adjustment. A family with parents living together and offering support to the Hearing Impaired child brings about better emotional adjustment.

*Love & Murdock (2004)* confirmed that parent-child attachment was a significant predictor of well-being in young adults, and *Cooper, Shaver, & Collins, (1998)* concluded through another study, that those from intact families were able to regulate their emotions better than those with insecure parent-attachments. This would probably hold true in the case of Hearing Impaired students too.

*The respondents' choice of group study and play resulted in an enhanced level of emotional adjustment.*

The homogenous group shares a common platform for participation and interaction. Students preferring to play in groups and study as a group exhibit better emotional adjustment, as there prevails a shared language and an avenue for shared experiences. The commonality that stems from an accessible linguistic environment, enhances bonding and the togetherness elicits better emotional adjustment.

In an analysis of deaf programs versus mainstream set ups, including numerous studies, *Musselman et al., (1996)* stated that there is substantial evidence supporting the conclusion that deaf-specific programs promote more successful socio emotional growth compared to mainstream schools.
Good interaction with teachers resulted in good emotional adjustment of Hearing-Impaired children.

A good level of daily interactions with teachers, receiving instruction, encouragement and commendation from them, play a key role in the emotional system of children.

Antia (1982) showed through her study on interactions of partially mainstreamed Hearing Impaired and hearing children in younger grades in five urban schools that Hearing Impaired children interacted less frequently with their peers and more frequently with the teachers than the hearing children, and additionally that Hearing Impaired children also interacted more frequently with children of their own category.

Examining the communication strategies used by deaf children in their social interaction with other deaf children, Preisler (1984) found that students with early sign language experience communicated more effectively than those with late sign language experience, who were orally trained. It was then that classroom teachers were suggested to reinforce in deaf students, positive feelings about themselves and the language.
SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the Researcher, with the experience of a Sign Language Interpreter, would like to put forward the following suggestions for the various stake holders connected with the Deaf scenario.

For Policies

- As students with hearing impairment are more of visual learners, the need is for specialized techniques in teaching. Concepts are driven home better through visual aids. Curriculum has to be visually-appealing, with pictures, images, live videos, tables, diagrams, etc.,

- Curriculum for Deaf students is presently the same as that of all students. This needs to be changed, as with auditory training, speech learning, lip-reading and vocational courses, emphasis should be on building a strong foundation on reading and writing skills, which may be time-consuming in the case of deaf children. Schools should be permitted to choose their own curriculum which allows them to pick up the academic subjects after a certain grade, once the literacy skills are worked up on and up to par.

- Adequate knowledge/ training in Indian Sign Language for teachers of Deaf, so that teacher-student interaction can be improved, and the subject content taught with better understanding of the learning modes of Deaf children.

- Indian Sign Language be made a medium of instruction for schools for Deaf so that children can have better learning opportunities.

- Promotion of Indian Sign Language / Training Centres, so that there is more awareness about the language and the need for the use of the language which could result in the involvement of the society in the lives of Deaf people.

- Many of the studies revealed that there is a lag in parent-child interaction. As parents play a vital role in the overall development of a child, Certificate Courses in Sign Language may be conducted for parents and siblings, to enable better family communications.
For Families

❖ Parents need not feel that it is the end of their lives or the end of their infant's life the moment they find out that the infant cannot hear. There is hope with Sign language and one is able to communicate everything that is communicated in a spoken language. With parental support, a deaf child can succeed in life on par with a hearing child.

❖ Parents need to seek all information regarding deafness and the options for communication and education and make informed decisions. Parents should not be biased about any particular mode of communication for a deaf child, but should strive to obtain clear and full information.

❖ Parents should make efforts to learn sign language irrespective of the communication option they choose. Sign language can be used with the child even if he/she uses hearing aids or is undergoing speech therapy or is a cochlear implantee.

❖ Parents should come to terms with their child's deafness and should strive to understand the culture, values and norms that surround it and not compare or expect the child to be like any other, but respect the uniqueness that it brings and support the diversity.

❖ *Parents could form support groups and keep up with technology for Deaf and the advancements in education technology, new findings from research studies, etc., and also share knowledge and information with newer and younger parents.

For Schools

❖ Quoting Albert Einstein, "Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school", Schools will need to evolve into those seats of learning for deaf children, more so, by imparting quality and accessible education.
Schools will need to put in the necessary time, efforts and training specifically to counter the learning/language challenges of deaf children.

Schools should have regular orientation programmes for teachers, ensuring proper qualification, and move away from the medical-deficit model of deafness, and adapt appropriate teaching techniques.

Teachers' goals of educating a deaf child must be to ensure age-appropriate literacy skills and learning for life, with developed social skills, healthy socio-emotional adjustment levels, positive self-image, and not just with the intent of passing out yet another deaf student to prove and add to one's own success rate.

An interactive and student-participatory classroom should be the goal of every teacher and education-policy formulation, to ensure learning by students and not just teaching alone by teachers.

**For Further Research**

- Studies may be conducted on social assessment of students with hearing impairment in younger grades.
- Comparative studies with introduction of Indian Sign Language (ISL) in preschools and ISL with late intervention may be undertaken.
- Studies to determine the most effective courses for tertiary education to enhance career opportunities for Deaf adults.
- Studies may be taken up on teachers of the Hearing Impaired children and their attitudes towards teaching Hearing Impaired children, problems encountered and coping strategies.
- Studies may be initiated on attitudes and experiences of parents of Hearing Impaired children and the problems encountered in their upbringing.
- Studies on the various aspects of the present day special education system and its efficacy thereof, could be undertaken.
- Impact of visual aids and Computer Assisted Learning could be researched upon.
- A study on Social assessment of adult Deaf could be a possible topic for future research.
- The role of Indian Sign language in Deaf education is a much needed research in order to use a scientific approach to formulate policies for education of Deaf.
SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION

Hearing Impaired children, being in the category of the "dis"abled"", are in need of some attention and a lot of social work intervention. Social workers, in the capacity of interpreters, facilitators, counselors, and advocates, are a key to the empowerment of Hearing Impaired persons. They have the ability to enrich the lives of Hearing Impaired persons. A few of the social work strategies are presented below:

- Indian Sign Language (ISL) Course to be included as part of Social Work Curriculum.
- Part of the curriculum for Social workers to include specifics on Disability Management of Hearing Impaired persons.
- For an effective client-worker relationship, the importance of communication cannot be stressed enough. Hence social work practice with Deaf persons requires a unique skill set such as communication mode, knowledge about the population, culture & technology, access to community resources, competencies, educational and communication options, psychosocial and developmental aspects of hearing loss.
- Awareness & Campaigns can be conducted by Social workers to bring about better and clearer understanding of the needs for equal access for Deaf community, effective education methods, employment opportunities, importance of sign language, and more.
- Social workers may adopt Group work strategies to motivate young children with hearing impairment and inspire them with learning & scholastic activities through communication in ISL, and enhance their quality of life.
- Social workers to employ counseling method for parents of deaf children on coping strategies, communication options for a deaf child, education choices, positive outlook and interaction through a common language.
- Social Workers equipped with diverse knowledge of the Deaf community, values & ethics, sign language skills, understanding of deaf cultural norms, can advocate
for the rights of Deaf persons and fight for equal access opportunities in all possible areas with the Government and be responsible for social action.

- Deaf parents of hearing children can also be counseled on parenting aspects and child rearing by Social workers skilled in Indian Sign Language.

- Support groups can be led by social workers and group activities can be held for parents of deaf children, to motivate the parents to keep up with the journey with their deaf child.

CONCLUSION

The importance of a stable family environment, close-knit interactions with siblings and family members, and free-flowing interactions with teachers at school, are some of the factors that have been evinced through the study of social and emotional adjustment of Hearing Impaired children and their self-image, who are studying in classes X - XII. As some of the factors originate at the family level, with adequate understanding and support of family members, the self-image of a deaf child can be enhanced, and socio-emotional adjustment levels can be improved. Communication in sign language, the unique language that deaf children associate themselves with, makes them complete with a wholesome identity. Family members and teachers play a vital role in contributing to this identity by using sign language to communicate with deaf children. It is essential to understand that deaf children can grow up to be successful adults, and be a part of the society and contribute to its growth, if they are given accessible education and empowerment through equal accessibility. The rating of the key variables indicates that their social adjustment, emotional adjustment and self-image are not up to the mark. Parents, teachers and the school administration, have to empower them jointly by taking note of the findings of the present research work.