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STRESS AND COPING BEHAVIOR AMONG HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN IN CHITTOOR DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to find out effect of stress and coping behavior on hearing impaired children. One hundred eight special children were randomly selected from various different schools in Chittoor district. Based on the class they are studying they were divided into three types - 6th class, 7th class and 8th class. Special children's Stress and coping scale inventories designed by V.S.Reddy (1999) were used. Findings revealed that if the students become more stressed they tend to adopt vigilant stress and coping style.

KEYWORDS

coping behavior, environmental stress, hearing impaired, visual.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is a common experience but one that is hard to define in specific terms. Many other words such as 'Anxiety' and 'Tension' seem to be interchangeable. The word 'Stress' originates from the physical sciences and means a 'constraining or impelling Force' (Concise Oxford Dictionary), an 'effort' or a 'demand upon energy'. In this sense, stress is maintained and breaking point is with-held. Too much stress and the wires will snap. Stress can be caused by physical demands (disease, exercise, temperature etc.,) or by environmental and social situations which are evaluated as potentially harmful, uncontrollable or exceeding our resources for coping.

Many different things can cause stress-from physical (such as fear, of something dangerous) to emotional (such as worry, over your family or job.) Identifying what may be causing you stress is often the first step in learning how to deal with your stress better. Some of the most common sources of stress are:

CAUSES OF STRESS

Survival Stress - You may have heard the phrase "fight or flight" before. This is a common response to danger in all people and animals. When you are afraid that someone or something may physically hurt you, your body naturally responds with a burst of energy so that you will be better able to survive the dangerous situation (fight) or escape it all together (flight). This is survival stress.

Internal Stress - Have you ever caught yourself worrying about things you can do nothing about or worrying for no reason at all? This is internal stress and it is one of the most important kinds of stress to understand and manage. Internal stress is when people make themselves stressed. This often happens when we worry about things we can't control, or put ourselves in situations we know will cause us stress. Some people become addicted to the kind of hurried, tense, lifestyle that results from being under stress. They even look for stressful situations and feel stress about things that aren't stressful.

Environmental Stress - This is a response to things around you that cause stress, such as noise, crowding, and pressure from work or family. Identifying these environmental stresses and learning to avoid them, or deal with them, will help lower your stress level.

Fatigue and Overwork - This kind of stress builds up over a long time and can take a hard toll on your body. It can be caused by working too much or too hard at your job(s), school, or home. It can also be caused by not knowing how to manage your time well or how to take time out for rest and relaxation. This can be one of the hardest kinds of stress to avoid because many people feel this is out of their control. Later in this course, we will show you that you DO have options and offer some useful tips for dealing with fatigue.

Visual, Hearing or Physical Limitations: Children who do not possess developmental or cognitive impairments but who are *visually impaired, hearing impaired or physically challenged* will understand, at their level of development, what is happening and may become frightened by the limitations their disability poses on them. In your explanations, be honest but reassuring. Safety and mobility are major concerns for students challenged by visual, hearing and physical impairments. As with all children, they need to know that they are going to be safe and that they can find a safe place in an emergency. Review safety plans and measures with them, provide lots of reassurance, and practice with them, if necessary. When explaining plans that may take them into unfamiliar territory. Provide very simple and explicit explanations. Students with visual impairments will need to have the area carefully described to them, while the students challenged by physical or hearing impairments may need visual aids as to what they have to do and where they have to go.

- **Vision-impaired:** The child with a visual impairment cannot pick up visual cues such as facial expressions. Use verbal cues to reinforce what you are feeling and seeing. Many children have seen video clips of the disaster or traumatic event and are talking about them. The vision-impaired children may need a verbal description to reinforce what they have heard about the events. Ask questions to clarify their understanding of what has happened. Children with visual impairments may have extraordinary concerns about their mobility and ability to move to safety during a crisis. Ask questions and give additional orientation and mobility training if needed.
- **Hearing Impaired:** Children who are hearing impaired will generally not be able to keep up with the fast talking adults during traumatic events. Caregivers will need to be aware of the child's frustration when trying to keep up with the conversation, if the child has sufficient hearing to participate in. Children who are unable to hear or lip-read will need interpretation. Not being able to understand will result in greater fear reactions. Children who are hearing impaired may not be familiar with all the new terminology.
- **Total Communication Students** it is important to have an indication near them. They need to use in describing or explaining the events that are occurring. Be aware of the language you use, be very concrete and check for understanding. Use visual materials in conjunction with any verbal or signed explanations. Know that someone will be there for them. For oral communicators, distance may be an issue as they may experience difficulty with lip reading. Darkness such as blackouts or disaster drills in areas with poor lighting, presents problems for total and oral communicators. In helping them understand that they are safe, that you are going to keep them safe, be sure and show them a flashlight and let them know where they are going to be kept and that they are a part of the safety plan and available for them in darkness.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hans Selye first introduced the concept of stress in to life science in 1936. He defined stress as "The force, pressure, or strain exerted upon a material object or person, which resists these forces and attempts to maintain its original state." Stress is ubiquitous in our society. It has become an integral part of everyday living. (Researchers on stress make it clear that, to enter in to the complex area of stress, especially in to the area of occupational stress, is very difficult). Stress is an unavoidable consequence of modern living. The growth of industries, pressure in the urban areas, quantitative growth in population and various problems in day-to-day life are some of the reasons for increase in stress. Stress is that has a direct bearing on emotions, thought process and physical conditions of a person.

Defined by Lazarus & Folkman 1984, it is the relationship between person and environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his simple one-way process since individuals can be cushioned in different ways and to different degrees depending on the range of psychosocial factors and mechanisms). In other words, stress is a complex variable resulting from interdependent processes including susceptibility and resistance, and influenced by mediating factors such as cognitive appraisal and coping strategies, which in turn affect the frequency, intensity and duration of psychological and Somatic responses.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Hearing impaired children form a considerable portion of humanity. So it is important to measure their behavior properly and correctly. Effective and efficient behavior of the hearing impaired children is very important to the society. The purpose is to examine the impact of class locality and gender on coping behavior of hearing impaired children. The article also aims at studying the relationship between class, locality and gender and the stress resulting from personal, health and motor problems of hearing impaired children. The study is confined to the hearing impaired children of chittoor district and is based on the class, locality and gender of the children.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the impact of class locality and gender on the sources of stress of hearing impaired children.
 2. To examine the impact of class locality and gender on coping behavior of hearing impaired children.
- Relevant data were collected and analyzed using relevant statistical procedures.

HYPOTHESES

1. There would be significant relationship between class, locality and gender on stress due to Health problems of hearing impaired children.
2. There would be significant relationship between class, locality and gender on stress due to Personal problems of hearing impaired children.
3. There would be significant relationship between class, locality and gender on stress due to Motor Problems of hearing impaired children.

METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE DESIGN

TABLE NO. 1: TOTAL RESPONDENTS

Grade of Class	Urban		Rural		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
6 th class	15	15	15	15	60
7 th class	15	15	15	15	60
8 th class	15	15	15	15	60
Total	45	45	45	45	180

Source: Primary Data

The study was conducted on a sample of 180 high school hearing impaired children (90 urban and 90 rural area children). Out of 90 urban children, 45 are male and 45 are female special education children. Out of 45 male children, 15 are from 6th class, 15 from the 7th class and 15 from 8th class. The same pattern was followed in the case of female subjects.

TOOLS USED

In order to realize the objectives of the study and to test the hypotheses that have been formulated, appropriate tools were chosen. Thus the study was carried out using the following tools:

[Stress and coping inventories designed by Reddy (1999) were administered (given) for the test-retest correlation is found to be (validity) 2.85.]

THE STRESS INVENTORY IS DIVIDED INTO 11 SUB-FACTORS, (VIZ)

1. Health 2. Personal 3. Motor 4. Emotional 5. Social 6. Cognitive 7. Language 8. Personality 9. Financial 10. School 11. Religious problems

By using the total score of the individual on this scale, the stress is measured. High score indicates high stress and low score indicates low stress. Coping inventory was also developed by V. Sreekanth Reddy (1999) with 30 items with (Yes and No responses) [the highest score is 60 and the lowest score is 0. A higher score indicates lower coping ability and a lower score indicates a higher coping ability]. Appropriate statistical analysis was applied to identify the trends in the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main objectives of this investigation were (1). To study the influence of class, locality and gender on the sources of stress of hearing impaired children. (2) To examine the influence of class locality and gender on the coping behavior of hearing impaired children.

Relevant data were collected and analyzed using relevant statistical procedures.

Hypotheses 1: There would be significant relationship between class, locality and gender on stress due to health problems of hearing impaired children.

TABLE 2: MEANS AND SDS OF SCORES ON STRESS DUE TO HEALTH PROBLEMS OF HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN

Grade of Class	Tools	Boys		Girls	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
6 th Class	Mean	21.33	30.27	33.67	30.73
	SD	3.55	9.92	7.19	7.07
7 th Class	Mean	25.07	29.27	27.47	33.27
	SD	8.46	6.93	10.06	6.61
8 th Class	Mean	22.60	29.60	27.33	37.80
	SD	7.26	9.02	7.98	12.21

Grand Means

Male = 25.62	Rural = 25.51	6 th Class = 29.00
Female = 31.71	Urban = 31.82	7 th Class = 27.68
		8 th Class = 29.30

An observation of Table-2 clearly shows that 8th class urban girls had obtained (37.80) indicating their stress due to health problems. The lowest mean was obtained by 6th class rural boys whose mean score is (21.33) indicating their low level of stress due to health problems. There are significant differences in stress levels between rural and urban boys and girls due to health problems.

GRAPH-1: GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF HEALTH PROBLEMS SCORES IN RELATION TO LOCALITY, GENDER AND CLASS

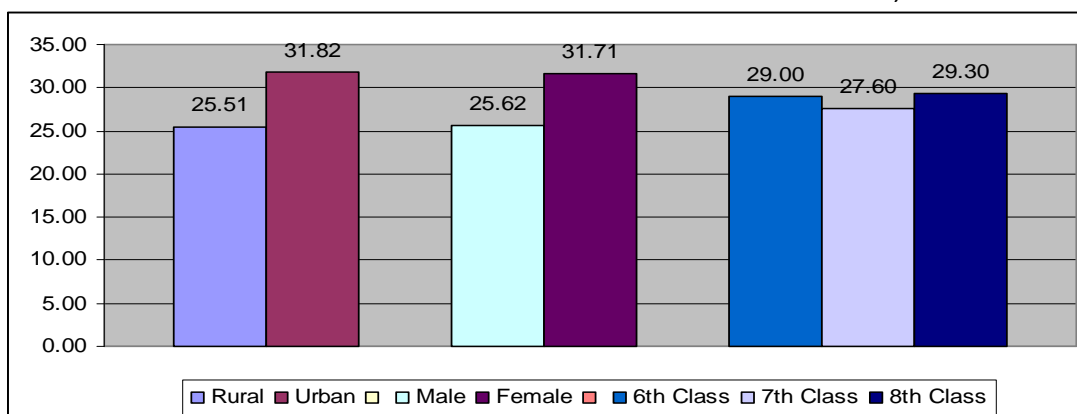


TABLE - 3: SUMMARY OF ANOVA OF SCORES ON STRESS DUE TO HEALTH PROBLEMS

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	'F' Values
Gender (A)	1290.689	1	1290.689	17.538**
Locality (B)	1400.022	1	1400.022	19.023**
Class (C)	9.733	2	4.867	0.066@
A x B	57.800	1	57.800	0.785@
B x C	254.044	2	127.022	1.726@
A x C	104.578	2	52.289	0.710@
A x B x C	524.933	2	262.467	3.566*
ERROR	12364.000	168	73.595	-
Total	16005.800	179	-	-

** - Significant at 0.01 level * - Significant at 0.05 level @ - Not significant

In order to test whether there is any significant gender difference among the subjects in their levels of stress? Due to health problems, Analysis of Variance was used and the results are presented in Table-3. The 'F' value of 17.538 is significant at 0.01 levels, indicating that there is significant effect of gender on the stress levels of students. Female students obtained a highest mean of 31.71 and male students obtained a lowest mean of 25.62 indicating that female students are facing more stress due to health problems. [Crnic & Low (2002) Hintermair (2006) Lederberg & Everhart, (2000)].

The 'F' value of 19.023 is significant at 0.01 levels, indicating that there is significant effect of locality on the stress levels of students. Urban students obtained a higher mean of 31.82 and rural students obtained lower mean of 25.51 indicating that urban students are facing more stress due to health problems. [Skinner AC, Slifkin RT (2007)].

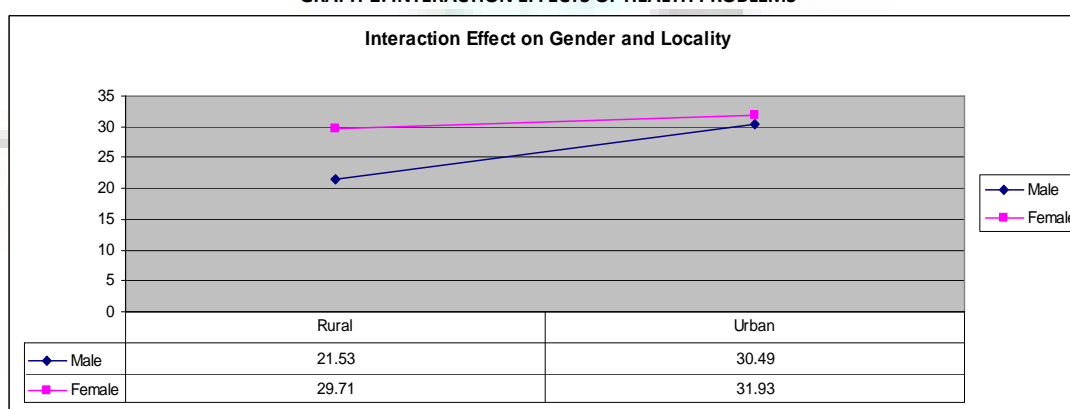
As for the effect of class of the subjects on their levels of stress, 'F' value of 0.066 is not significant indicating that class of the students has no significant influence on stress.

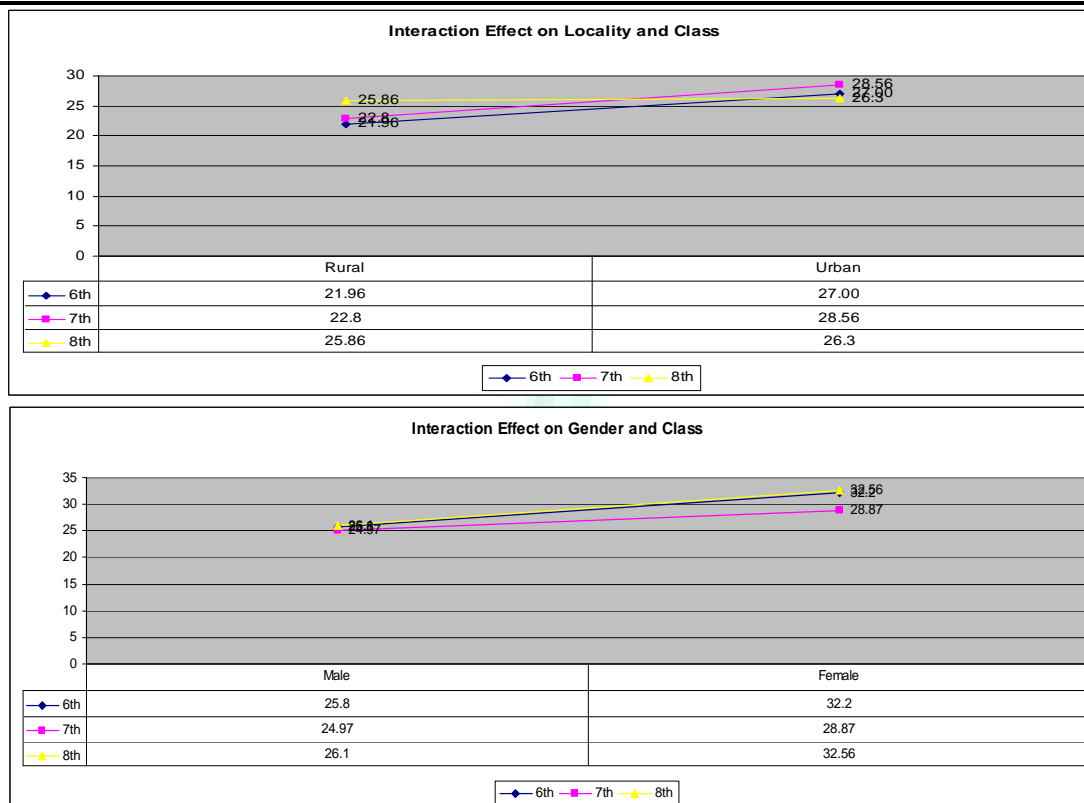
INTERACTION EFFECT

The 'F' value of 0.785 for the first order interaction between gender and locality, the 'F' value of 1.726 for locality and class, the 'F' value of 0.710 for gender and class are not significant, indicating that there is no interaction between gender and locality, locality and class and gender and class. The 'F' value of 3.566 for second order interaction between gender, locality and class is significant at 0.05 levels indicating that there is significant interaction between gender, locality and class. The interaction effects are represented graphically in **Graph-2. Hence the hypothesis 1 is accepted.**

The interaction effects are represented graphically in Graph-2, as some 'F' values are significant.

GRAPH-2: INTERACTION EFFECTS OF HEALTH PROBLEMS





Hypotheses 2: There would be no significant relationship between class, Locality and gender on stress to personal problems of hearing impaired children.

TABLE-4: MEANS AND SDS OF SCORES ON STRESS DUE TO PERSONAL PROBLEMS FOR HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN

Grade of Class	Tools	Boys		Girls	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
6 th Class	Mean	21.20	23.13	22.73	30.87
	SD	8.74	8.32	5.31	8.32
7 th Class	Mean	21.13	25.73	24.47	31.40
	SD	7.04	7.12	4.56	9.08
8 th Class	Mean	25.80	29.00	25.93	23.60
	SD	9.42	9.24	5.85	4.70

GRAND MEANS

Rural = 23.50	Male = 24.30	6 th Class = 24.48
Urban = 27.30	Female = 26.50	7 th Class = 25.68
		8 th Class = 26.00

An observation of Table-4 clearly shows that 6th class urban girls obtained a mean of (30.87), indicating a high level of stress due to **Personal Problems**. The lowest mean obtained by 7th class boys living in rural area, whose mean score is (21.13), indicates their low level of stress due to Personal problems. There are no significant differences in stress levels between rural and urban area boys and girls due to **Personal Problems**. Hence the **hypothesis 2** is rejected.

GRAPH-3: GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF PERSONAL PROBLEMS SCORES IN RELATION TO LOCALITY, GENDER AND CLASS FOR HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN

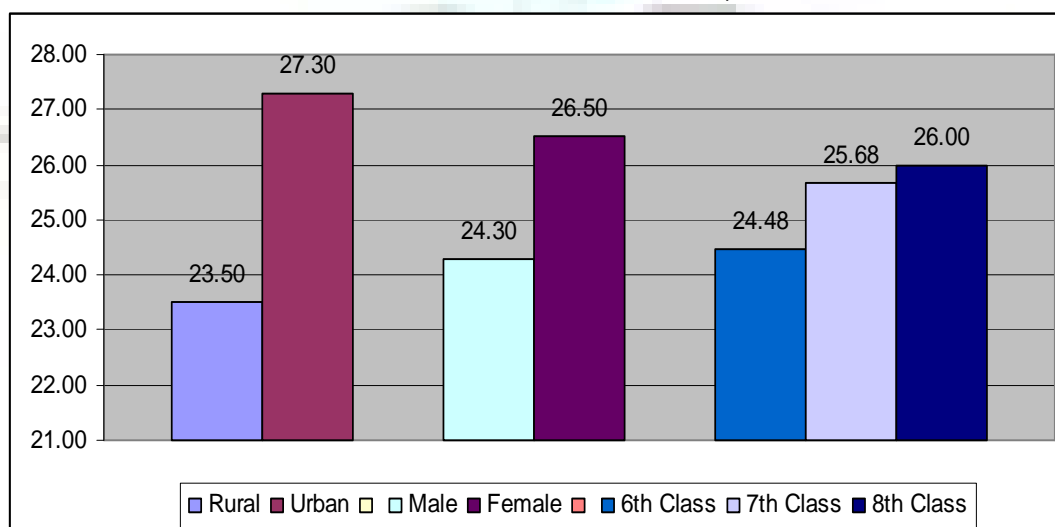


TABLE-5: SUMMARY OF ANOVA OF SCORES ON STRESS DUE TO PERSONAL PROBLEMS

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	'F' Values
Gender (A)	211.250	1	211.250	3.498@
Locality (B)	630.939	1	630.939	10.488**
Class (C)	83.200	2	41.600	6.689@
A x B	11.250	1	11.250	0.186@
B x C	250.711	2	125.356	2.0762
A x C	518.533	2	259.267	4.293**
A x B x C	268.133	2	134.067	2.220@
ERROR	10145.733	168	60.391	-
Total	12119.750	179	-	-

** - Significant at 0.01 level

@ - Not significant

In order to test whether there are any significant differences in the effect of gender of the subjects on their levels of stress due to personal problems, Analysis of Variance was used and the results are presented in Table-5. The 'F' value of 3.498 is not significant, indicating that there are no significant effects of gender on the stress levels of the students. Both male and female students are facing equal stress due to personal problems.

Concerning the effects of locality of the subjects on their levels of stress due to personal problems, the 'F' value of 10.448 is significant at 0.01 levels indicates that there is significant effect of locality on stress due to personal problems. Urban students obtained the highest mean of 27.30 and rural students obtained the lowest mean of 23.50 indicating that urban students are facing more stress due to personal problems.

Regarding the effect of class of the students on their levels of stress, the 'F' value of 0.689 is not significant, indicating that class of the students has no significant influence on stress. All 6th, 7th and 8th class students are facing stress due to personal problems.

INTERACTION EFFECT

The 'F' value of 0.186 for the first order interaction between gender and locality is not significant. The 'F' value of 2.076 for locality and class is not significant; the 'F' value of 4.293 for gender and class is significant, indicating that there is significant interaction between gender and class. The 'F' value of 2.220 for second order interaction between gender, locality and class is not significant indicating that there is no significant interaction between gender, locality and class. The interaction effect is represented graphically in Graph-4. **Hence the hypothesis 2 is rejected.**

GRAPH-4: INTERACTION EFFECTS ON PERSONAL PROBLEMS



TABLE- 6: MEANS AND SDS OF SCORES ON STRESS DUE TO MOTOR PROBLEMS

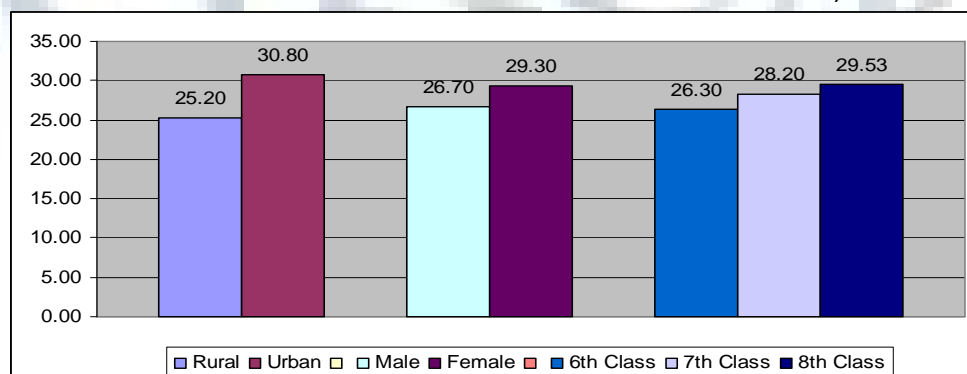
Grade of Class	Tools	Boys		Girls	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
6 th Class	Mean	20.87	29.80	26.07	28.60
	SD	6.59	6.29	6.07	6.82
7 th Class	Mean	25.93	30.80	26.67	29.47
	SD	7.93	7.06	5.17	9.44
8 th Class	Mean	24.80	28.33	26.93	38.07
	SD	6.42	8.07	6.99	8.12

GRAND MEANS

Rural = 25.20	Male = 29.30	6 th Class = 26.30
Urban = 30.80	Female = 26.30	7 th Class = 28.20
		8 th Class = 29.53

An observation of Table-6 clearly shows that 8th class urban girls living in urban area obtained a mean of (38.07) indicating a high level of stress due to motor Problems. The lowest mean was obtained by 6th class rural boys, whose mean score is (20.87), indicating their low level of stress due to motor Problems. There are no significant differences in stress between rural and urban area boys and girls due to **motor problems**.

GRAPH-5: GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF MOTOR PROBLEM SCORES IN RELATION TO LOCALITY, GENDER AND CLASS



Hypotheses 3: There would be significant relationship between class, locality and gender on stress due to Motor Problems of hearing impaired children.

TABLE-7: SUMMARY OF ANOVA OF SCORES ON STRESS DUE TO MOTOR PROBLEMS OF HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	'F' Values
Gender (A)	291.339	1	291.339	5.294*
Locality (B)	1428.050	1	1428.050	25.951**
Class (C)	310.411	2	155.206	2.820@
A x B	0.939	1	0.939	0.017@
B x C	92.100	2	46.050	0.837@
A x C	298.078	2	149.039	2.708@
A x B x C	385.278	2	192.639	3.501*
ERROR	9244.667	168	55.028	-
Total	12050.861	179	-	-

** - Significant at 0.01 level * - Significant at 0.05 level @ - Not significant

In order to test whether there are any significant effects of gender of the subjects in their levels of stress, the data were further subjected to Analysis of Variance and the results are presented in table- 7. The 'F' value of 5.294 is significant at 0.05 levels, indicating that there are significant effects of gender on the stress levels of the students. (Females obtained the highest mean of 29.30 and males obtained the lowest mean of 26.70).

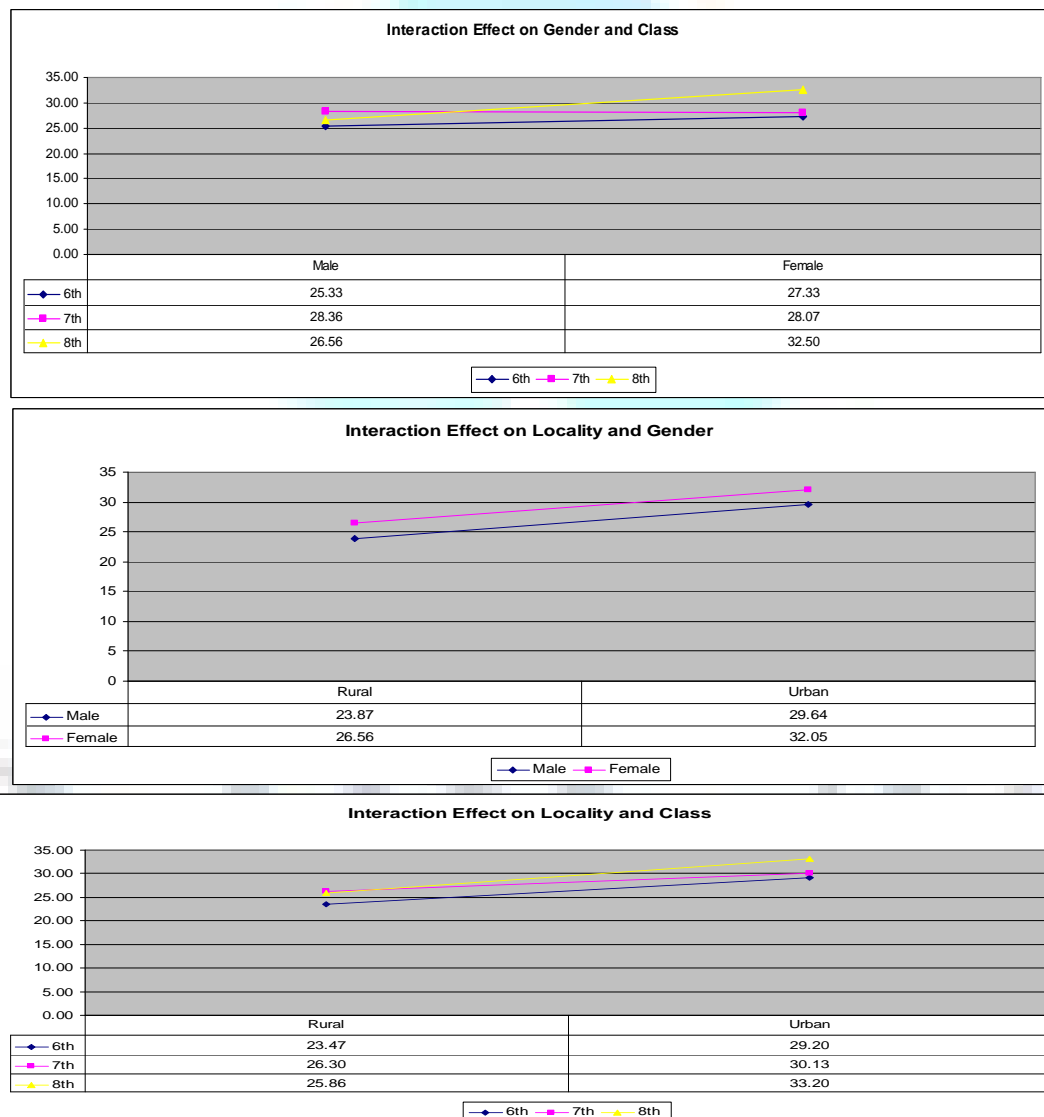
Regarding locality as a factor affecting the levels of stress due to motor problems, the 'F' value of 25.951 is significant at 0.01 levels indicating that there is significant effect of locality on stress levels among the subjects. Urban students obtained a high mean of 30.80 and rural students obtained lower mean of 25.20 indicating that urban students are facing more stress due to motor problems.

Respecting class as a factor affecting the stress levels of students the 'F' value of 2.820 is not significant; indicating that class of the students has no significant influence on stress. All 6th, 7th and 8th class students are facing equal stress due to motor problems.

INTERACTION EFFECT

The 'F' value of 0.017 for the first order interaction between gender and locality is not significant and the 'F' value of 0.837 for locality and class is not significant but the 'F' value of 2.708 for gender and class is significant, indicating that there is significant interaction between gender and class. The 'F' value of 3.501 for second order interaction between gender, locality and class is significant indicating that there is significant interaction between gender, locality and class. The interaction effects are represented graphically in Graph-6. **Hence hypothesis 3 accepted.**

GRAPH-6: INTERACTION EFFECTS ON MOTOR PROBLEMS



CONCLUSION

There are significant relationships between gender, locality and class differences on stress due to health problems of hearing impaired children. There are no significant relationships between Gender, Locality and class differences on stress due to Personal Problems of hearing impaired children. There are no significant relationships between gender locality and class differences on stress due to motor Problems of hearing impaired children.

The study of the problems of hearing impaired children can be extending to other district of Andhra Pradesh based on the findings of this study. Such a major research work will enable the government and the non governmental agencies working in this area to formulate policies for addressing the needs of hearing impaired children.

SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The above findings of the study can be considered opportunities for future theoretical and empirical research. The study is limited to examining the impact of stress on hearing impaired children below 12 years of age in chittoor district. Further research on hearing impaired adolescents, based on this study, will be highly fruitful. Future research should focus on thoroughly examining the attributes and dimensions of the quality of life of hearing impaired youngsters in rural and urban areas.

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