As early as 1910, Robert Koch, the renowned scientist who isolated the bacillus, head predicted that "man will one day fight noise as inexorably as he has fought cholera and the plague". His prediction has undoubtly come true. A report by the Centre on Youth and Social Development stated that 'Children grown in cacophony of noise could become mentally upset. Five out of one hundred deaf were victims of noise pollution'.

India possesses some of the noisiest cities in the world and now noise is inching its way into villages and rural areas where once there was peace and quiet and a stillness. For some reason Indians seem to be in love with noise. It, however, affects brain wave patterns, heart rates, blood glucose and galvanic skin response.

The literature related to the effects of noise is full of contradictory results. All the studies could be broadly classified under three categories - those indicating adverse impact of noise on work efficiency, those revealing that noise enhances work efficiency; and finally those claiming that noise does not affect work efficiency.

The noise literature is complicated by two issues. First, noise can be annoying not only because of the physical
qualities, but also because of its meaning to the listener. Second, people differ widely in what they define as 'noise' and in the way they respond to it. The noises experienced as most disturbing are usually the ones that carry information or meaning. The majority of these studies agree that meaningful noise and especially high intensity meaningful noise affects physiology apart from the work efficiency. It exerts its toll on human body because one never gets adapted to it. By contrast, meaningless noises are less disturbing because after some time it becomes a part of environment and the person gets adapted to it.

The developing countries like ours, which were relatively free from noise pollution are now badly coming in its grip. There are numerous sources of noise - industries, traffic, residential areas, community (religious and cultural), offices and so on. Because of this environmental noise, one cannot study; one cannot sleep comfortably; and one cannot talk to another person properly. In other words, one cannot concentrate on the jobs he is performing.

The review of the literature reveals that studies conducted previously did not take into account the key role played by individual's 'noise sensitivity'. The present investigation has tried to control this variable by equating
The subject on noise sensitivity level. Moreover, every possible effort has been made to overcome the shortcomings in the designs of earlier studies.

The author is grateful to Dr. I.S. Mubor, Professor of Psychology and Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences, M.D. University, Rohtak under whose supervision this work was planned and conducted.

I am also grateful to Professor Rajbir Singh, Head of the Department of Psychology for extending me the laboratory facilities.

The author expresses her gratitude to Dr. (Mrs.) Prabha Bhatia for her help and valuable suggestions during the course of this work.

The author is also thankful to all those who participated in the investigation as subjects.