

## **Preferred Means of Communication among the Deaf**

Khayria A Al-Abduljawad, PhD, Audiology\*

**Objective:** To describe the methods of communication preferred among hearing impaired students and their usage of hearing aids, the benefits of using hearing aids, their impact on verbal communication and other problems affecting academic skills.

**Setting:** Al-Amal Institutions for Deaf, the Arab Open University, the Culture Center for the Deaf, and the Sport Center for the Deaf in Riyadh.

**Design:** Questionnaire study.

**Method:** Two hundred and sixty volunteers participated in the study, 50% were boys and 50% were girls, their average age ranged from 12 to 24 years. The hearing loss of those students varies from moderate to profound bilateral sensorineural hearing loss (SNHL).

**Result:** The majority of the respondents indicated that they prefer to use total communication 138 (53%); while only 67 (25.8%) used sign language with some oral communication, and 55 (21%) prefer sign language besides oral communication. Use of hearing aids within the female student population is higher among young girls than it is among older girls.

**Conclusion:** In this study, we found that the majority of deaf individuals prefer the total communication method, while 67 prefer sign language alone and 55 prefer sign language besides oral communication. Only 174 (66.9%) of the participants reported using hearing aids.