

# Parents' Knowledge In Using Communication Approaches For Effective Interaction Among Their Deaf Children

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## Abstract

The study aimed to determine the communication approaches used by parents whose children were diagnosed with hearing impairment, and how these approaches can lead to effective interaction between them and their children. The meeting was their preferred source of information in which 95 percent of the information that they received was all about using sign language. They used this information to interact with their child and shared it with other members of the family and this information made them more knowledgeable about the preferred language of their child. They only have a moderate level of knowledge in using the manual approach and the most used was sign language. In terms of the new technology approach, 60 percent were using hearing aids. The problem encountered was insufficient knowledge of the manual approach and they were irritated with using the hearing aid. The other alternative approach used by parents was using pen and paper, home signs, and mobile phones through text message and messenger applications as a mode of communication. There was a significant relationship between the knowledge level of sign language and the usage level of new technology for effective interaction. There was also a significant relationship between the problem encountered in using the manual approach to the effective interaction between parents and their deaf children, while there was a highly significant relationship between the alternative approach and effective interaction, aside from that all variables didn't affect the effective interaction between parents and their deaf children.

**Keywords:** communication approaches, parents, effective, interactions, deaf children, knowledge, alternative, technology

## Introduction

According to the World Health Organization people worldwide have hearing impairment were children. Hearing impairment includes a range of difficulties with hearing, including deafness. Based on Sign Language Studies, 90 to 95 percent of deaf children nowadays are born to hearing parents. However, these hearing parents often find themselves unable

(2018), around 466 million impairment, wherein 34 million of these

to communicate with their children, and frequently decide to send them to special boarding schools, so the deaf is left without much knowledge (Levonian, 2013). Considering the scenario, this study was conducted to identify the mainstream

communication approaches concerning both manual and new technology approaches used by parents in dealing with their children who were diagnosed with hearing impairment.

It also aimed to discover new communication strategies used by parents for effective interaction between them and their deaf children.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were the following:

1. Describe the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents;
2. Determine the communication characteristics of the respondents;
3. To identify the knowledge and usage level of the parents about existing communication approaches in dealing with deaf children;
4. To identify the usage level of the parents on new technology approaches in communicating with deaf children;
5. To identify the problem encountered by parents in using manual and new technology communication approaches;
6. To determine the other alternative approaches used by parents in communicating with their children;
7. To determine the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics, communication characteristics, knowledge and usage level on using manual communication approaches, usage level on using new technology approaches, and other alternative approaches used by parents for effective interaction between parents and children;

### **Review of Related Literature**

Deafness and hearing loss have many causes and can occur at any age. People can go deaf suddenly as a complication, while about 3 in 1,000 babies are born deaf, often because of genetic factors. According to Kroll (2017), a

child born completely or very nearly deaf in both ears has higher odds of also being unable to speak. Sign Language Studies stated that 90 to 95 percent of deaf children nowadays are born to hearing parents. Hearing family members can learn to communicate effectively with their children with support from professionals and deaf or hard-of-hearing adults. Family involvement including effective family infant communication, along with timely early intervention, is the strongest predictor of early language development. Infants and toddlers who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families are extremely diverse and, services should be tailored to meet the needs of the children and the family's resources and priorities. There is little evidence to suggest the most effective ways to promote family involvement for all families or the best ways for families to learn how to communicate with their deaf or hard-of-hearing children (Lehrer, 2013).

### **Methodology**

The study used Qualitative Descriptive Research in presenting the communication approaches used by parents for effective interaction between them and their deaf child. Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents of the study which were the parents of deaf children in two public schools namely Talavera Central Elementary School and San Jose West Central School. All of the parents were asked if they were willing to be part of the study. A total of 20 respondents were considered. An interview schedule type of instrument was used to gather the needed data. All data from the interview schedule that fit the objectives used statistical tools such as percentage, frequency and mean to make the data more accurate and reliable.

## Results and Discussion

### I. Respondents' Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 showed the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics and it reveals

that the age of the respondents fell from the range of 20 to 59 years old, 65 percent were mothers, half of the respondents were high school graduates (50%), then 55 percent were blue collared and 60 percent of them have an income of at most of Php 5,000.

**Table 1.** Respondents' sociodemographic characteristics.

<b>SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC</b>	<b>FREQ.</b>	<b>%</b>
Age		
20-29	6	30
30-39	4	20
40-49	6	30
50-59	4	20

Table 1. Continued...

<b>SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC</b>	<b>FREQ.</b>	<b>%</b>
Sex		
Male	7	35
Female	13	65
Highest educational attain.		
Elem. Undergraduate	1	5
Elem. Graduate	1	5
HS undergraduate	3	15
HS graduate	10	50
College undergraduate	2	10
College graduate	3	15
Occupation		
None	8	40
Blue-collared	11	55
White-collared	1	5
Monthly income		
At most 5000	12	60
5001-10000	5	25
10001-20000	3	15

## 2. Respondents' Communication Characteristics

Table 2 presented the communication characteristics of the respondents. The preferred source of information of the respondents was meeting, the information

that they received is more on using sign language, they went to use this and other information to interact with their deaf child and this information made them more knowledgeable, especially about communication approaches.

**Table 2.** Respondents' communication characteristics.

COMM. CHARACTERISTICS	FREQ.	%
Source of information		
Meeting	19	95

Table 2 Continued...

COMM. CHARACTERISTICS	FREQ.	%
Information received		
Using sign-language	19	95
Child care	16	80
Using other comm.	18	90
Teaching GMRC	17	85
About modern tech.	12	60
Use of information received		
Child	20	100
Other parents	17	85
Family member	18	90
Other people	18	90
To get more information	10	50
Benefits of info received		
Increased knowledge	20	100
Shared to others	18	90
Help for easier comm.	20	100
Messages were helpful	18	90
Deeper comm knowledge	17	85

**3. Knowledge and usage level of manual approaches**

Table 3 presented the knowledge of the parents about the manual communication approach while table 4 presents the usage level of the parents about manual

communication. The respondents were moderately knowledgeable about sign language, finger spelling and cued speech and these three manual approaches were also the most used approaches by the respondents.

**Table 3.** Knowledge and usage level

<u>MANUAL APP.</u>	<u>MEAN INTERPRET.</u>	
<b>Knowledge level Sign</b>		
Language	1.95	Moderate
Lip Reading	1.25	Low
Fingerspelling	1.70	Moderate

Table 3. Continued...

<u>MANUAL APP.</u>	<u>MEAN INTERPRET.</u>	
<b>Knowledge level</b>		
Cued-speech	2.00	Moderate
<b>Usage level</b>		
Sign Language	1.00	Most used
Lip Reading	1.55	Less used
Fingerspelling	1.20	Most used
Cued-speech	1.05	Most used

**4. Usage level on new technology approaches.**

Table 5 present the respondents' usage level on new technology approaches.

Among the 20 respondents, only 12 of them agreed that they used the new technology approach, and all these 12 respondents used only a hearing aid.

Table 4. Usage level on new technology approach. NEW TECHNOLOGY FREQ.

<u>INTERPRET.</u>		
Hearing aid	12	most used

**5. Problem encountered using manual and new technology approach.**

Table 6 presented the problem encountered by parents using manual approaches while table 7 presented the problem encountered

using a new technology approach. In using the manual approach the most problem that they encountered was insufficient knowledge while in the new technology approach they found hearing aid irritating.

**Table 5.** Problem encountered

<b>PROBLEM ENCOUNTERED</b>	<b>FREQ.</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Manual</b>		
Insufficient knowledge	14	70
Rapid use of signs	1	5
Both	5	25
<b>New technology</b>		
Unsuitable size	3	25
Irritating/uncomfortable	10	83
Loud buzzing sound	4	33

### 6. Other alternative approaches

Table 8 presented the other alternative approaches used by parents in communicating with their deaf children. The most used

alternative approach was home signs or informal sign language invented by the parents.

**Table 6.** Alternative approaches

<b>ALTERNATIVE APP.</b>	<b>FREQ.</b>	<b>%</b>
Pen and paper	7	35
Phone/social media	5	25
Home signs	12	60

**7. Relationship between sociodemographics, communication characteristics, a problem encountered, knowledge and usage level on using manual communication approaches, usage level on using new technology approaches, and alternative approaches to the effective interaction between parents and deaf child.** In correlating these variables, the results were: There was a significant relationship between the problem encountered in using a manual approach to the effective interaction between parents and deaf children. There was a significant relationship between knowledge level on manual approaches to effective interaction, there was also a significant relationship

between usage level on new technology approach and effective interaction, while there was a highly significant relationship between the alternative approach and effective interaction, aside from that all variables didn't affect the effective interaction between parents and their deaf children.

### Summary

This study was conducted to determine the communication approaches used by parents whose children were diagnosed with hearing impairment, and how these approaches can lead to effective communication between them and their children. Among twenty (20)

respondents, the majority were between 20-29 and 40-49 years old. Almost all of them are mothers. Half of them were high school graduates. Almost all had blue collared jobs and have an income of Php 5,000 a month at most. The preferred source of information of the respondents was meeting, the information that they received was more on using sign language, they went to use this and other information to interact with their deaf children and this information made them more knowledgeable, especially about communication approaches. The respondents were moderately knowledgeable about sign language, finger spelling and cued speech and these three manual approaches were also the most used approaches by the respondents. Among the 20 respondents, only 12 of them agreed that they used the new technology approach, and all these 12 respondents used only a hearing aid. In using the manual approach the most problem that they encountered was insufficient knowledge while in the new technology approach they found hearing aid irritating. The most used alternative approach was home signs or informal sign language invented by the parents. Lastly, there was a significant relationship between the problem encountered in using the manual approach to the effective interaction between parents and their deaf child, while there was a highly significant relationship between the alternative approach and effective interaction, aside from that all variables didn't affect the effective interaction between parents and their deaf children.

### **Conclusions**

The majority of the parent respondents are mothers because they were mostly active in accompanying their children to school. Both schools were using interpersonal communication such as meetings to inform or

teach the parents how to deal with their children who were diagnosed with hearing impairment. The researcher concluded that both schools that were offering special education programs saw the importance or the role of the parents in educating their children. Aside from that, the school disseminated print materials especially visual aids to guide parents and other members of the family at home to communicate with their deaf child.

Moreover, parents learned sign language and other manual communication in school during the class of their deaf children. A large number of parents used sign language more than the other manual communication approaches because it was the main and common language of the deaf. Most of the respondents had a high knowledge level about manual communication but they mostly didn't use it in communicating, however, they still preferred using the alternative approach because they were the ones who created it so they were comfortable using it.

In terms of the usage level of the new technology approach, most of the respondents availed of the hearing aid through sponsorship. However, common problems were encountered by those who were using hearing aids like the children were irritated and uncomfortable using them. Hence, the parents still didn't find it effective.

The most serious problem encountered by parents was experienced when they used new technology approaches, particularly the hearing aid. However, the parents who used a manual approach in dealing with their deaf children experienced minimal problems.

Parents developed other approaches by the combination of sign language they already knew and informal sign language which was made as a representation of things or pointing at things. Also, parent respondents used new media like cellular phones through text messages and Facebook Messenger as an alternative approach to interacting with their children. Parents needed to be creative to deliver information and messages for effective interaction between them and their deaf children.

There was a positive and significant relationship between parents' knowledge level about sign language and effective interaction meant that the higher the knowledge level, the higher the effective interaction. The researcher concluded that since sign language served as a common medium of communication for the deaf, the parents sought more information about sign language, for them to be more knowledgeable in understanding it during the interaction. However, there was no relationship between parents' usage level of manual communication and effective interaction, then the researcher concluded that they were knowledgeable about sign language but they were not good at using it because it followed many complicated positions and motions.

There was a positive and highly significant relationship between other alternative communication approaches which were home signs and effective interaction. The researcher concluded that there was a relationship because informal sign language didn't follow any positions and motions so it was easily used by the parents and they could create other signs on their own and could be understood by the child so that there would be a higher chance of effective interaction.

## Recommendations

For parents, to communicate effectively with their deaf child, they should try some new technology approaches that are available in their country, especially mobile application that is formulated for deaf people.

For parents, to acquire more information about existing manual communication and other related approaches regarding their child to achieve an effective interaction and for their deaf child to feel that they also belong and that they are normal.

For future researchers, to know the effectiveness of lessons taught by the teachers of deaf children at home and school and how they deal with it.

Future researchers, to focus on the whole family regarding the communication approaches they used in communicating with their deaf members for effective interaction with them.

For future researchers, to know the communication approaches used by the family to communicate effectively with their deaf member who did not enroll or has never been to school.

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