

## Maternal Communicative Style with Children with Hearing Impairment – An Old Question Revisited.

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### ABSTRACT

*Infants from birth itself are in constant interaction with their mothers and the environment. Thus the maternal styles of communication would play an important role in developing communicative competency in children. This process happens so naturally and incidentally that no one pays special attention to it. However, when a hearing impairment is present, the opportunity to learn incidentally is diminished and parents tend to adopt a different style while interacting which could lead to outputs from the children which may not be appropriate.*

*The present study is aimed at investigating and describing the maternal communicative styles in 20 mother-child dyads in a natural setting.*

*Subjects were divided into 2 communicative dyads. Ten children with hearing impairment interacting with normal hearing mother comprised Dyad A. Dyad B consisted of ten age matched children and their mothers, both having normal hearing status. Various inclusion criteria were used.*

*Interactions of the dyads A and B were video recorded for duration of 20 minutes while in natural conversation. The samples were later viewed by 2 experienced judges simultaneously who coded for the presence of certain behaviour only when there was mutual agreement on the same.*

*A descriptive analysis has been carried out and the frequency of occurrence of maternal behaviours (of the first 50 utterances only) has been tabulated as well as depicted through a bar diagram.*

*It was concluded, that mothers need to be sensitized towards the communication needs of children with hearing impairment. Being aware of the kind of utterances that would support and enhance communication will help the mothers to modify their styles and help the child with hearing impairment achieve socially acceptable communicative patterns.*