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Psychosocial impact of hearing loss on adults using hearing aids and sign language users- ICF framework.

Manisha Choudhury

Amity Medical School, Amity University, India.

International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF,WHO 2001) is a holistic framework for integrating biological, psychological, and social aspects of human functioning. ICF has been extensively used for assessing the psychosocial impact in adults with hearing loss for better intervention and prognosis.

Purpose of the study: As, there is no such study available with respect to Indian context specifically dealing with the impact of hearing loss on prelingual deafness and post lingual deafness with or without amplification device based on ICF Framework. Hence, the present study was conducted to assess the psycho social issues which are being faced by the people who are using hearing aids and the people who rely more on sign language to communicate with or without amplification.

Method: The research was carried out in 3 phases, by dividing the subjects into two groups. Group I (GRP-I) consisted of 120 adult hearing aid users and Group II (GRP-II) also consisted of 120 adult sign language users considering the age range of 18-60 years.

Results: Mann-Whitney 'U' test was used to compare between GRP-I and GRP-II with respect to domains of ICF. Results revealed that the impact of hearing loss resulting in psycho-social stress is different for both the groups.

Conclusion: The current study addressed the various issues faced by individuals who are using hearing aid amplification and who are using sign language as a mode of communication. With respect to clinical practice in addition to Hearing Aid fitting, there is still a need for extensive services in aural rehabilitation for these population.

Key words : ICF, Sign Language Users, Hearing Aid Users, Psychosocial stress.

mchoudhury@ggn.amity.edu