

# Perceptions of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students of Their Learning Environment in Buraidah, Saudia Arebia

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**Abstract:** Approximately, 3% of children are diagnosed with hearing loss in Saudi Arabia. Providing the necessary health services is critical to the lifelong speech and communication skills of deaf children. Students' opinion on health, education, and socialization could help to identify any unmet needs and to improve the quality of services.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional study among 57 deaf and hearing-impaired students, who attended specialized high-school classes in the academic year of 2012-2013 in Buraidah, Al-Qassim. Health care services, educational environment, and social relationships were assessed using a structured questionnaire. The data was analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS).

**Results:** The students included 30 males and 27 females. There was high satisfaction among students with healthcare services; most had been provided with hearing aids (70%). With regards to the educational environment, technology played an important role—90% of students reported having computers skills and using them as a primary learning modality. Further, many students relied on computers for general communication and socialization: 60% have their own computers and 50% had special mobile devices. Students reported having friends only among hearing impaired classmates or no friends at all. There were some gender differences with respect to satisfaction. Male students reported lower satisfaction of health and educational services than female students. However, they reported more satisfaction with their friendships and social relationships than female students.

**Conclusions:** Hearing impaired students have low satisfaction with their educational environment and with their social life. Future research should identify ways to improve academic achievement among these students; as well as provide more opportunities for them to socialize and integrate into the community.

**Keywords:** Hearing impaired students, learning environment.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Hearing impairment is the inability to hear as other with normal hearing. Hearing impaired people have a hearing difficulty or deafness. If a person cannot hear at all, then they have deafness.

In our community, there are some people who lose one or more of their senses produced by several reasons as a result they face difficulties in their educational and communicational processes with normal peers in the community .To help them to live as natural person, we've made this research to cover as possible their difficulties and try to solve.

Natural and healthy people communicate with the external environment by five senses which are sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. We can imagine how it is difficult to live and communicate with others when you lack one of them.

The medical model conveys the impression about deaf children that there is something inherently wrong with them. The cultural model values the remarkable and extraordinary variations in all of human kind and uniqueness of us all.

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Hearing impairment may be inherited, caused by maternal rubella or complications at birth, certain infectious diseases such as meningitis, use of ototoxic drugs, exposure to excessive noise and ageing.

About half of all deafness and hearing impairment can be prevented if common causes were dealt with at primary health care level.

For at least a century, the education of deaf children has been polarized into two main camps, the manualists (those who sign) and the oralists (those who rely on speech and speech reading for communication). In addition, there is a third camp, those who use cued speech. Cued speech is not really speech at all, but a visual representation of English sounds. In relative terms, it is a new method that will be discussed later. If parents understand the history behind the controversy, they will have a better chance of being able to filter feelings from fact. "They [parents] need to learn the difference between opinion (emotionally based) and fact (researched)."1

Why can't a person simply be deaf? This observation/question from my twelve-year old deserves an answer. Most of the people I interviewed are not extremists. Individuals who are members of the Deaf Community are able to communicate and become friends with members of the Hearing Community and vice versa. One deaf author comments "I understand well why the world of Deaf Culture may be somewhat intimidating to hearing parents. But it shouldn't be. It improves communication, enriches life. Like I said, it can bridge worlds together...The mistake here is having an 'either-or' mentality (i.e. your child will either sign, or he will speak)."2

Prior to 1975, "more than one-half of the children with disabilities in the United States did not receive appropriate educational services that would enable such children to have full equality of opportunity. One million of the children with disabilities in the United States were excluded entirely from the public school system and did not go through the educational process with their peers...because of the lack of adequate services within the public school system. Families were often forced to find services outside the public school system, often at great distance from their residence and at their own expense."3

#### **Study Question:**

What are deaf and dumb opinions toward their education and communication with non deaf community?

#### **General Objective:**

To find out the difficulties they face in communicating within the non-deaf community. Also, the needs and services they want.

#### **Specific Objectives:**

- To find out the most important causes of deafness.
- To determine the main difficulties they face in their education and communication with non deaf community and try to help them to live as natural people.
- To determine the services provide to them, and is it enough to help them.
- To determine their needs from health services, technology and other needs.

## **2. SUBJECTS & METHODS**

### **1. Study population:**

The study Included the deaf and hard hearing regular daily attends in the private and Integration schools in Buraidah throughout the year 2012 – 2013 .

### **2. Study design:**

Cross sectional study design.

### **3. Study setting:**

The study conducted in the deaf and hard hearing student in private and integration schools in Buridah and the duration of the Study took four months.

#### 4. Sample type:

All the deaf and hard hearing students which were presented in the private and integration schools in Buraidah .

#### 5. Sample size:

Convenience sample =57 ( 30 males & 27 females ) deaf & hard hearing in the private and integration schools in Buraidah .

#### 6. Variable and data collection technique:

Interview and Self-administrated structure questionnaire formed of opened / closed ended questions. Questionnaire gathered information about educational environment of teaching, health care and social relations and then the data were collected by us as groups work.

#### 7. Pretest:

The questionnaire were pretested concerning the sequence, form of the questions and leaving space for the answers, reliability of the results and the time needed.

#### 8. Plan for data processing and statistical analysis:

The data was analyzed using the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS).

#### 9. Quality control:

The completion of the questionnaires, its accuracy, clarity and the date entry mistakes were checked out .

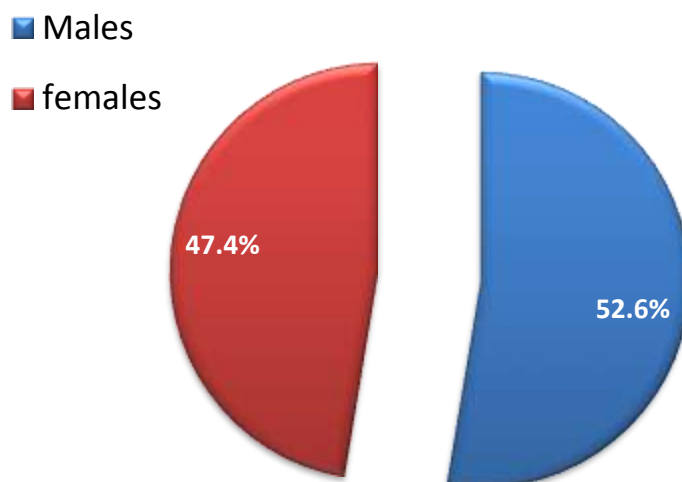
#### 10. Ethical review:

- Obtaining consent before the start.
- The objective of the study explained to deaf and hard hearing people with the emphasize on the importance of data and its confidentiality.
- No sensitive questions in the questionnaire.
- No imposing participation by force.

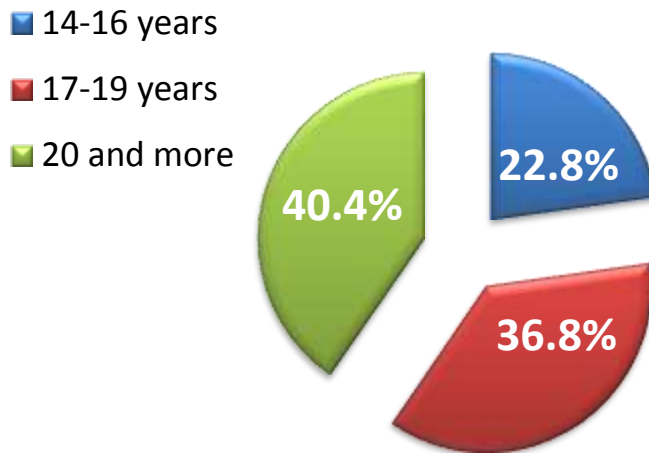
### 3. RESULTS

#### Characteristics of the students:

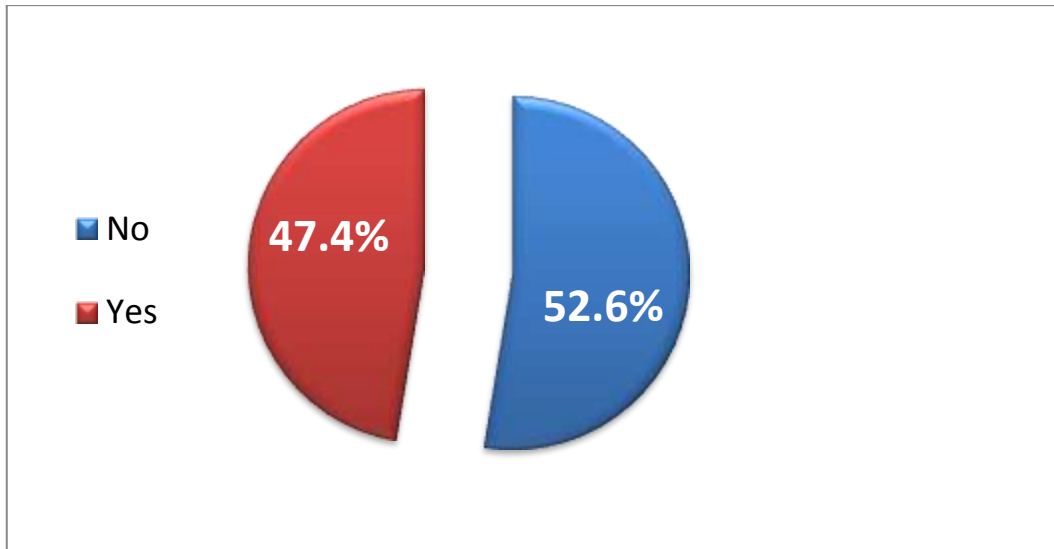
##### *Deaf and hard hearing students by sex*



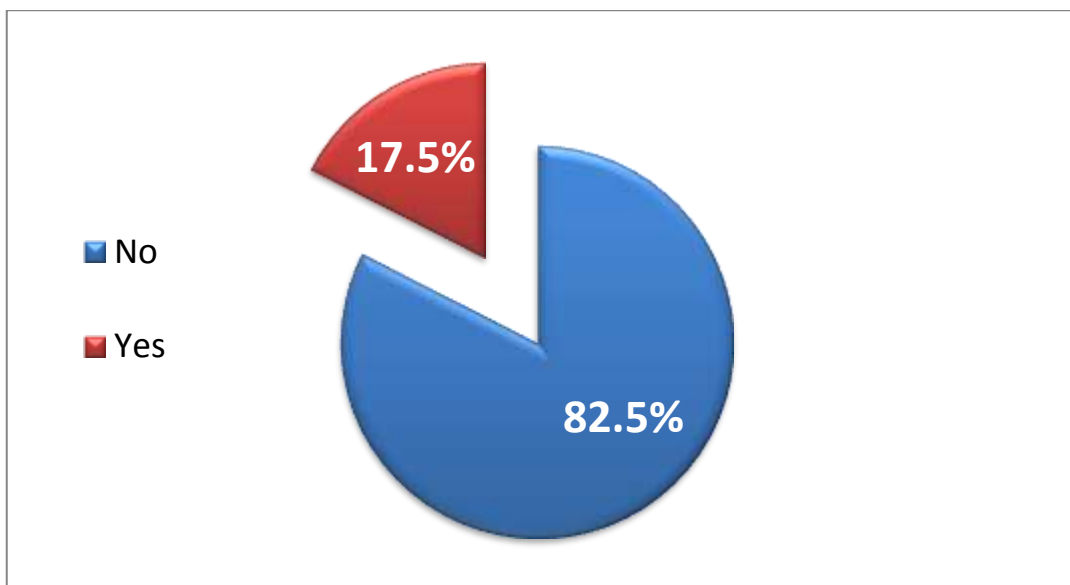
*Deaf and hard hearing students by age:*



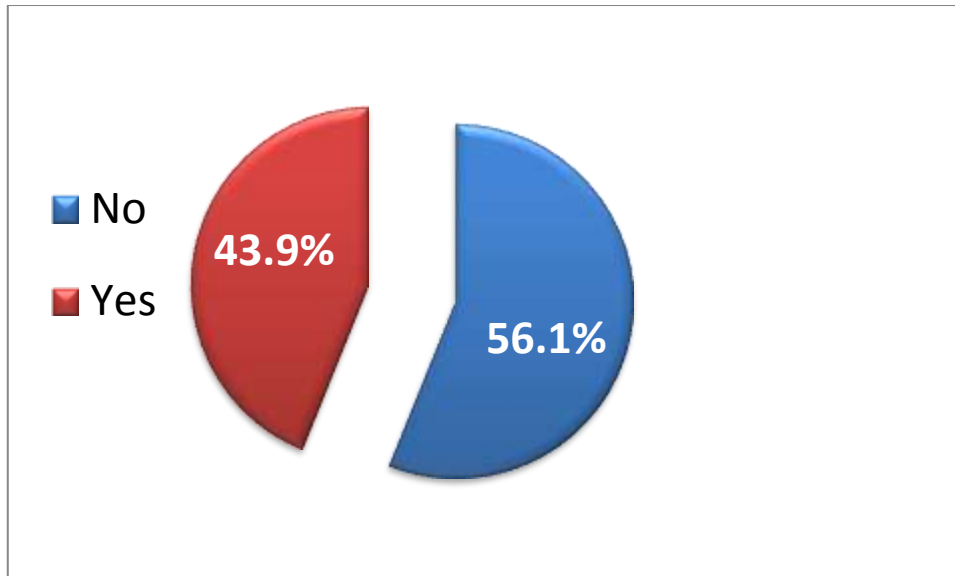
*Deaf and hard hearing students by father work:*



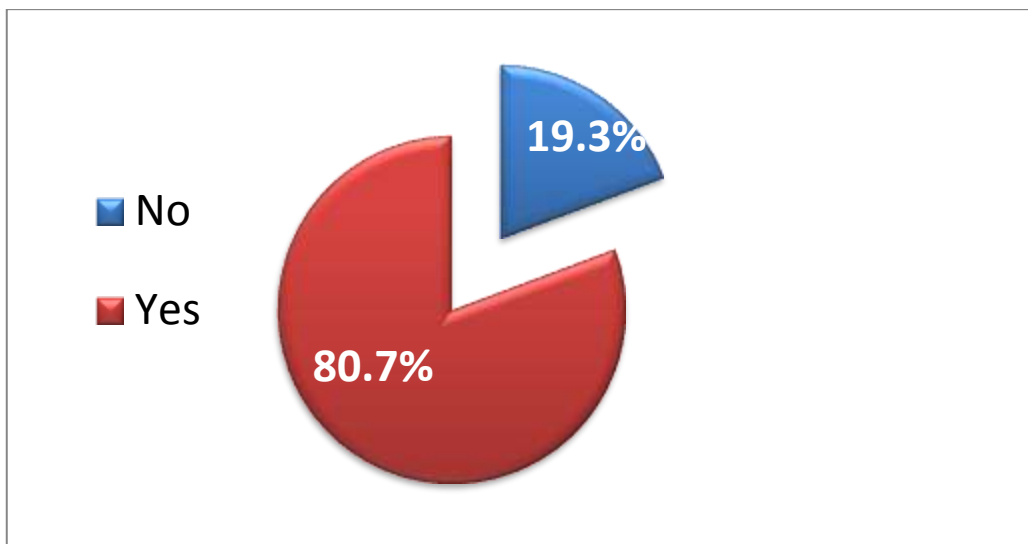
*Deaf and hard hearing students by mother work:*



*Deaf and hard hearing students by family history:*

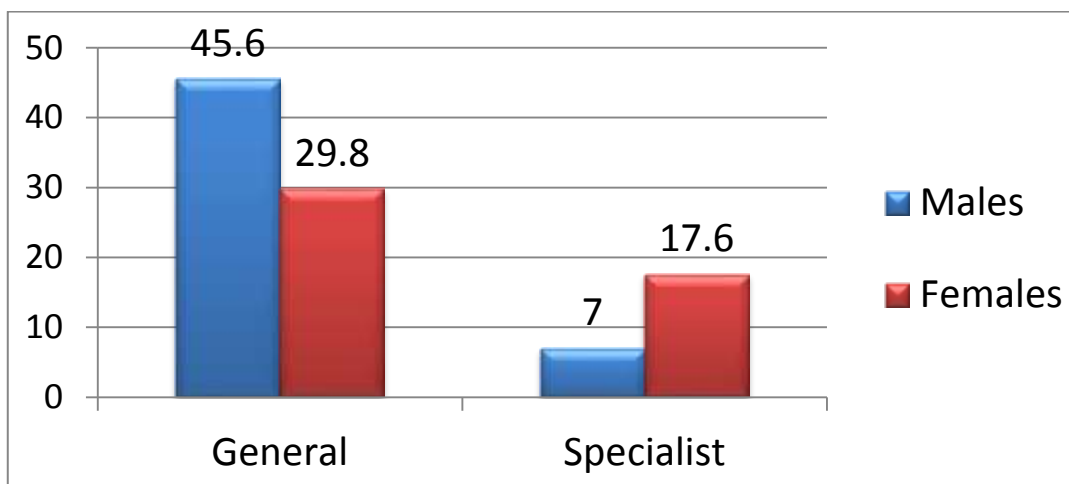


*Deaf and hard hearing students by history at birth:*

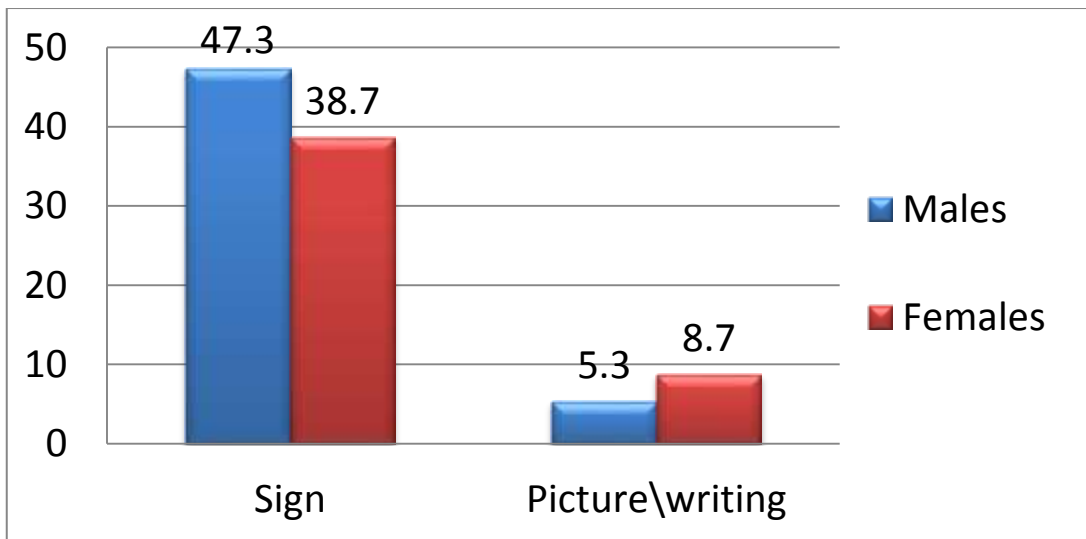


**Educational services:**

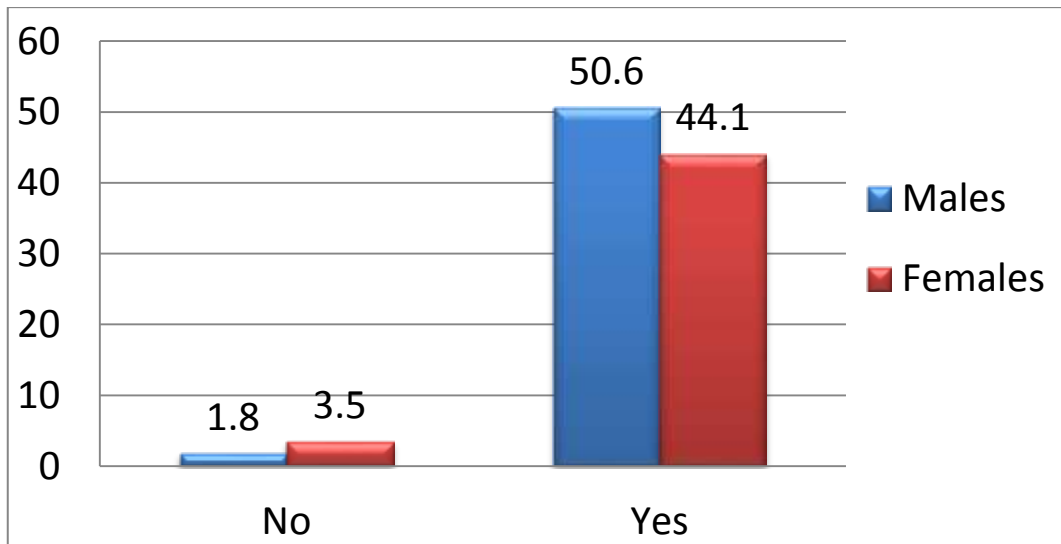
*Teachers specialty*



*Educational methods*

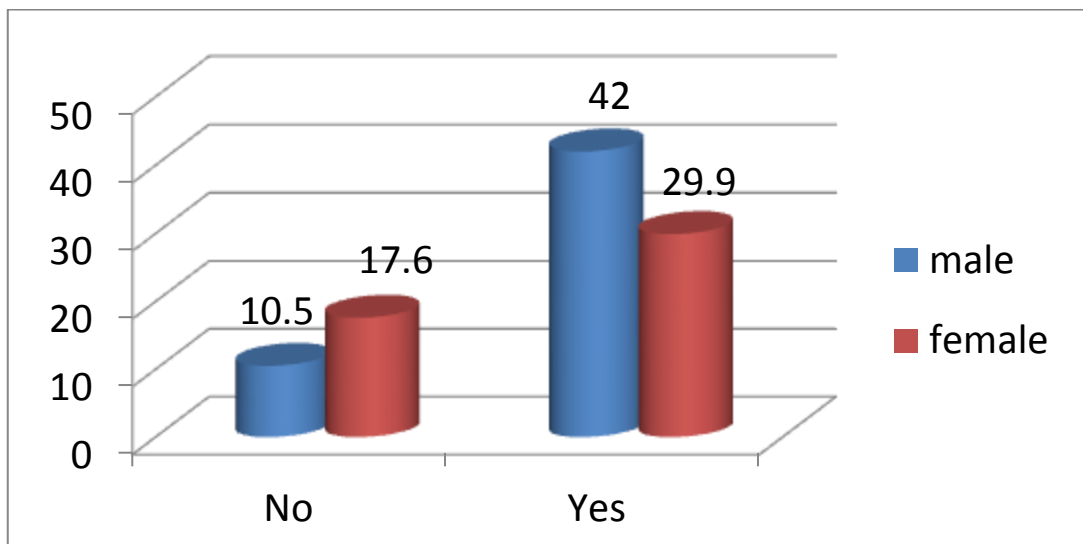


*Use of computer*

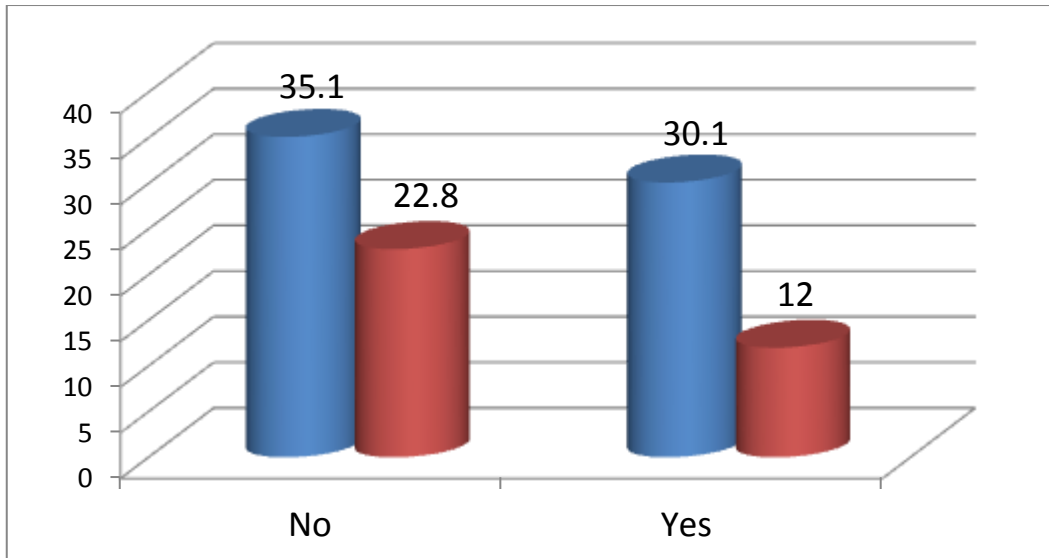


**Medical services:**

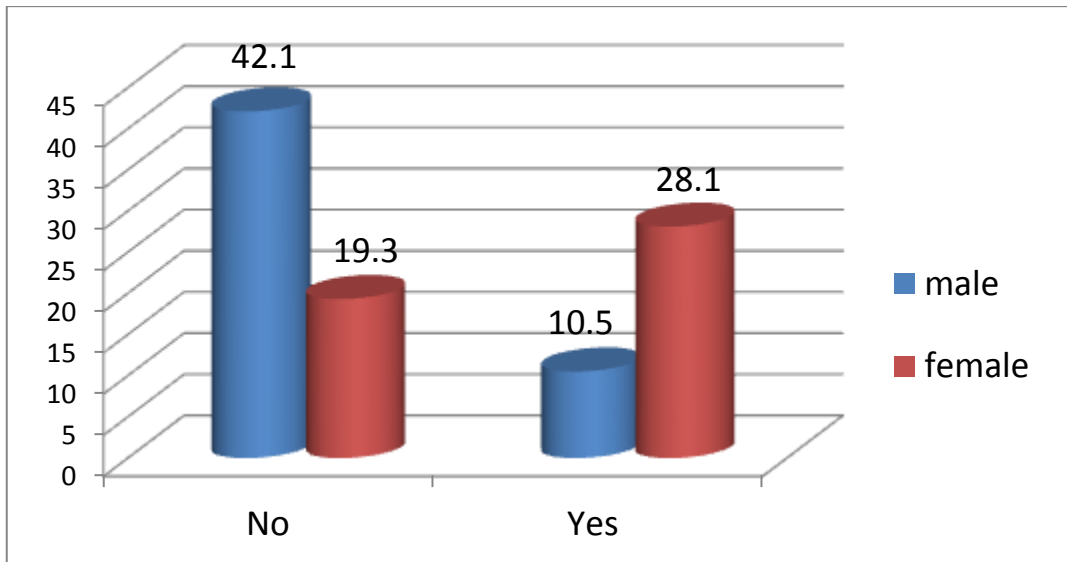
*Ear phone:*



**Medications:**

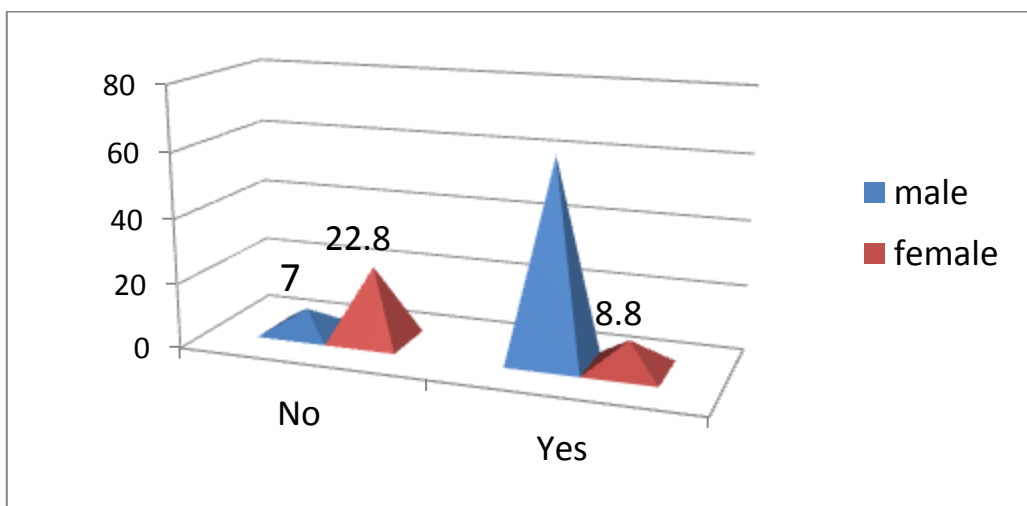


**Special care:**

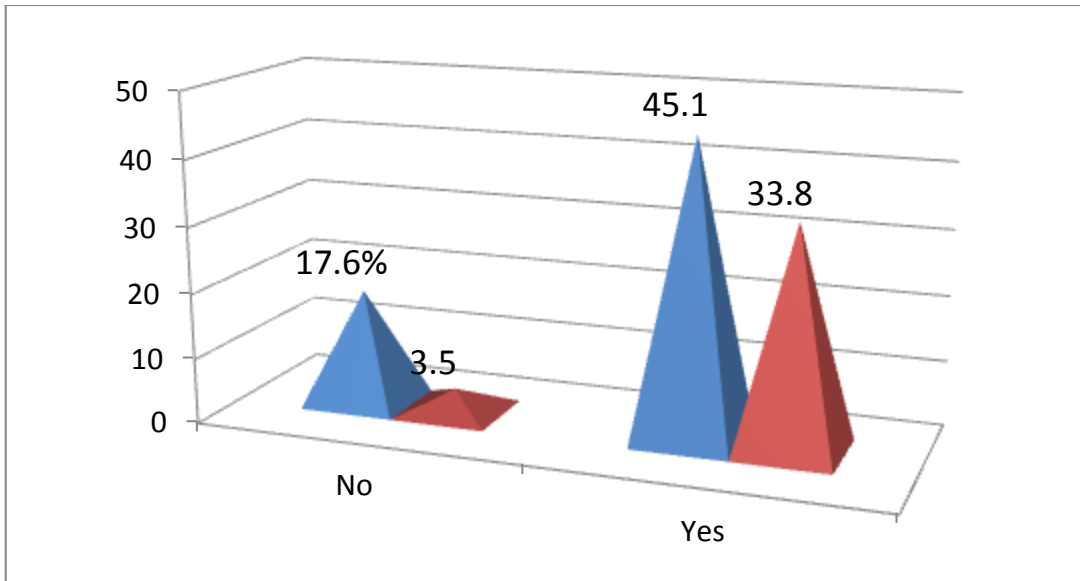


**Use of technology:**

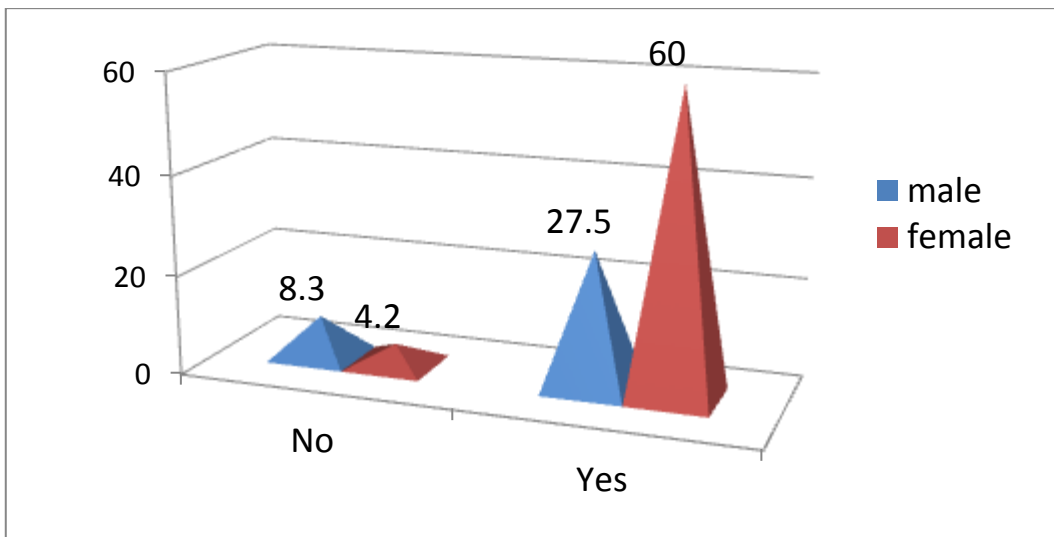
**Own mobile:**



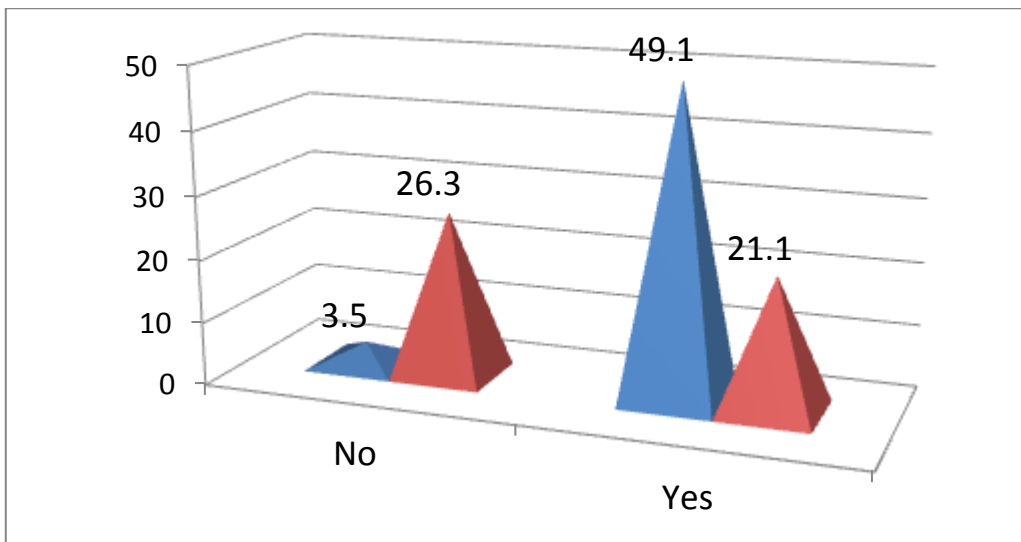
*Special mobile:*



*Mobile Satisfy your needs:*

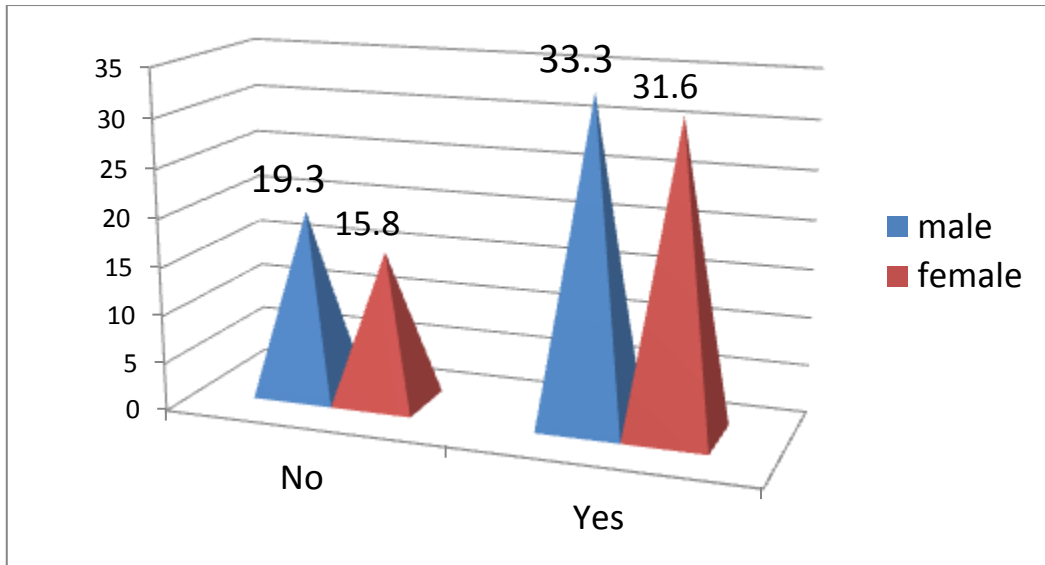


*The services available:*

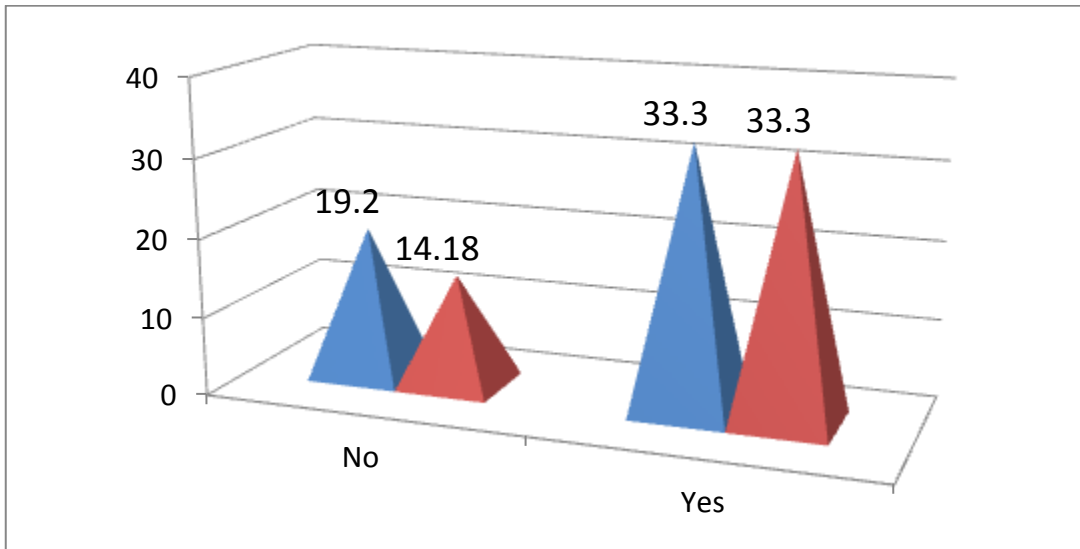




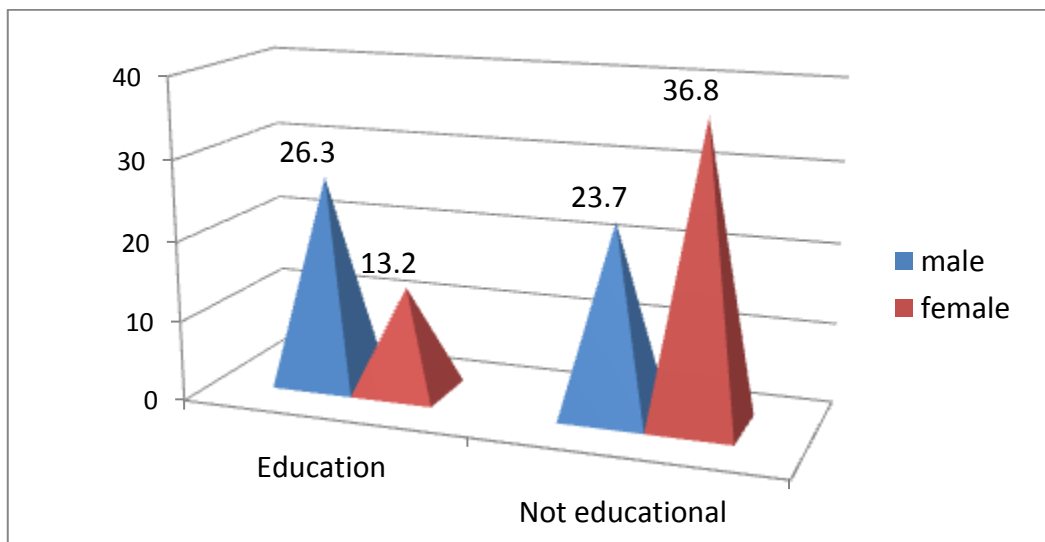
**Own computer/laptop:**



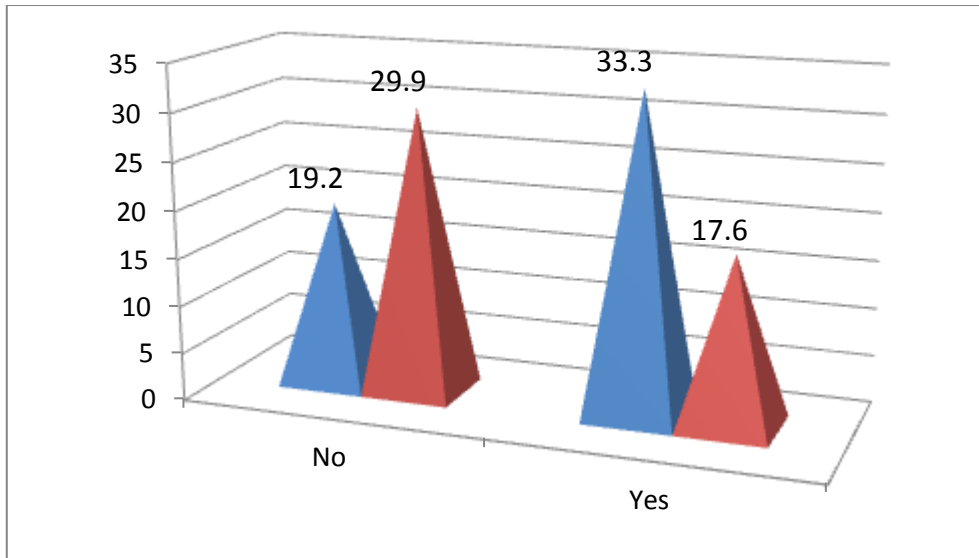
**Browse:**



**Websites:**

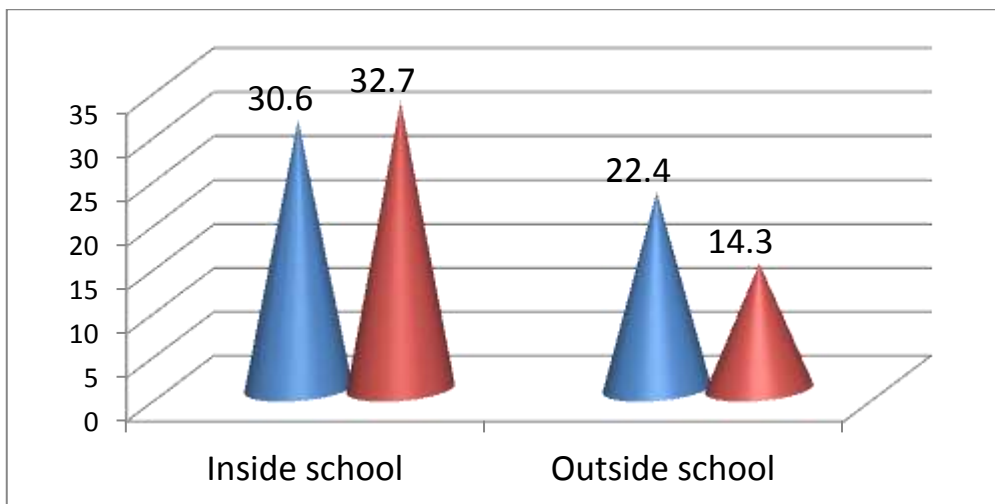
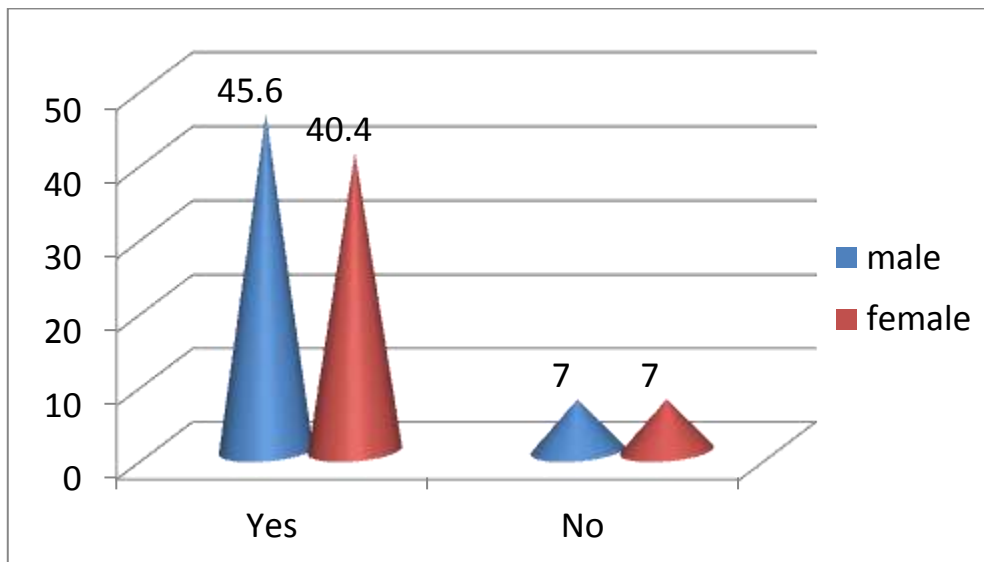


**Chat and messages:**

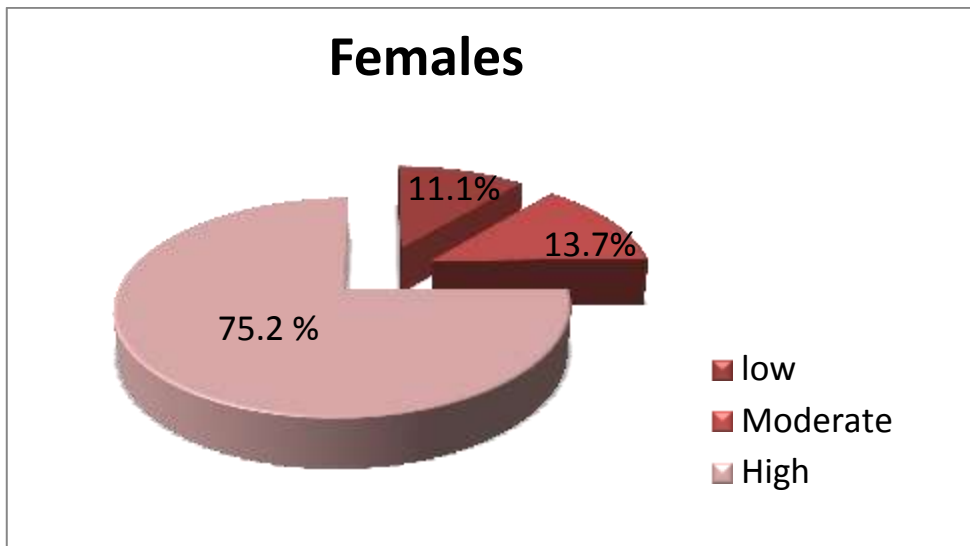
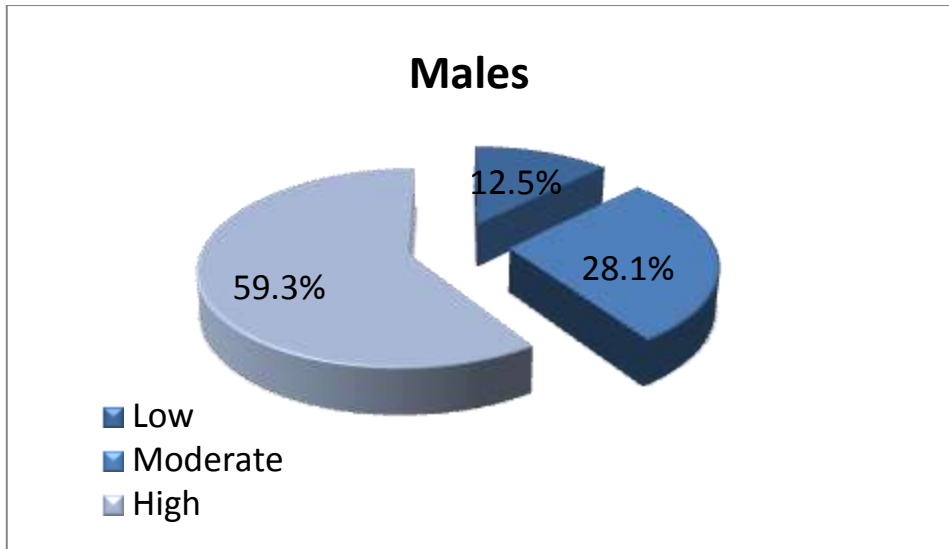


**Social relations:**

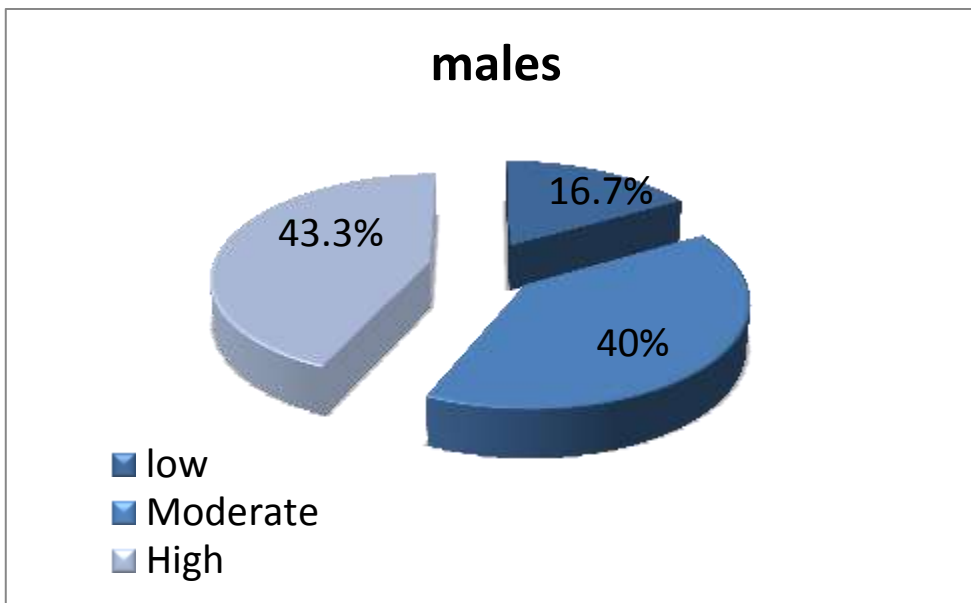
**Friends:**

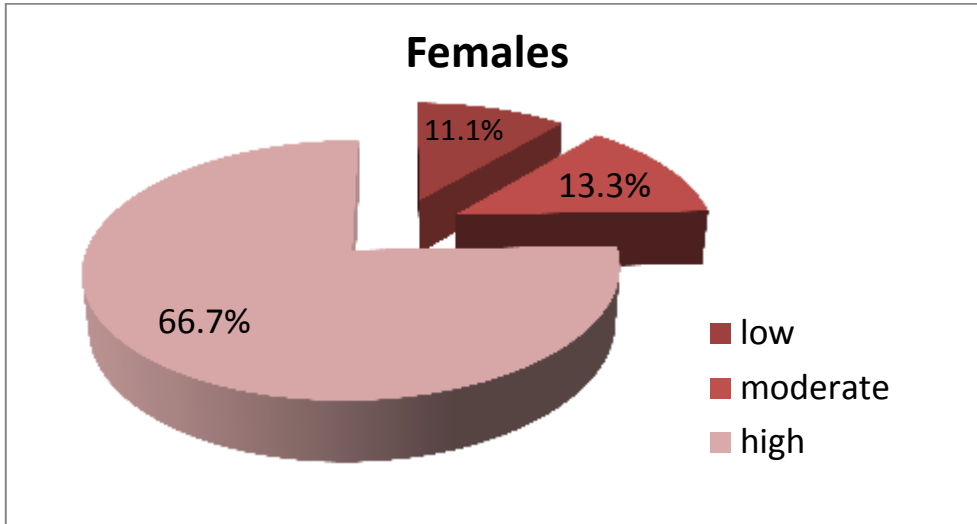


Satisfaction by educational service:

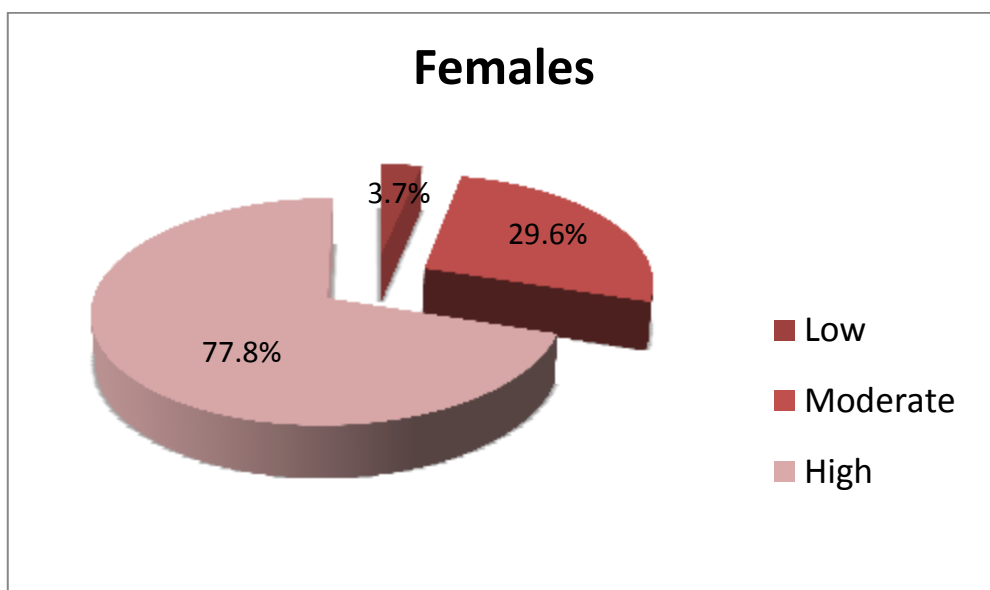
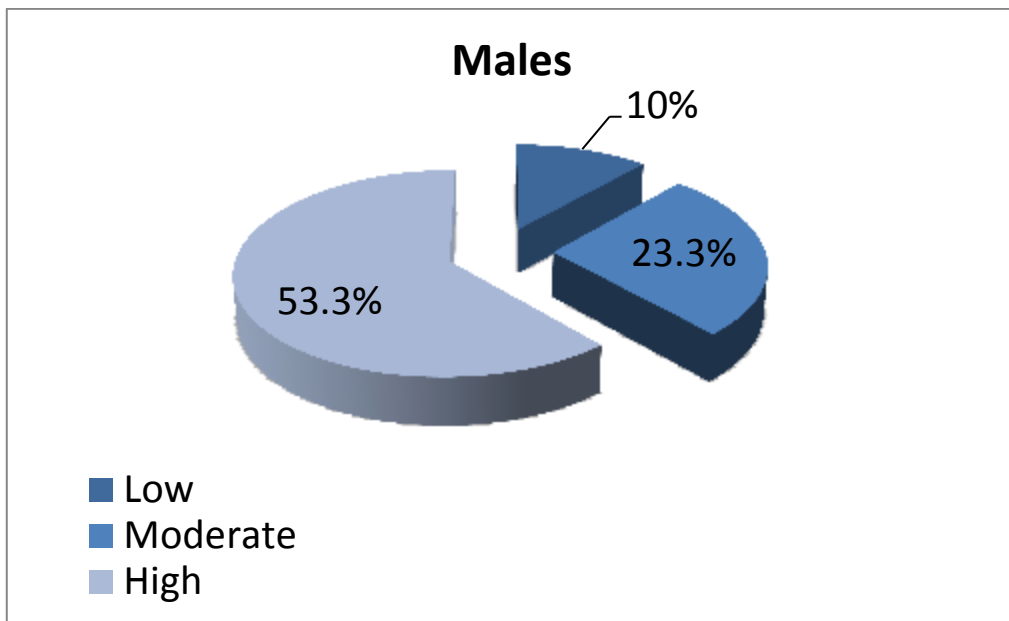


Satisfaction by social relations:





Satisfaction by the community view:



## Results:

### Educational services:

It was found that only 24 % of teachers were specialist in dealing with deaf students (most of them were female teachers). The use of computer in teaching was reported by 90 % of the students and the language of communication was sign (85%) with the aid of pictures and writing.

### Medical services:

Concerning the health services, most of students were provided by ear hearing aids (70%).

### Use of technology:

The majority of students (90%) can use computers.

They browsed for non- educational websites (40 %) and half of them used internet in chatting and sending messages.

### Social relations:

50 % of the students had friends only from school colleagues.

59.3% of male students are highly satisfied from the education services that provide to them while 12.5% are not.

75.2% students are highly satisfied from the education services that provide to them while 11.1% .

Male students showed lesser satisfaction by the provided educational service than females.

43.3% of male students are highly satisfied from their social relationship while 16.7% are not.

The majority of female students 65.7% are satisfied from their relationship while 11.1 are not .

Male students showed lesser satisfaction by social relations than females.

53.3% of the male students are highly satisfied from the community view to them while 10% are not.

77.8% of the female students are highly satisfied from the community view to them while 29.6 % are not.

Male students showed lesser satisfaction by the community view towards deaf than female.

**Age:** Most of them aged more than 20 years.

**Income:** Majority of them their father and mother are not working

**History of similar condition:** 25 of the students have similar condition in their family, while 32 have not.

**The age of having this condition:** Majority of them was born with this condition, while 11 of them have acquired it.

**Education services:** Most of the teachers are NOT special for 43 teachers, while only 14 are specialist.

### Method of education:

85% of the schools use the sign language as the first method of teaching.

14% of the school use pictures and writing as associated method.

1% of the school use computer.

## 4. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The results of our study revealed the association of deaf with low socioeconomic levels, Majority of them their father and mother are not working. This is agreed with study in USA (4) compared with families of children without hearing loss, families of hearing-impaired children live closer to the poverty level and utilize some medical services with less frequency. Further identification of causal relationships between familial socioeconomic status and childhood hearing loss may help direct policy initiatives designed to mitigate healthcare disparities and improve access to services for hearing-impaired children.

The age of having this condition: Majority of them was born with this condition, while 11 of them have acquired it. Congenital deafness accounts for 1 in every 1000-2000 births (5).

The students have proper education services, medical services and availability of technology. The Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia is responsible for providing a free and appropriate education for all students, including those with disabilities *Legislation of Disability*. Legislation of Disability (LD) passed in 1987 as the first legislation for people with disabilities in Saudi Arabia. The LD includes important provisions that guarantee individuals with disabilities rights equal to those of other people in society. This legislation also contains many articles that define disabilities and describe programs for prevention and intervention and procedures of assessment and diagnosis to determine eligibility for special education services. Finally, LD requires that public agencies must provide rehabilitation services and training programs that support independent living Ministry of health care (6).

**Social relations:** The majority of the students are having friends inside the school.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1- deaf students face difficulties in their education and communication with normal peers in their community.
- 2- The satisfaction of the learning environment of the studied group was high, because they use other than ear hearing aids like, visual aids, communication devices, loudspeakers of ear and others.
- 3- Also the school encourage them by giving them financial reward and take them in trips out of the school.
- 4- We should to be more concern on medical services as it was low in the studied group, as they don't have medical centers or clinics with specialist in the school.

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