

Difficulties Faced By Deaf Individuals during the Process of Communicating and Receiving Information from Women Who Use Sign Language While Wearing the Niqab in the Kingdom Of Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

The study aimed to identify the difficulties that deaf and hard-of-hearing people face during the process of communicating and receiving information from women who use sign language while wearing the Niqab (face veil) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. To achieve the objectives of the study, it was applied to a sample of (140) Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals, males (N,98) and females (N,42). The study used the descriptive analytical method. The results of the study showed: that they understand the message when the full face is revealed, as well as the importance of the appearance of the cheeks. Findings also revealed that most respondents did not show hatred for the woman who wears the Niqab while communicating with deaf people.

Keywords: difficulties, sign language, Niqab, attitudes, deaf and hard of hearing.

Introduction

The term deaf culture spread in the 1980s and was defined as the set of beliefs, morals, traditions, artistic expressions, social forms, rules of behavior, and language expressions used by deaf individuals (Holcomb, 2013; Leigh et al., 2018; Padden & Humphreys, 1988). Research in Saudi Arabia did not focus enough on the identity, culture, and vitality of deaf literature. This gap makes Saudi society lack knowledge and empirical studies on Saudi Arabian Sign Language (SASL) culture and deaf culture (Alqarni, 2017; Alzahrani, 2017).

Most of the research that looks at Deaf students in the university setting has been conducted in the United States and Australia (Cuculick & Kelly, 2003; Redding, 1997; Napier & Barker, 2004). It is important to note that Deaf people are considered a minority group among others in hearing communities (Ladd, 2003; Lane, Hoffmeister, & Bahan, 1996; Marschark, Zettler, & Dammeyer, 2017). As a result of being a minority group, there are many misconceptions about Deaf students that have negatively affected Deaf students' lives. This is also true for the field of Deaf Education. The most challenging problem that DHH students face is the underestimation of their abilities--socially, mentally, and academically.

Deaf and hard of hearing people usually communicate through sign language or speech and can make use of assistive devices such as hearing aids and cochlear implants, technology such as captions, as well as sign language interpreters (Holcomb, 2013). The extent of hearing loss and language and communication preferences affect the identity of deaf people (Leigh, 2009). Communication difficulties can be exacerbated by some personal protective equipment such as masks, face shields, physical distance, and visitor restrictions (Ten Hulzen & Fabry, 2020). In addition, wearing the Niqab in some Islamic countries may increase communication

problems (Guarnera et al. 2015). Niqab is defined as “a veil for covering the hair and face except for the eyes. That is worn by some Muslim women” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

Based on the foregoing, this study seeks to show the difficulties that the deaf face during the process of communicating and receiving information from women who use sign language while wearing the Niqab in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

As Elliot and Jacobs (2013) notes, facial expressions convey emotions and help people to understand situations and react to information and contexts appropriately. The anatomy of the face consists of the lower, middle, and upper sections, each of which plays its part in expressing an individual's emotions and mood (Bank et al, 2011).

To illustrate, when one smiles, a gesture that Rozin and Cohen (2013) assert is part of everyday communication, the lips, cheeks, and mouth (all part of the lower section of the face) is activated.

Sidera et al. (2017) describes the facial expressions used to convey different emotions as ‘units of action.’ These units or changes in the appearance of one's face can be categorized using the coding system for facial movements. In short, different groups of muscles are employed when making specific facial expressions, which, in turn, convey unique emotions. The wrinkling of the nose, for example, occurs in the middle of the face, involves the skin on both sides of the nose being pulled up, and is understood to convey disgust (Sidera et al., 2017).

Chen and Chen (2010) observed that the lower section of one's face features many units of action, including the lifting of the chin, the lifting of the lip, the parting of the lips, and the dropping of the jaw, and each of the groups of facial muscles used in these units expresses a particular feeling.

As Rodger et al. (2021) found, anger is conveyed by ‘chin lifts,’ which involve pushing the chin tip and lower lip upward, and ‘lip lifts,’ which narrow the lips. Similarly, in the so-called ‘lip lip,’ the lips are drawn horizontally while the ‘lip part’ involves separating the lips slightly but both gestures are a display of fear. Finally, dropping the jaw and revealing the gap between one's top and bottom teeth is commonly understood to be an expression of surprise. Given the importance of facial expressions, wearing the Niqab can hinder the transmission and receipt of information and impede understanding.

Face masks provide a vital role in public health, yet they can make face-to-face communication challenging. The term ‘interpersonal communication’ is used to describe the verbal and non-verbal (gesture-based) interactions between at least two people. According to Mheidly et al. (2020), to work properly, a face mask must cover the nose and the mouth, making speech more difficult to hear. Wearing a face mask also obscures the middle and lower sections of the face and prevents people from seeing the many facial expressions that occur here.

Mörchen et al. (2020) used the example of doctor-patient communications to illustrate this phenomenon. In this context, patient anxiety is significantly impacted by the doctor's ability (or inability) to display reassuring facial expressions, and thus face masks prevent positive units of action. Taking the same example, Mheidly and Fares (2020) explained that when the faces of patients are obscured by face masks, medical practitioners are unable to interpret the patient's emotions and thus respond appropriately. The sympathy a doctor may be

trying to convey could be lost on the patient. moreover, deaf people who depend on sign language for communication are impacted by the wearing of face masks, and their inability to see and interpret the movements of the chin, nose, mouth, and teeth can reduce their understanding and result in feelings of exclusion.

Importantly, facial expressions and other non-verbal communication account for over half (55%) of all communication with the mouth but also the eyes, the most important conveyors of feeling. Bombari et al. (2013) argued that covering the middle and lower face decreases emotional perception but increases the use of the upper section of the face to convey emotion. Isaacowitz et al. (2007) state that covering the face, whether it be with a Niqab or face mask, redirects people's attention to the eyes. Empathy, expressions of interest, the management of emotions, and other aids to communication can be achieved through eye contact. Nonetheless, Guarnera et al. (2015) reported that lengthy eye contact can make people uncomfortable and be interpreted as a sign of aggression.

Many people around the world cover their faces for cultural or religious purposes while cloth and surgical face masks have been worn for health reasons in many East Asian countries since the turn of the 20th century. The global influenza pandemic of 1918 saw the widespread wearing of face masks around the world. Mayo (2020) argued that subsequent influenza epidemics in the 1950s/1960s in Singapore and Hong Kong and SARS outbreaks in the early 2000s in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong fostered a mask-wearing culture in these countries. For some, face masks have become a mark of respect and part of the social contract. Moreover, natural disasters, such as the Great Kanto Earthquake, which occurred in 1923 in Japan, can fill the air with such thick ash and smoke that the populace may be forced to cover their faces. However, MacIntyre et al. (2009) argued that Western cultures still need to adapt to the habit of covering the face. To support this adaptation, it will be necessary for experts to be engaged to allay the concerns associated with masks in the West and the face coverings seen in Muslim nations. Nobile (2020) argues that experts can participate in interviews and be active on social media to increase awareness of the health benefits of face masks and address inaccuracies about masks.

Among the deaf, a key issue as regards facial expressions is the inability to exploit the eyes and eyebrows in the upper section of the face by, for instance, closing the eyes to display agreement. Nobile (2020) argues that the eyes and eyebrows are vitally important, with raised eyebrows being very expressive; yet the upper face and eyebrows in particular have been largely overlooked by the existing literature on communication. The work of Nobile (2020) goes some way to filling this gap by exploring the part played by the eyebrows in non-verbal communication and expressing emotion, as well as sexual dimorphism and facial appearance. In terms of recognizing faces, eyebrows are as important if not more important than eyes. It has even been found that removing eyebrows makes it more difficult for people to recognize faces than removing eyes.

An absence of non-verbal communication can be a problem during the communication process. According to Elliot and Jacobs (2013), body language such as hand gestures can aid communication and emotional expression. Ong (2020) similarly asserted that non-verbal communication plays a central role in conversation but also significantly affects social environments. It can take the form of body language, facial expressions, eye contact, and more, and can function as an aid or even substitute for verbal interaction (Ong, 2020).

Recent advances in technology have the potential to assist in real-life communication and human interactions (Mheidly & Fares, 2020). The study of Garg et al. (2021) aimed to

assess the challenges faced by the deaf and hard of hearing during COVID-19 through a literature review. The study showed that the challenges they faced were under-informed, face mask making communication difficult, social distancing affecting their physical and mental health, stigma, and barriers related to the healthcare system. Strategies included the use of technology, assistance from sign language instructors, and preparation for health care settings for deaf people. System strengthening, telemedicine, and policy adjustments could be the pillars for building a support system for the hearing impaired to protect them from COVID-19. Weast (2011) found that an analysis of the eyebrow lift, a non-manual sign, its exact function in ASL has long been a mystery. Noting the various problems. In addition to outlining an alternative account in a contingency setting that avoids the use of formal principles of general rules in favor of competence-based processing tendencies.

According to Kimmelman et al. (2020), facial expressions in sign language-based communication can not only convey grammatical aspects, such as when formulating a question, but also serve as a way to express emotions, both those specific to the situation and established actions. Both these functions often employ the same components, whereby the meanings may align or be in contradiction to each other. As an example, raising the eyebrows may indicate a sudden or polar question, whereas lowering them conveys anger. The findings indicate that individuals raise their eyebrows when expressing polar questions and surprise, and lower them when conveying anger, with some interactions found between these two factors.

According to Denmark et al. (2019), facial expressions in sign language bear a variety of communicative traits. While emotion can modulate spoken speech through changes in intonation, duration, and intensity, in sign language specific facial expressions are presented synchronously with a hand sign that performs this function. When deaf adult signers are unable to see facial features, their ability to judge feelings through signed vocalizations is impaired. The study examined the role of the face in understanding feelings in sign language in a group of normally developing deaf children and a group of deaf children with autism spectrum disorder, deaf children with autism spectrum disorder showed a deficit in emotion recognition during sign language processing similar to a deficiency in recognition of feelings in sign language. Acoustic emotions are observed when hearing children with autism. Holcomb (2013), argued that successful face-to-face communication includes multiple channels, especially hand gestures in addition to speech for spoken language and oral patterns in addition to hand signals for sign language

The Study Questions

1. What are the difficulties that deaf people face during the process of communicating and receiving information from women who use sign language while wearing the Niqab in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?
2. What is the viewpoint regarding the importance of different facial expressions in the communication process?
3. What are the Difficulties related to understanding the message of a woman who wears the Niqab?
4. What are the attitudes towards wearing the Niqab in the communication process for the deaf?

Research Design

This study utilized a survey for its descriptive research design. Creswell (2012) state that a study should employ a research design to structure the analysis of the subject being

examined, with the ultimate aim of offering answers to the research questions. A descriptive research design generally seeks to describe a current real-life situation (Creswell, 2012).

Participants

The whole population of this study consists of 680 deaf and hard of-hearing males and females in Aljouf Region in Saudi Arabia, and the total of respondents was 140.

Research Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a survey which consisted of five sections. The first section contained five items relevant to the respondent's characteristics. These included the respondent's gender, their age, their educational level, their hearing status, and their preferred communication methods. The other four sections utilized a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree", as described by Creswell (2012). The second section contained five items about respondent's personal difficulties. The third section contained four items relevant to respondent's opinion about the importance of different expressions in the communication process. The fourth section contained five items about difficulties related to understanding the message of a woman who wears the Niqab. The fifth section contained five items relevant to respondent's attitudes toward wearing the Niqab.

Reliability Test

The reason for the linearity test is to study the linear relationship between dependent and independent variables. Linearity is the relationship between a variable that can be described as a straight line passing through a cloud of data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), in a standard equilibrium, the scale should have an approximately rectangular distribution with most degrees centered in the center without a clear or systematic pattern, such as a curved line. Deviations from the central rectangle indicate a violation of the linearity assumption. In this article, linearity is tested by examining a partial correlation diagram that shows the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable resulting from a regression analysis.

It is evident from table (1) below that the value of the coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) is greater than (0.70), for all variables of the total study tool, and it is valid for data analysis to achieve the objectives of the study and draw conclusions.

Table (1): Reliability Test

Variable	No. items	Value Cronbach's alpha
Personal difficulties	5	0.80
Opinions about the importance of different expressions in the communication process	4	0.77
Difficulties related to understanding the message of a woman who wears the Niqab	5	0.77
Attitudes toward wearing the Niqab	5	0.76
Study Tool	19	0.86

Validity Test

According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), in a standard equilibrium, the scale should have an approximately rectangular distribution with most degrees centered in the center without a clear or systematic pattern, such as a curved line. Deviations from the central rectangle indicate a violation of the linearity assumption. In this article, linearity is tested by

examining a partial correlation diagram that shows the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable resulting from a regression analysis.

Content Validity

Content validity is the subjective agreement of most practitioners that the scale describes the exact volume to be measured. The validity of the questionnaire items' content was determined by a number of competent and experienced arbitrators who evaluated and measured the procedures. Changes were made in response to their suggestions and comments.

Variable Validity

The researcher verifies the study variables using theoretical concepts. Thus, when more validity variables are used, more validity will be changed (Malhotra & Stanton, 2004).

The validity of the variables is an important aspect that every researcher must take into account when conducting research. It refers to specific variables that cover or share a large proportion of the variance (Hair et al., 2006). It basically indicates the degree to which two scales are related to the same concept. Convergence validity can be tested using factor analysis (FA) to ensure that the variable factor loading is greater than 0.30 (Hair et al., 2006).

To ensure the validity of the study tool by performing the analytical factor, a test (Kmo and Bartlett's) was conducted, where the results appeared in table (2) below

Where the value of coefficient was greater than (0.5) when it reached (0.858), the value of coefficient was a statistical function less than (5%) when it reached (0.00), In light of the test results, the study tool is suitable for conducting a study.

Table (2): Kmo and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.858
Approx. Chi-Square	1849.798
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	171
Df	0.00
sig	

The result of the analytical factor is greater than (30%) as it reached for the current study tool, where the explanatory analytical factor for the study variables reached (65.515). Figure (1) shows the results of the factorial analysis of the study variables

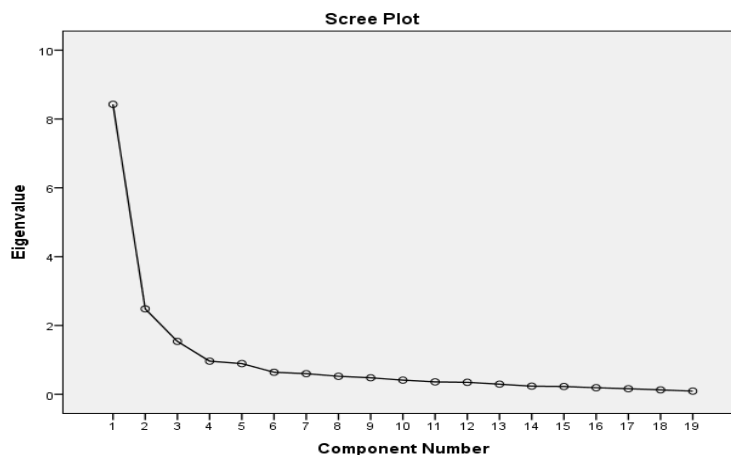


Figure (1): results of the factorial analysis of the study variables

Ethical considerations

All participants gave written consent after being informed of the details to participate in the research and publish the results.

Findings

Sample Demographics

This part of the study provides a detailed presentation of the demographic data of the study sample members, about their attitudes and opinions of women who use sign language and wear the Niqab in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to identify the most prominent personal and functional characteristics of them using numerical frequency ratios. These variables included gender, educational levels, age, hearing status, and preferred language of communication presented in table (3) below. That the largest percentage of males constituted from number of respondents, where it reached (70%) and their number was (98), while the number of females was (42) at a rate of (30%). The age group of the respondents was concentrated in the category (20-30) where it reached (41.4%) with the number (58), and the lowest was the age group represented by (above 50) by (15) number. The academic qualifications of the deaf respondents in high school were concentrated by (45.7%) and their number was (64) followed by the diploma qualification with the percentage (25%) and their number (35). As for the hearing status of the respondents, the number of deaf people was reduced by (98) by percentage (70%), and the number of respondents with hard of hearing was reduced by (42) by percentage (30%). The preferred methods of communication for the respondents were Saudi sign language, where their number was (71) and their percentage was (50.7%), followed by Spoken language where the number was (31) and their ratio was (22.1%).

Table (3): Sample Demographic

variable	SEX	Frequency	Percentage%
Sex	Male	98	70
	female	42	30
Total		140	100
variable	Age group	Frequency	Percentage%
Age	20-30	58	41.4
	31-40	36	25.7
	41-50	31	22.2
	above 50	15	10.7
Total		140	100
variable	Educational Levels	Frequency	Percentage%
Educational Levels	High School	64	45.7
	Diploma degree	35	25.0
	Bachelor degree	33	23.6
	Postgraduate	8	5.7
Total		140	100
Hearing condition	Hard of hearing	42	30
	Deaf	98	70
Total		140	100
variable	Occupation	Frequency	Percentage%
Preferred communication methods	Saudi Arabia Sign language	71	50.7
	Arabic Sign Language	26	18.6
	Spoken language	31	22.1
	Total communication	8	8.6
Total			100

Descriptive Statistics for Variables

This part aims to describe the variables of the study model, by analyzing the answers of the study sample members to the items that measure these variables. To determine the degree of the relative importance of the attitudes and opinions of the verbal response sample members about the difficulties that the deaf face during the process of communicating and receiving information from women who use sign language while wearing the Niqab in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the following formula was applied:

period length = The upper limit of the *alternative* – Minimum alternative / number of levels.

$$\frac{5-1}{3} = 1.33. \text{ (No.1, (Musa, 2007))}$$

Where the level of influence was determined based on the arithmetic mean value of the weights of the answers to the paragraphs of the study tool and the model variables, according to three levels, in table 4 below:

Table (4) *the level of influence for the study items and variables and the corresponding arithmetic means.*

Impact level	High	medium	Low
Arithmetic mean	3.66– less than5	2.33- less than 3.66	2.33– less than1

Table (5): *Variables descriptive statistics Personal difficulties*

The number	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	The relative importance of the degree of impact	Rank
Q1	I can't focus when I receive information in sign language from a female who wears the Niqab.	3.55	1.25	medium	2
Q2	I get worried when I receive information in sign language from a female who wears the Niqab.	3.37	1.35	medium	3
Q3	I feel embarrassed when I receive information in sign language from a female who wears the Niqab.	3.32	1.42	medium	4
Q4	I get angry when I receive information in sign language from a female who wears the Niqab	3.21	1.45	medium	5
Q5	I feel comfortable when I receive information in sign language from a female who wears the Niqab.	3.85	1.09	High	1
The relative importance of the degree of influence of the trend on the variable as a whole.		3.62	0.92	medium	

The results of the table (5) below show that paragraph No. (Q5) of the variable personal difficulties, which states (I feel comfortable when I receive information in sign language from a female who wears the Niqab.), which is the highest, the relative importance of the degree of influence of the trend is high, with an arithmetic mean (3.85) and a standard deviation (1.09). As for paragraph No. (Q4) which states (I get angry when I receive information in sign language from a female who wears the Niqab) which is the lowest in relative importance to a medium degree of influence, with an arithmetic mean (3.21) and a standard deviation (1.45). As for the degree of relative importance for the direction of the variable (personal difficulties) as a whole, it is a medium with an arithmetic mean (3.62), and a standard deviation (0.92)

The results of the table (6) below show that paragraph No. (Q2) of the variable Opinion about the importance of different expressions in the communication process, which states (I believe that the cheeks of a person who uses sign language have to appear during communication.). which is the highest, the relative importance of the degree of influence of the trend is high, with an arithmetic mean (3.94) and a standard deviation (1.06). As for paragraph No. (Q4) which states (I believe that it is sufficient for the eyes of the person who uses sign language to appear during communication.) which is the lowest in relative importance to a high degree of influence, with an arithmetic mean (3.86) and a standard deviation (1.15). As for the degree of relative importance for the direction of the variable (Opinion about the importance of different expressions in the communication process) as a whole, it is a High with an arithmetic mean (3.91), and a standard deviation (0.85).

Table (6): Variables descriptive statistics Opinion about the importance of different expressions in the communication process

The number	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	The relative importance of the degree of impact	Rank
Q1	I believe that the mouth of a person who uses sign language have to appear during communication.	3.91	1.14	High	3
Q2	I believe that the cheeks of a person who uses sign language have to appear during communication.	3.94	1.06	High	1
Q3	I believe that the eyebrows of a person who uses sign language have to appear during communication.	3.92	1.073	High	2
Q4	I believe that it is sufficient for the eyes of the person who uses sign language to appear during communication.	3.86	1.15	High	4
The relative importance of the degree of influence of the trend on the variable as a whole.		3.91	0.85	High	

The results of the table (7) below show that paragraph No. (Q4) of the variable statistics Difficulties related to understanding the message of a woman who wears the Niqab, which states (I only understand the message when the whole face of the person, who uses sign language during communication, is revealed.) which is the highest, the relative importance of the degree of influence of the trend is high, with an arithmetic mean (3.72) and a standard deviation (1.22). As for paragraph No. (Q3) which states (I do not understand the message because the Niqab hides the movements of the eyebrows.) which is the lowest in relative importance to a medium degree of influence, with an arithmetic mean (3.44) and a standard deviation (1.35). As for the degree of relative importance for the direction of the variable (Difficulties related to understanding the message of a woman who wears the Niqab) as a whole, it is a High with an arithmetic mean (3.62), and a standard deviation (0.92).

Table (7): Variables descriptive statistics Difficulties related to understanding the message of a woman who wears the Niqab

The number	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	The relative importance of the degree of impact	Rank
Q1	I do not understand the message because the Niqab hides the movements of the lips.	3.61	1.27	medium	4
Q2	I do not understand the message because the Niqab hides the facial expressions.	3.62	1.28	medium	3
Q3	I do not understand the message because the Niqab hides the movements of the eyebrows.	3.44	1.35	medium	5
Q4	I only understand the message when the whole face of the person, who uses sign language during communication, is revealed.	3.72	1.22	High	1
Q5	I understand the full message even if the Niqab covers the whole face.	3.71	1.26	High	2
The relative importance of the degree of influence of the trend on the variable as a whole.		3.62	0.92	medium	

The results of the table (8) below show that paragraph No. (Q5) of the variable Attitudes toward wearing the Niqab (I am proud of a female who wears the Niqab when she communicates with deaf.) which is the highest, the relative importance of the degree of influence of the trend is a high, with an arithmetic mean (3.90) and a standard deviation (1.13). As for paragraph No. (Q2) which states (I hate a female who wears the Niqab when she Communicates with deaf people using sign language.) which is the lowest in relative importance to a medium degree of influence, with an arithmetic mean (3.07) and a standard deviation (1.44). As for the degree of relative importance for the direction of the variable (Attitudes toward wearing the Niqab) as a whole, it is a medium with an arithmetic mean (3.41), and a standard deviation (0.96).

Table (8): Variables descriptive Attitudes toward wearing the Niqab

The number	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	The relative importance of the degree of impact	Rank
Q1	I am against wearing the Niqab for a female who uses sign language while communicating with deaf people.	3.32	1.37	medium	3
Q2	I hate a female who wears the Niqab when she Communicates with deaf people using sign language.	3.07	1.44	medium	5
Q3	I request that the whole face of the female is uncovered when using sign language to communicate with deaf people.	3.50	1.38	medium	2
Q4	I consider wearing the Niqab while communicating with deaf people as a form of religious extremism.	3.27	1.39	medium	4
Q5	I am proud of a female who wears the Niqab when she communicates with deaf people using sign language.	3.90	1.13	High	1
	The relative importance of the degree of influence of the trend on the variable as a whole.	3.41	0.96	medium	

Discussion

The findings of this study suggest that deaf people understand the message when the whole face of the person who uses sign language during communication is revealed. This is consistent with what Ten Hulzen and Fabry, (2020) argued, when they asserted that masks and face shields cause communication difficulties. Moreover, deaf people in the current study believe that the cheeks of a person who uses sign language must appear during communication. They also believe that it is not sufficient for the eyes of the person who uses sign language to appear during communication, which is consistent with the arguing of previous explaining (e.g., Nobile, 2020). However, they still feel comfortable while receiving information in sign language from a female who wears the Niqab. These findings show that they revealed facts about the situation of understanding the message and what has to appear during communication, yet they feel comfortable about the case of wearing the Niqab for a woman and they are proud of a female who wears the Niqab. They also do not hate the female who wears the Niqab when she communicates with deaf people using sign language. These findings might be explained by their religious believe about the importance of covering a female's face in front of males. Moreover, the results showed that the Niqab does not hide the movements of the eyebrows. This means that the movement of eyebrows is important as Kimmelman et al. (2020) explained that the eyebrows are raised when polar questions and surprise, and they

descend into anger. The result of understanding the message in the current study consistent with what Denmark et al. (2019) found in terms of the inability for deaf adult signers to judge feelings through signed vocalizations when they are unable to see facial features. The findings also showed that most of respondents do not get angry when receiving information in sign language from a female who wears the Niqab.

Conclusion

The study aimed to identify the difficulties that deaf and hard of hearing people face during the process of communicating and receiving information from women who use sign language while wearing the Niqab (face veil) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The findings showed that they understand the message when the full face is revealed. They believe in the importance of the appearance of the cheeks. Results also revealed that most respondents did not show hatred for the woman who wears the Niqab while communicating with deaf people.

Limitations and Future Research

This study was applied to Aljouf Region which is one region out of thirteen regions in Saudi Arabia. The study was limited to investigating the difficulties faced by deaf individuals when receiving information from a woman who wears Niqab while using sign language and their opinions about such practice. Therefore, in the future research there may be a need to investigate solutions about wearing niqab while communicating with deaf people.

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