



**“EVALUATION OF SPEECH OUTCOMES IN CLEFT LIP AND
PALATE PATIENTS: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY”**

by

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ABSTRACT

Background and Objectives: A comprehensive perceptual speech assessment of cleft patients is necessary to rule out any speech misarticulation and resonance disorders due to velopharyngeal dysfunction and to identify improvements in velopharyngeal competency level after speech therapy

As there are no such studies available in kannada speaking subjects, there is a need to conduct a study in repaired CLAP of any type (complete or incomplete, unilateral/ Bilateral) to identify the incidence of speech misarticulation and resonance disorders post-surgically.

Material and Methods: The test group consisted of 77 subjects who had their primary CLAP and CSP repair performed at this unit between the ages of 4 and 8 years. The control group included 25 normal children with the same age range. Subjects who had any clinical evidence of a persistent oro-nasal fistula, Children with associated syndromes of craniofacial malformations, mental retardation, hearing loss and colds were excluded from the study and control groups.

All the patients considered for the evaluation of speech outcomes were assessed by a speech pathologist based on the five universal speech parameters i.e. hypernasality, speech intelligibility, misarticulation, audible nasal air emission and facial grimacing.

Results: Over all there was fairly good (70%) percentage of children with functional repair CLAP and CSP had normal velopharyngeal function and speech. Success rate of the management protocol followed here is considered "fairly good". There are various factors which could has positively affected the outcome of management protocol such as socio-

economic status, education level, age of surgical management, geographical constrain making patients parents unable to follow up for speech therapy.

Key words: Complete cleft lip, alveolus and palate, Cleft of secondary palate, Velopharyngeal incompetence, Nasal emission, Hypernasality, Speech intelligibility, Misarticulation.