

Influence of Speech Therapy on Stuttering

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Abstract

The "Influence of Speech Therapy on Stuttering" research explores how effective speech therapy is in helping people in Pakistan who stutter. Using semi-structured interviews and a qualitative approach, this study looks at how speech therapy can impact stuttering and the various factors that come into play. It also delves into the linguistic side, examining how therapy affects speech fluency, pronunciation, and sentence structure. The findings show that speech therapy can significantly help reduce stuttering, but it also highlights the importance of tailoring therapy to each person's unique needs. However, there are challenges too, such as difficulties sticking with the therapy and the time and cost involved. This research aims to raise awareness about how beneficial speech therapy can be for treating stuttering, reinforcing that there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. It also emphasizes how speech therapy can boost self-esteem and improve communication skills, helping to create a more inclusive and confident society. Additionally, by integrating linguistic insights, this study enriches both speech therapy practices and our understanding of linguistics.

Keywords: Speech therapy, Stuttering, Pakistan, Effectiveness, Personalized treatment, Communication skills, Self-esteem.

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Introduction:

Humans communicate through two primary types of language skills: productive, which involves speaking and writing, and receptive, which involves listening and reading. Among these, speaking is one of the most effective means of communication as it directly conveys thoughts and ideas through acoustic signals. However, speech fluency can be disrupted by various factors such as intonation, speed, repetition, and pauses, leading to speech disfluencies like stuttering.

Stuttering is a speech disorder characterized by disruptions in the flow of speech, affecting an individual's ability to communicate effectively. It can significantly impact social, academic, and professional aspects of life. Despite its prevalence in Pakistan, there has been limited research on the effectiveness of speech therapy in reducing stuttering. This study aims to address this research gap by investigating the impact of speech therapy on stuttering among individuals in Pakistan. By providing insights into the effectiveness of speech therapy, this research will contribute to the existing body of literature on stuttering and its treatment. Additionally, the findings may have broader implications for public awareness and understanding, potentially improving the quality of life for those who stutter.

In Pakistan, the social stigma associated with stuttering often discourages individuals from seeking speech therapy. This stigma can lead to anxiety and avoidance behaviors, further exacerbating the condition. Moreover,

there is a general lack of awareness about the effectiveness of speech therapy in treating stuttering, resulting in limited access to treatment options. This study aims to increase awareness about the causes, symptoms, and treatment options for stuttering, with a particular focus on the benefits of speech therapy. By enhancing awareness, the research hopes to encourage more individuals to seek help, thereby improving their communication abilities and overall quality of life.

This study seeks to fill the research gap by examining the influence of speech therapy on stuttering, an area that has received little attention in previous research. Prior studies, such as one conducted in Pakistan on speech therapy for individuals with aphasia (Abid & Pathan, 2021), highlight the need for further exploration in the context of stuttering. This research represents a significant step toward understanding how speech therapy can aid individuals who stutter in managing their condition, offering valuable contributions to the field and promoting positive attitudes towards speech therapy in Pakistan.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This study aims to explore how speech therapy is effective in reducing stuttering.

Objective 1. To study the influence of speech therapy on stuttering.

Objective 2. To explore the ways speech therapy is beneficial for reducing stuttering.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1: What is the influence of speech therapy on stuttering?

RQ2: In what ways is speech therapy beneficial for reducing stuttering?

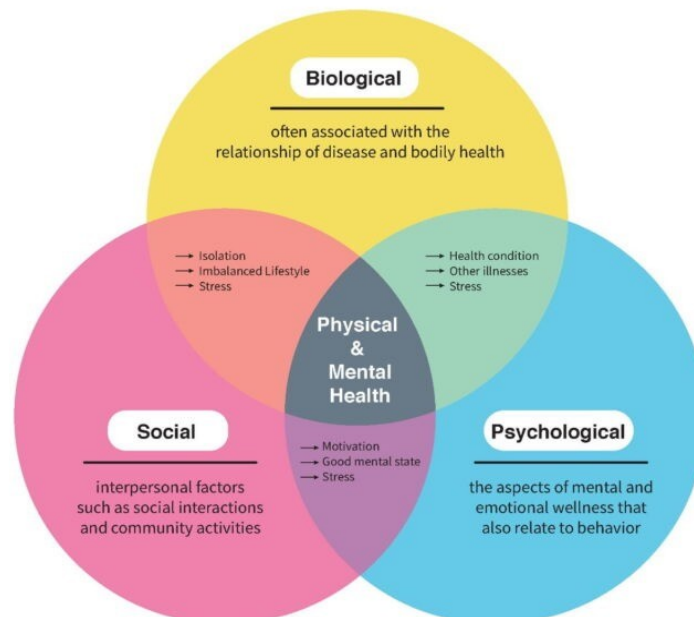
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

The biopsychosocial model proposed by George Engel provides the theoretical foundation for understanding the influence of speech therapy on stuttering. This model suggests that stuttering arises from the interplay of biological, psychological, and social factors. Biological factors include genetic and neurological predispositions, while psychological factors encompass anxiety, self-esteem, and other cognitive and emotional elements. Social factors involve social anxiety, negative feedback, and environmental influences.

Speech therapy interventions can target these factors using various techniques and strategies. Behavioral therapies, such as positive reinforcement and shaping, address psychological factors by improving communication skills and reducing anxiety. Neurolinguistic approaches, including brain training, improve brain function and reduce neurological contributors to stuttering. Social skills training and conversation practice enhance communication skills and reduce social anxiety.

By addressing all three dimensions of the biopsychosocial model, speech therapy can significantly influence stuttering. However, its effectiveness may vary based on individual factors such as the severity and duration of stuttering, age, and cognitive and emotional characteristics. Therefore, it is crucial to consider these individual factors when designing and evaluating speech therapy interventions for stuttering.

Biopsychosocial (BPS) model



LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter's discussion revolves around stuttering, encompassing an exploration of its causes and symptoms. A historical overview is provided to elucidate the evolution of societal perceptions regarding stuttering. Furthermore, the chapter emphasizes the critical importance of speech therapy in the treatment and management of stuttering.

STUTTERING

The words stammering and stuttering are often used indistinguishably. A disorder of stuttering exhibits an unnaturally high number of obstructions in the flow of speech in communication. Definitions of stuttering disorder show ordinary speech symptoms and many other types of features that help to find out an exact diagnosis of the disorder. However, there is still no exact method to find out whether a child has a stuttering disorder or not (Howell, 2011).

Precisely, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines stuttering as; “disorders of the flow of speech in which a person knows accurately what he wants to convey but at a time he is not able to say it because of the involuntary ending of a sound or repetitive prolongation in the speech” (Khatoon et al., 2020).

The term “stuttering” can indicate a variety of concepts. It frequently alludes to a group of speech patterns that are thought of as abnormal in some manner, like blocks, extensions, or part-word repeats (Ruth et al., 2001).

It is a multifactorial language disorder characterized by usual prolongations, repeats, or blocks of spoken sounds and/or syllables. It affects 1% of the population, with nearly four times as many men as females being affected. There are a variety of dysfluencies used, including interruptions (unnecessary phrases and sounds like “uh” and “well”), modifications (the alteration of a phrase’s content or grammatical structure or word pronunciations), unfinished sentences (the lack of completion of the content), repeating and making long noises (that are considered to be unnecessarily lengthy), and fragmented words (incompletely uttered words).

Stuttering can significantly affect a person’s ability to perform socially, emotionally, and academically, which can result in feelings of annoyance, nervousness, and loneliness. Although the exact causes for stuttering are unidentified, the study indicates that a complex interplay of genetic, neurological, and environmental variables is potentially in consideration (Giraud et al., 2008).

There are two stuttering therapy strategies. The first strategy is the direct and indirect strategy, where the indirect strategy focuses on controlling the child's surroundings rather than dealing with their speech. When borderline stutterers have not responded to the indirect strategy, they are given the direct strategy. The Lidcombe Program is the second strategy that has been created for kids under the age of six years. Parents and clinicians work to create possibilities for positive responses to the child's fluency and stuttering speech.

History of Stuttering

In the sixth century, a physician from Autius, Amida believed that stuttering was caused by the tongue and recommended surgery, including the division of the frenum. This method remained notable for centuries. In the 19th century, German surgeon Frederick Dieffenbach (1795-1847) suggested cutting part of the tongue to cure speech disorders by releasing nerves causing muscle spasms. In 1830, French author H. De Chegoin attributed stuttering to muscular weakness and proposed using a fork-like device in the jaw to support the tongue. Around the same time, Yaes from New York believed stuttering was due to a contradiction in the glottis and recommended keeping the tongue raised while speaking.

Charles Canon Kingsley (1819-1875) thought stuttering could be an unconscious or conscious imitation, possibly caused by misaligned teeth. He suggested using corks on the teeth, doing dumbbell exercises, and boxing. Mosses Mendlesohn believed stuttering stemmed from psychological disorders due to conflicting thoughts, while Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802) linked it to emotions like bashfulness interrupting speech. Joseph Frank (1911) proposed cerebral lesions and sexual excess as causes of stuttering.

In the late 1800s, stuttering was thought to be caused by necrosis and treated with psychoanalysis. Sandow (1898) attributed it to excitement or dread of speaking, and in 1908, Steckel defined it as fear hysteria with anxiety neurosis. By the 20th century, stuttering was viewed as a psychogenic disorder, treated with psychoanalysis until 1960 when it proved ineffective.

Today, stuttering is considered a neurophysical dysfunction affecting speech timing and coordination between articulation and breathing. Genetics also plays a role, with Dr. Dennis Drayna and his team identifying three genes linked to stuttering in 2010 (The History of Speech and Language Impairments, 2011).

Causes of Stuttering

The exact cause of stuttering is not fully understood, but researchers have identified several factors that may contribute to the development of this disorder, including genetic, brain development, neurological, developmental, and environmental factors.

Genetic Factors

Genetic factors play a significant role in the development of stuttering. Studies suggest that stuttering runs in families, and specific genes have been identified that increase the likelihood of developing the disorder. For instance, a study examined 69 preschool children who stuttered and analyzed their family trees, concluding that the transmission of a single major genetic locus contributes to stuttering in families (Ambrose et al., 1997).

Brain Development

Differences in brain development, particularly in areas involved in motor control and speech production, are also associated with stuttering. Research indicates that the brain activity and white matter tracts in young children who stutter differ from those in children who do not stutter (Chang & Zhu, 2013).

Neurological Factors

Neurological factors, such as brain injuries from head trauma, intracerebral hemorrhage, or stroke, can lead to neurogenic stuttering. This phenomenon has been observed following lesions in various parts of the brain. For example, a report described a 30-year-old man who developed stuttering after a high-speed motorcycle accident, despite having no family history or childhood stuttering (Quinn & Andrews, 1977).

Developmental Factors

Developmental factors significantly contribute to stuttering, particularly in children. Stuttering often begins in childhood, with 95% of children who stutter starting before the age of four and almost all before the age of 12 (Yairi & Ambrose, 2013). Many children who begin to stutter between the ages of two and six experience spontaneous recovery or natural reduction with limited therapy (Chang et al., 2019).

Environmental Factors

Environmental factors such as anxiety, stress, fatigue, or excitement can trigger or worsen stuttering. These factors can cause prolongation of speech, repeated sounds, pauses, syllables, or words, and blockages in speech (Bloodstein et al., 2021).

Symptoms of Stuttering

Stuttering is a communication disorder characterized by interruptions in speech. Common symptoms include:

Repetitions

Repetition involves repeating syllables, sounds, or words. For example, saying “m-m-m-mall” instead of “mall” or “b-b-b-bell” instead of “bell.” Repetitions can occur at the beginning, middle, or end of a word or sentence, such as “b-b-bell is not ringing” or “the door b-b-bell has a fault” (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, n.d.).

Prolongations

Prolongation is the stretching out of a syllable or sound. For example, saying “sssssssuch” instead of “such” or “ssssstop” instead of “stop” (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, n.d.).

Blocks

A block occurs when a person gets stuck on a word or sound and cannot produce it. This can be accompanied by tension in the muscles of the neck, face, or shoulders (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, n.d.).

Interjections

Interjection involves inserting extra words or sounds into speech, such as “like” or “umm,” when unable to produce a sound or word (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, n.d.).

Circumlocutions

Circumlocution is avoiding a difficult word by using a different one. For example, saying “speech-language doctor” instead of “pathologist” (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, n.d.).

Avoidance Behaviours

Avoidance involves steering clear of speaking situations, such as making phone calls or public speaking, due to fear of being ridiculed. These symptoms can vary in frequency and severity and may be accompanied by anxiety or physical tension (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, n.d.).

Speech Therapy

Speech therapy seeks to enhance a person’s capacity for effective communication. It can be a helpful therapeutic method for people who stutter. It can help to lessen the frequency and severity of stuttering, improve communication abilities, and improve quality of life.

According to the study, speech therapy is a successful stutter treatment method. For instance, a systematic review of research conducted on the treatment of stuttering discovered that speech therapy was linked to substantial improvements in both the severity of stuttering and communication abilities (Boyle et al., Disclosure of stuttering and quality of life in people who stutter, 2018)

There are numerous approaches and methods used in speech therapy to address stuttering:

Fluency shaping therapy, which encourages training people on how to talk more naturally and coherently using strategies like control of breathing, thoughtful and slow speech, and gentle onsets (Davidow & Scott, 2017).

Stuttering modification therapy centers on assisting people in developing coping mechanisms to control and minimize the effects of their stuttering behaviors, including voluntary stuttering, delays, and pull-outs (Bothe et al., 2006).

Integrated therapy combines aspects of fluency shaping and stuttering modification approaches and customizes the therapy to the patient’s particular requirements and goals (Onslow et al., 2018).

In a study conducted on perceptions towards stuttering, few of the participants (aged 52 to 82 years) achieved favorable outcomes after receiving treatment in the past, the majority did not want therapy when they were being studied. A lot of individuals who stutter express unfavorable feelings about speech therapy (Manning et al., 1984).

History of Speech Therapy

“Speech therapy is used to address speech and language disorders, helping people communicate more effectively” (Cleveland Clinic, n.d.).

Historically, speech impairments were often viewed negatively. In Roman times, people with speech disorders were kept in cages for entertainment. Demosthenes, a Greek orator, reportedly used pebbles in his mouth to control his stutter (The history of speech and Language Impairments, 2011).

Modern speech therapy focuses on teaching and refining speech. Cotton Mather, a Puritan preacher, overcame his stutter by stretching his words. Alexander Graham Bell, who invented the telephone, founded a school for the deaf and developed a visual alphabet system to help students produce speech sounds (The history of speech and language impairments, 2011).

Hermann Gutzmann, a German speech-language pathologist, developed techniques for children with language impairments. Lionel Logue, known from "The King's Speech," treated WWI veterans with speech problems using diaphragm exercises and breathing techniques. Speech therapy gained prominence in the early twentieth century, with the establishment of the American Academy of Speech Correction in 1926, further advancing during WWII (The history of speech and language impairments, 2011).

Early practitioners included physicians, teachers, and elocutionists. American physicians learned from European professionals, focusing on dysfluency (stuttering) and articulation problems (Duchan, 2002).

Research shows that speech therapy is effective for stuttering in both children and adults. SLPs work to minimize stuttering and improve communication. Early treatment for children is crucial to enhance speech fluency and form a positive attitude toward communication. For adults and teenagers, therapy aims to lessen stuttering through slow speech, breath control, and coping strategies for social anxiety (Salus University, n.d.).

SLPs also help family members and teachers respond better to stuttering. Experts suggest not interrupting and giving the person time to speak without completing their sentences, as this can cause pressure and hinder fluency (HOW SLPs CAN HELP THOSE WHO STUTTER, n.d.).

Advantages of Speech Therapy

Speech therapy offers numerous benefits for people who stutter, helping to decrease stuttering severity, enhance communication skills, and improve overall quality of life (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, n.d.).

Effectiveness of Speech Therapy: Research supports the effectiveness of speech therapy in significantly improving communication skills and speech fluency. Techniques such as stuttering modification and fluency shaping are particularly effective in reducing the severity and frequency of stuttering, with early intervention yielding better outcomes (Onslow et al., 2018).

Fluency Improvement: Speech therapy improves speech fluency and helps individuals develop better-coping strategies for managing the emotional and social aspects of stuttering. It leads to increased self-efficacy, morale, and reduced social anxiety.

Personalized Approaches: Effective speech therapy techniques include stuttering modification, fluency shaping, and cognitive behavioural therapy. These can be used individually or in combination, depending on the individual's needs. Personalized approaches to therapy, along with early intervention, are crucial for achieving the best results (Constantino et al., 2016).

PERCEPTIONS ON SPEECH THERAPY

Speech therapy can have a significant influence on the experiences and perceptions of the person who stutters. The majority of individuals who stutter state that it has given them many kinds of benefits to their morale, social interactions, and the quality of their life after using speech therapy for their stuttering disorder (Figliomeni, 2015).

Furthermore, in research it was observed that people who stuttered reported several positive aspects of their speech therapy. It included improved speech fluency, self-confidence, and communication skills. The participants of the research also reported that they are understood and supported by the speech-language pathologist (SLPs). The participants also appreciated the flexibility and personalization of the approaches to speech therapy (Koutsodimitropoulos et al., 2016).

In a similar way, in a study it was found that people who stutter stated significant improvements in communication skills, speech fluency, and the quality of their life after being part of group-based speech therapy programs. The Participants of the research also stated that they are feeling more connected to the people who stutter around them and they are feeling more empowered to handle their disorder of stuttering. Although, it is also important to keep in mind that not everyone who stutters may have a positive kind of experience with speech therapy. Few people may feel under pressure or they may be misunderstood by their speech-language pathologists. It can lead to negative kind of feelings and results. The researchers stress the importance of the surety that speech therapy is provided in a supportive and patient-centered manner that also respects the patient's different preferences and experiences (Boyle, 2017).

In conclusion, the overall perceptions of the people who stutter who have received speech therapy can differ based on their experiences and the kind of stuttering. Although, the majority of the people states great improvements in their fluency of speech, the quality of their life, and communication skills after getting treatment through speech therapy.

Research Methodology

Paradigm:

A research paradigm is a framework or perspective within which research is conducted. It includes a set of fundamental beliefs, values, and assumptions that guide the researcher's understanding and interpretation of the research topic (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

This study employs an interpretive paradigm, also referred to as interpretivism, a study methodology that emphasizes the significance of comprehending the meanings that are subjective and explanations that people assign to their experiences. This approach is frequently linked to qualitative research techniques like document analysis, observation, and interviewing (Denzin & Yvonna, 2011).

Method:

This study has employed a qualitative research method to explore the viewpoints of speech language pathologists. Qualitative research seeks to understand societal phenomena from the viewpoint of those involved through the investigation of the individualized meanings and interpretations that participants give to their experiences. This method of study usually entails gathering and analyzing information that is not numerical, such as words, pictures, and findings, using a variety of techniques like interviewing, focus groups, and ethnographic observation (Denzin & Yvonna, 2011).

Study Site:

The current study focuses on Hyderabad City, the second-largest city in the Sindh province and the eighth-largest in Pakistan, and Jamshoro City. The research involved conducting interviews at private and government speech therapy centers. Five centers were selected based on the availability of speech therapists rather than the researcher's preferences, relying solely on the accessibility of clinics within Hyderabad and Jamshoro. The chosen centers are as follows:

1. The Talk Clinic Speech Language Therapy and Audiology, Doctors Lane Saddar.
2. The Real Audiology Hearing Aids and Speech Therapy Centre, Doctors Lane Saddar.
3. Speech World Centre, Quaid-e-Azam Complex Cantonment
4. The Rehabilitation Centre, Jamshoro

Sampling and Population:

The targeted population of this study is ten speech therapists in the regions of Hyderabad and Jamshoro. In addition to that, this study has used convenient sampling. Convenient sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which individuals who meet practical criteria, such as geographic proximity, availability, accessibility, or willingness to participate, are selected from the target population for the study. This method does

not involve a random selection of participants. It is also referred to as Haphazard Sampling or Accidental Sampling (Davis, 2007).

Research Tool:

This research has used semi structured interviews as a tool. A semi-structured interview "combines the advantages of standardized and unstructured interviewing". It allows for some standardization of questions, which can facilitate data analysis and comparison across respondents, but also allows for flexibility and adaptability in response to the particularities of each interviewee's experiences and perspectives (Rocha, 2020).

The current research seeks to investigate the influence of speech therapy on stuttering by gathering input from therapists. The semi-structured interview guide is used to gather in-depth information from participants, providing a comprehensive understanding of experiences and viewpoints. This study has incorporated ten interviews with speech therapists.

Data Analysis:

In the current study, data were analysed using Thematic Analysis, which involved examining and validating themes or patterns in the recorded data. This process entailed developing a comprehensive description of the relevant topic based on the responses from speech therapists. The analysis section presents these responses as themes and codes, which are also depicted diagrammatically in the results section. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research technique employed by researchers to methodically arrange and dissect intricate data collections. Its purpose is to uncover themes that can encapsulate the stories found within these data sets. This procedure entails recognizing these themes through thorough and repeated examination of transcribed data (King, 2004)

Generating themes from Codes

| Codes | Themes |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improves quality of life 2. effectiveness of therapy 3. Positive outcome 4. improved communication skills | Speech therapy efficacy |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Holistic Approach 6. Collaborative approach 7. Universal Effectiveness 8. Universal Benefit of Speech Therapy | Universal effectiveness |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Recovery dependency on practice 10. Outcome dependency on collaboration 11. Personalized treatment plans 12. Session completion impact | Collaborative approach |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Self-confidence building 14. Confidence and stuttering improvement 15. Parental involvement 16. Boost in self-confidence | Elevating self-esteem through speech therapy |

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 17. Fluency enhancing strategies 18. Condition related therapy 19. Stuttering management techniques individualized strategies | Customized approach |
| 20. Speech pattern alteration 21. Individualized strategies 22. Breathing and social interaction 23. Task-based therapy | Diverse Methods in Speech Enhancement |
| 24. Counseling, boost self confidence 25. Boost self-confidence through psychologist 26. Therapy improves their confidence 27. Boost confidence | Self-confidence development |
| 28. No specified time, depends on severity and interest. 29. Depends on the willingness of participants 30. Depends on severity and cooperation 31. Depends on the age and severity | Varied timelines |
| 32. lack of interest, and withdrawal during therapy. 33. client compliance. 34. Non-serious attitude, Give up. 35. non-cooperative behavior of parents | Challenges for speech therapist |
| 36. workshops, symposiums, seminars to be aware. 37. Involvement of parents 38. parent awareness sessions. 39. withdrawal during therapy | Spreading awareness |
| 40. No disadvantage 41. No negative impact 42. No side effects. 43. Frustration | A positive outlook on speech therapy |

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings of Discussion:

The findings of this research indicate that speech therapy is a highly effective method for individuals dealing with stuttering issues. It is evident from the responses of speech therapists that this therapy significantly improves speech fluency and boosts confidence among those who stutter. Moreover, this research underscores

the importance of tailoring therapy to meet the unique needs of each individual, highlighting the fact that there is no one-size-fits-all solution in stuttering therapy.

Furthermore, the research findings emphasize that speech therapy is a collaborative journey involving both the therapist and the individual undergoing treatment. There should be a collaboration between the therapist and the patient and also the patient's family. This collaborative approach plays a pivotal role in achieving favourable outcomes. Additionally, this study recognizes the varied causes of stuttering and how speech therapy is equipped to address these diverse underlying factors such as it is beneficial for biological, psychological, and social causes of stuttering.

In addition to that, the findings also indicate the Varied timelines for stuttering patients to recover. The findings from the responses of the participants suggest that every individual takes different period of time to recover from the condition of stuttering. It depends on the severity of stuttering, the age of patients, the willingness of participants, and consistency. Hence, every individual takes a different time to recover from the condition of stuttering.

However, it is important to acknowledge the challenges that may arise during speech therapy. Responses of speech therapists suggest that some individuals may not take therapy seriously, and there may be financial and time constraints because speech therapy is a time-consuming and expensive process. The gradual nature of progress can also lead to frustration for those undergoing therapy. Additionally, some challenges are also faced by speech therapists such as the non-seriousness of patients, awareness of parents, and non-cooperative behaviour of patients.

The findings of the research also suggest that there should be awareness about the use of speech therapy for stuttering. Seminars, workshops, and symposiums should be arranged to aware people of it. It also suggests that parents of the patients should participate actively in the process and they should get the awareness about the benefits of speech therapy.

In conclusion, my research unequivocally supports the notion that speech therapy is a valuable and transformative tool for individuals who stutter. It enhances communication skills and overall quality of life. Despite the challenges, my findings affirm the positive impact of speech therapy, advocating for its continued use and improvement in stuttering treatment.

Findings of Research Questions:

What is the influence of speech therapy on stuttering?

The findings of this study indicate that speech therapy has a highly favourable impact on stuttering, addressing several critical aspects. It significantly improves communication abilities, boosts self-esteem, and reduces the frequency and severity of stuttering through personalized methods like controlled breathing and desensitization.

Furthermore, speech therapy plays a crucial role in building self-confidence. Therapists use various approaches, including counselling and psychological support, to help individuals confront and overcome social challenges associated with stuttering, such as fear of judgment or exclusion. This transformative potential extends beyond speech improvement, fundamentally shaping how individuals perceive themselves and interact with the world.

However, the study also uncovered challenges linked to speech therapy, including non-serious attitudes and lack of cooperation among patients and their parents, as well as inconsistency in attending therapy sessions. The gradual progress in therapy can lead to frustration, causing some individuals to discontinue therapy prematurely.

Despite these challenges, the overall consensus among participants is positive, viewing speech therapy as a powerful tool for empowerment. In summary, speech therapy positively influences stuttering by enhancing communication skills, developing self-confidence, and improving the quality of life. These findings underscore the importance of raising awareness and addressing challenges to further enhance the effectiveness of therapy.

In what ways speech therapy is beneficial to reduce stuttering?

The study reveals that speech therapy significantly improves communication skills and self-esteem in individuals who stutter. Techniques like controlled breathing, slow speech, and desensitization reduce the frequency and severity of stuttering, leading to better speech articulation.

Moreover, speech therapy positively impacts self-confidence. Individuals who stutter often gain self-assurance as they see progress in therapy, which helps reduce anxiety related to stuttering. This boost in confidence plays a crucial role in decreasing stuttering instances.

Additionally, speech therapy fosters a positive attitude toward communication. It equips individuals with tools to manage stuttering effectively, reducing fear and apprehension associated with speaking.

Personalized treatment plans are also essential. Therapists tailor strategies to meet each individual's unique needs, ensuring that therapy targets specific aspects of stuttering for more effective results.

The collaborative approach in speech therapy, involving patients, therapists, and families, ensures comprehensive support. This teamwork helps individuals manage stuttering both during therapy sessions and in their daily lives.

In summary, speech therapy benefits individuals by improving communication skills, enhancing self-esteem, fostering positive attitudes toward communication, offering personalized treatment, and encouraging collaborative efforts. These findings underscore the transformative nature of speech therapy in addressing stuttering, making it a valuable resource for those seeking to overcome this speech disorder.

Recommendations and Suggestions:

Based on the comprehensive findings of this study, several key recommendations and suggestions emerge to further advance the field of speech therapy for individuals who stutter. First and foremost, there is a critical need to enhance public awareness about the effectiveness of speech therapy and the paramount importance of early intervention. Achieving this could be facilitated through the organization of workshops, symposiums, and seminars that aim to disseminate information about stuttering, its treatment options, and the positive impact of early therapy. By raising awareness, I can ensure that individuals who stutter and their families are well-informed and can seek help proactively, potentially minimizing the long-term effects of stuttering on communication and self-esteem.

Additionally, promoting collaboration is a pivotal recommendation stemming from this research. Encouraging a collaborative approach between speech therapists, individuals who stutter, and their families can significantly enhance the overall effectiveness of therapy. Collaboration fosters a sense of shared responsibility and engagement in the therapeutic process. Through open communication and active involvement, individuals who stutter can work closely with their therapists to set goals, track progress, and make necessary adjustments to their treatment plans. This collaborative effort can not only lead to more tailored and successful outcomes but also empower individuals to take ownership of their speech therapy journey.

Furthermore, it is recommended to prioritize continuous professional development for speech therapists. Given the dynamic nature of the field and the ever-evolving techniques and approaches in stuttering therapy, ongoing training and education are essential. Advocating for opportunities for speech therapists to engage in continuous learning and skill enhancement ensures that they remain up-to-date with the latest advancements in the field. This, in turn, equips them with the knowledge and tools necessary to provide the highest quality of care to individuals who stutter, continually improving the efficacy of therapy and the overall well-being of their patients.

In conclusion, these recommendations underscore the importance of not only increasing awareness and collaboration but also investing in the professional growth of speech therapists. By implementing these suggestions, we can create a more supportive and effective environment for individuals who stutter, ultimately leading to improved outcomes and a better quality of life for those affected by this speech disorder.

Limitations of the study:

The study has several notable limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the relatively small sample size of speech therapists involved in the research may limit the generalizability of the findings. A larger and more diverse sample of speech therapists would provide a more representative perspective of the field and its practices. Moreover, the absence of direct input from individuals who stutter is another limitation. Including the viewpoints of those undergoing therapy would have enriched the study by offering a firsthand account of their experiences, needs, and expectations, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the subject.

Furthermore, it's important to note that this study did not delve into specific therapeutic techniques employed in stuttering therapy. This omission leaves room for future research to explore and analyze the various therapeutic approaches and methods utilized by speech therapists in greater detail. A more in-depth examination of these techniques could yield valuable insights into their effectiveness and guide the development of evidence-based

best practices in the field. In conclusion, while this study contributes valuable insights, it is essential to recognize these limitations as they shape the scope and applicability of the research findings.

Implications of the study:

The implications drawn from this study carry significant weight in reaffirming the transformative power of speech therapy for individuals who stutter. The findings underscore the profound positive impact that speech therapy can have on two critical aspects: self-esteem and communication skills. This highlights the potential for therapy not only to address the physical aspects of stuttering but also to bolster individuals' overall self-confidence and their ability to effectively communicate.

Furthermore, the identified themes within the study emphasize the necessity of adopting a collaborative and personalized approach in stuttering therapy. The research underscores that a one-size-fits-all approach is insufficient, given the unique needs and experiences of each individual who stutters. Therefore, the study accentuates the importance of tailoring therapeutic interventions to cater to the specific challenges and characteristics of each patient. This personalized approach ensures that therapy is maximally effective and that individuals feel valued and engaged in their own therapeutic journey.

Additionally, the study brings attention to the diversity of strategies employed by speech therapists to enhance fluency and confidence among those who stutter. This diversity reflects the dynamic nature of the field, with therapists utilizing a wide array of techniques, exercises, and interventions. These varied approaches can be seen as a testament to the adaptability and innovation within speech therapy, as therapists strive to find the most effective methods for each individual.

In sum, the implications of this study serve as a testament to the transformative potential of speech therapy in boosting self-esteem and communication skills. They underscore the need for tailored, collaborative, and diverse approaches to therapy, promoting a holistic and effective method for individuals who stutter to overcome their challenges and achieve an improved quality of life.

Conclusion

This comprehensive study highlights the profound positive impact of speech therapy on individuals who stutter, enhancing both their speech and overall well-being. Input from experienced speech therapists affirmed the transformative power of speech therapy in improving patients' lives by addressing speech disorders, fostering self-esteem, and boosting confidence.

Despite challenges such as patient disinterest, limited parental involvement, and long therapy sessions, the essential role of speech therapy remains clear. Therapists emphasized that without speech therapy, meaningful improvements in speech and self-esteem are difficult to achieve.

The study also noted that speech therapy raises awareness about stuttering and reduces its associated stigma, providing practical benefits and a better understanding of the condition.

Overall, this research underscores the transformative potential of speech therapy and the need for ongoing development in the field to address challenges and ensure optimal support for individuals who stutter.

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