

Primary School Teachers' Attitudes regarding Stuttering of School Age Children at First Al-Karkh Education Directorate in Baghdad City

Rafea Qadri Meteab Al-Qaisi¹, Eqbal Ghanim Ali², Ali Kareem Khudhair, PhD³

¹Academic Nurse, Ministry of Health, PhD, ²Professor and Academic Supervisor, College of Nursing, University of Baghdad, ³Professor and Academic Supervisor, College of Nursing, University of Kerbala

Abstract

Objective(s): To assess primary school teachers' attitudes regarding the stuttering of school-age children at first al-karkh education directorate in Baghdad city, and find out the relationships between primary school teachers' attitudes regarding stuttering and their demographic characteristics

Methodology: The study started from the period of 20th September 2018 to the 1st of March 2020. Probability samples of 370 primary school teachers were chosen randomly. The questionnaire was designed and composed of two parts: the first part deals with the teachers' demographic data; the second part includes a stuttering attitude scale. Determined reliability of the questionnaire through a pilot study and determined validity through a panel of (31) experts. The data was collected through the self-administration method was used by asking the participants to complete the format of the questionnaire and fulfill the questions, and it described statistically and analyzed through the use of descriptive and inferential statistical analysis procedures.

Results: The findings of the present study indicate that (71.3 %) of the study sample has a neutral level of attitudes toward stuttering of school-age children.

Conclusions: The study concludes that most of the teachers' attitudes were neutral related to the stuttering of school-age children, and there are no effects of socio-demographic characteristics of teachers' on their knowledge about stuttering.

Recommendations: The study recommended an education program about stuttering for primary schools' teachers to improving their attitudes toward children who stutter (CWS) in the school environment, and there are no effect socio-demographic characteristics of teachers' on their attitude toward stuttering.

Keywords: Primary School Teachers, Attitudes, School Age Children, Stuttering

Introduction

Stuttering exists in all cultures and societies throughout the world (Al-Khaledi et al., 2009; Nicholls, 2013; Safwat & Sheikhany, 2014). It is a fluency disorder characterized by involuntary disruptions of the flow of speech, hindering the production of continuous, smooth and effortless speech (Silva et al., 2016), It is a communication disorder that interferes with a person's ability to speak fluently. It involves the repetition, prolongation, or blockage of sounds, syllables, or words (Scott & Guitar, 2010). Stuttering is a speech disorder

that affects the fluency of speech, it is speech events that contain monosyllabic, whole-word repetitions, part-word repetitions, audible sound prolongations, or silent fixations or blockages; these may or may not be accompanied by accessory behaviors. Roughly 3 million Americans stutter. Stuttering affects people of all ages. It occurs most often in children between the ages of 2 and 5 years old as they are developing their language skills (Terry, 2015). It has been estimated that about one percent of the general population stutters. This would amount to almost three million stutterers in the

United States alone. Stuttering is about three or four times more common in males than in females (Nicholls, 2013). Stuttering can be classified into neurogenic is derived from brain damage vascular or traumatic origin and developmental stuttering that defined as the result of a dysfunction of the central nervous system with a genetic basis, which appears in the period of acquisition and development of language, between 18 months and seven years of age (Silva et al., 2016). Developmental stuttering is the most common type of stuttering usually develops of its own accord in childhood, although in rare cases it may begin much later. Approximately 5 percent of all children go through a period of stuttering that lasts six months or more. Three-quarters of those will recover by late childhood, leaving about 1% with a long-term problem (Scott & Guitar, 2010; Hobbs, 2012). The exact causes of stuttering are unknown (Jenkins, 2010). It can result from an interaction of factors including child development, family dynamics, genetics, and neurophysiology (Scott & Guitar, 2010). The evolution of developmental stuttering causes serious consequences in the life of a child, hampering their communication and may cause psychological impacts, generate negative emotions, shyness, fear related to speech and anxiety. Thus, the child is more exposed to errors of judgment and thus to improper attitudes of their teachers before his/her speech difficulty (Silva et al., 2016). For CWS, bullying and other forms of victimization such as teasing can be a problem and are common (Nicholls, 2013). Several studies have investigated the incidence of stuttering-related teasing or bullying, and have found between 44% and 83% of children who stutter (CWS) experience bullying or some other form of victimization from their peers (Nicholls, 2013; Blood et al., 2011). School-age children spend a considerable amount of time at school and there is little doubt that teachers are authority figures who can have a significant influence on their lives during these formative years (Abdalla & St. Louis, 2012; Placencia, 2014; Abrahams, 2015; Abrahams et al., 2016). Thus, educators play an important role in the educational development of CWS, their attitudes can significantly affect the performance of students in the classroom, as well as their progression (Jenkins, 2010; Silva et al., 2016). Many CWS testify that stuttering negatively impacted their self-confidence in school, academic capacity, and relationships with teachers and peers (St. Louis, 2011).

Materials and Method

Study Design: Descriptive cross-sectional study design was conducted on teachers working in governmental primary schools at first Al-Karkh education directorate in Baghdad city, the study started from the period of 20th September 2018 to 1st March 2020 and aims to assess primary school teachers' attitudes toward stuttering of school-age children, and find out the relationships between primary school teachers' attitudes toward stuttering and their demographic characteristics.

Study Sample: Probability samples of 370 primary school teachers and currently works in government primary schools were selected from 30 primary schools at first Al-Karkh education directorate in Baghdad City they were chosen randomly from each school.

The Study Instruments: To measure the primary school teachers' attitudes toward stuttering, the instrument was designed and constructed by the investigators depending on the Arabic version of adopted and developed Public Opinion Survey of Human Attributes-Stuttering Scale (POSHA-S) (St. Louis, 2011; Abdalla & St. Louis, 2012), the questionnaire format consists of two parts:

Part I: Teacher's Demographic Characteristics: This section includes (6) items concerning the respondents' general characteristics: age of teacher, gender, residency, marital status, education level, and their teaching experience years.

Part II: Stuttering Attitude Scale: This part of the questionnaire is composed of 40 items concerned with the teacher's attitude toward stuttering, it includes beliefs and reaction sections. The questionnaire used a paper-and-pencil format and asked participants to respond to each statement by answering (Yes), (To some extent) or (No).

Data collection: The data collected by the investigators, Participants were asked to complete a self-administered questionnaire, after taking the initial consent of each teacher to participate in the study, the process started from the 20th of February until the 30th of May 2019.

Rating and Scoring of the Questionnaire Format: The items have been rated and scored according to the

following patterns: Three-point Likert scales are used for rating the items as yes =3, to some extent =2, no =1, except all negatively worded questions are reversing scored. The total score ranged between (40- 120). The lowest score indicated a negative attitude while the highest score reflects a positive attitude.

Data Analyses: This analysis was performed through the computation frequencies, percentages, arithmetic mean, standard deviation (SD), mean of the score (MS) and relative sufficiency(RS%). Contingency Coefficients (C.C.) test was used to the assessment of the relationship between overall attitudes of participants and other variables.

Results

Most of the study sample were represented (34.1%) within age groups of (40-49) years, (83.8%) were females, the highest percentage (93.2%) of the study sample are living in urban residential area, (71.9%) of the study sample were (Married), (40.3%) were graduates from (Institute/2 year Diploma degree), and (35.9%) have (10-19) years' experience in teaching.

Assessment by RS%: (33.33 – 55.55) Negative; (55.56 – 77.77) Neutral (77.78– 100) Positive

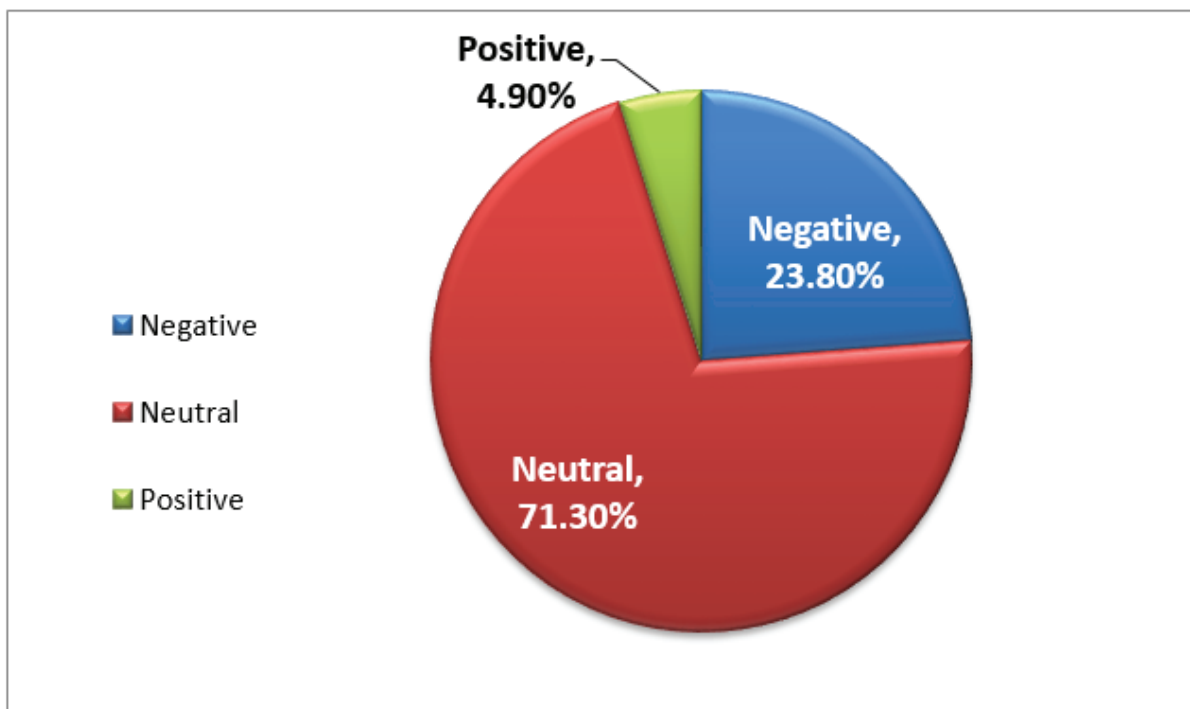


Figure (1): Distribution of the Teachers' Attitudes toward Levels of Assessment.

The results in figure (1) indicate that (71.30 %) of the study sample represents neutral level of attitudes, while only (4.90%) have positive attitudes toward CWS.

Table (1): Association between Attitude of primary school teachers and their socio-demographic characteristics

No.	Socio-demographic characteristics	Attitude		
		C.C.	Sig.	C.S.(*)
1.	Age Groups	0.097	0.476	NS
2.	Gender	0.099	0.056	NS
3.	Residence	0.020	0.702	NS
4.	Marital Status	0.097	0.316	NS
5.	Education level	0.103	0.414	NS
6.	Number of teaching experience years	0.142	0.054	NS

(*)HS: Highly significant at P<0.01; S: significant at P<0.05; NS: Non-significant at P>0.05; Testing based on Contingency Coefficients (C.C.).

This table shows no-significant relationship between socio-demographical characteristics and attitudes of primary school teachers toward stuttering.

Discussion

The analysis of the (POSHA-S) scale showed that less than three-quarters of the study sample had neutral, and a little less than a quarter had negative attitudes toward CWS in the figure (1). The findings of this study agree with (Parasuram, 2006) who mention that a teachers had a neutral response to disability in general, and agree with (Irani et al., 2012) they mention that majority of Arab teachers reported neutral attitudes toward people who stutter (PWS) and, close to one-third of the Arab teachers reported relatively negative attitudes toward PWS. Also agree with (Abrahams, 2015) who reported that most of his study sample (62%) was in neutral level, and agree with (Abrahams et al., 2016) they mention that overall result indicates neutral attitudes towards stuttering.

Conclusions

According to the findings of the present study, the researcher concluded that most of the study samples at age group (40 - 49 years), the vast majority of the primary school teachers were female, and, teachers' attitudes were neutral related to stuttering of school-age children. There is no significant association was found

between teachers' attitudes toward stuttering and their socio-demographic characteristics.

Recommendations

Education program about stuttering is essential to improve the teachers' attitudes toward stuttering, and using mass media and television for educating the community as a whole and not teachers only.

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Conflict of Interest: None to declare.

Ethical Clearance: All experimental protocols were approved under the Ministry of Health and all experiments were carried out in accordance with approved guidelines.

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