

Behavioral Pattern and Level of Aggression in people with Speech Disorders

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Abstract

Speech disorders can affect the way that a person creates sound to form words and then to sentences. The most common experienced speech disorder is stuttering. The personality profile of a stutterer is more or less complicated. The behavioral pattern varies with restlessness, impatience and tension. They may show more tendencies to suppress their anger and aggression with the belief that they were not able to express words before other people. The present study is an attempt to find out the behavioral pattern and the level of aggression in people with stuttering. The subjects were 120 male adults (60 stutterers and 60 non stutterers) from different districts of Kerala. The tool used in the present study are Type A/B Behavioral Pattern Scale (ABBPS) developed by Upinder Dhair and Manisha Jain (2001) and the Aggression Questionnaire developed by G.C Pati (1976). The analysis was done in SPSS version 20, and t-test was the main statistical analysis employed. The results showed that majority of the adult stutterers belongs to type A behavioral pattern and the level of aggression was not found to be significant while comparing adult stutterers with adult non stutterers.

Keywords: Behavioral Pattern, Aggression, Speech Disorder

Speech disorder is a communication disorder in which the normal speech is disrupted also termed as speech impediments. Stuttering is the common type of speech disorder experienced. The American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA) define communication disorder as: "Impairment in the ability to receive, sends, process, and comprehends concepts or verbal, nonverbal and graphic symbol systems. A communication disorder may be evident in the processes of hearing, language, and/or speech. A communication disorder may range in severity from mild to profound. It may be developmental or acquired. Individuals may demonstrate one or any combination of the three aspects of communication disorders. A communication disorder may result in a primary disability or it may be secondary to other disabilities" (ASHA, 1993). Communication disorders may range from sound substitutions to the inability to use speech and language. Speech difficulties in adult are common and come in many forms including stuttering, dysarthria, voice problems and articulation difficulties. The speech disorder involved in the current study is stuttering. In stuttering the flow of speech is disrupted by involuntary repetitions and prolongations of sounds, syllables, words or phrases as well as involuntary silent pauses or blocks in which the person who stutters is unable to produce sound. Wingate's (1964) definition of stuttering is probably the most accepted one by professionals in this area. He defines stuttering as a "disruption in the forward flow of speech which is characterized by involuntary, audible or silent, repletion or prolongation in the utterance of short speech elements, namely sounds, syllables and words of one syllable. These disruptions usually occur frequently or are marked in character and are not readily controllable". This definition included descriptions of accessory movements of the speech mechanism or other parts of the body. These accessory features of stuttering accompany the disruptions of verbal fluency and may be seen as being related to the struggle behaviors of stuttering. Wingate stated that the individual who stutters often experiences alterations in emotion that may be as general as an increase in tension or excitement or as specifically negative as the occurrence of fear, embarrassment, or similar emotions. Chronic stuttering may be accompanied by ocular, auditory or physiological manifestations such as eye movements, grimaces or linguistic circumlocutions which may occur when the speaker tries to avoid certain words. The presence and severity of stuttering vary and may be predicted to some extent by the communicative environment and the words being uttered.

The behavioral patterns of people who stutter are characterized by restlessness, impatience, tenseness and time urgency. Like any frustrating experience, stuttering can cause anger. It is one of the personality trait in which a stutterer is unwilling to express their anger openly. The more anger they feel, they are less willing to express it openly. Hence they are likely

to stutter more severely. Some individuals may direct the feelings of anger inwards that is they hate themselves which leads to a vicious cycle or self fulfilling prophecy or failure. Some stutters direct their feeling of anger outward to other people and this can affect their relationships in their work settings and in their society and create a vicious cycle of failure. They may also express their anger in terms of aggressive activities towards the environment. So in the current study an attempt has made to understand the behavioral pattern and aggression of people with stuttering.

Objectives

1. To find out the behavioral pattern of adult stutters.
2. To find out the significant difference in the level of aggression between adult stutters and adult non stutters.

Hypotheses

1. The behavioral pattern of adult stutters will be type A.
2. There will be no significant difference in the level of aggression between adult stutters and adult non stutters.

Method

Participants

The participants of this study consist of 120 subjects, 60 stutters and 60 non stutters. Only male stutters were included in the study whose age ranges from twenty five to fifty. The data were collected from various stutters belonging to different districts of Kerala. Purposive random sampling method was used for data collection.

Instruments

1. Type A/B Behavioral Pattern Scale (ABBPS) - This scale was developed by Upinder Dhair and Manisha Jain (2001) and this scale has two parts – Form A and Form B to measure Type A and Type B behavior patterns separately. The scale constituted 33 items, 17 items in form A and 16 items in form B. The form A measures six characteristics of a person such as tenseness, impatience, restlessness, achievement orientation, domineering and workaholic. The form B measures five characteristics of a person such as complacent, easygoing, non- assertive, relaxed and patience. The reliability coefficient of form A was found to be .54 and for form B also, it was found to be .54. The validity was found to be .73 for both form A and form B.
2. The Aggression Questionnaire- The Aggression Questionnaire was developed by G.C Pati (1976).The questionnaire consists of 16 questions, which describes 16 different

situations relating to family, peers, certain outside persons, antisocial characters, police and court. The reliability of the questionnaire was found to be .71 and the validity was found to be .82.

3. Personal Data Sheet- Personal information like age, sex, religion, occupation, marital status, type of family, birth order of the participants were collected using personal data sheet.

Procedure

The investigator collected the data from Stuttering Foundation Kochi. Then the participants were directly contacted and explained about the aim of the study and the procedure prior to collecting the data. After completion the research instruments were collected back and checked for incompleteness. Scoring was done as per the manual and entered into a spread sheet for further statistical analysis. Similarly data was collected from the non stutterers also who were matched on the basis of age, sex, educational qualification, monthly income, birth order and marital status.

Results and Discussion

The first objective of the study was to find out the behavioral pattern of adult stutterer, whether they belongs to Type A behavior pattern or Type B behavior pattern. The results are presented in the following table.

Table 1

Percentage of type A and type B behavioral pattern of adult stutterers

| Behavioral Pattern | Percentage of stutterers |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Type A | 80% |
| Type B | 20% |

Table 1 shows the percentage of stutterers belonging to type A and type B behavioral pattern. Among the 60 adult stutterers majority of them, i.e, 80% comes under the category of Type A personality. The remaining 20% of adult stutterers comes under the category of Type B personality. This may be because most of the stutterers had a high tendency towards hostility, sense of immense time urgency and impatience that seems to be the characteristics of a Type A personality person. They may speak fast, act fast, see goals and challenges everywhere and may be due to these they stutters. In the case of Type B stutterers, they may work hard and may have considerable drive but they feel no conflict with people or time. They may be more relaxed and

easy going than Type A stutterers. They may accept situations and work within those situations rather than fight them competitively.

Level of Aggression between adult stutterer and adult non stutterer.

The second objective of the study was to find out the significant difference in the aggression between adult stutterer and adult non stutterer. To find out the significant difference, descriptive statistics was calculated and the results are presented in the following table.

Table 2

Means, standard deviations and t value relating to the significance of the difference between the stutterers and non stutterers on aggression.

| Variable | Group | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | t-value |
|------------|----------------|----|--------|----------------|---------|
| Aggression | Stutterers | 60 | 471.22 | 51.089 | 0.439 |
| | Non stutterers | 60 | 475.50 | 55.801 | |

Table 2 gives the means, standard deviations and t value relating to the significance of the difference between the stutterers and non stutterers on aggression. It can be seen that there is no significant difference in aggression between stutterers and non stutterers. But by comparing the mean value of aggression between stutterers and non stutterers, it can be seen that non stutterers (Mean= 475.50) are more aggressive than stutterers (Mean= 471.22). The result was opposing the finding of Blood and Blood (2007). They conducted a study of self-reported experience of physical aggression and bullying of boys who stutter: Relation to increased anxiety. This study examined the relationship of self-reported anxiety and vulnerability to bullying for 18 children who stuttered and 18 children who did not stutter. More children who stuttered were at significantly higher risk of experiencing bullying behavior (61%) than children who did not stutter (22%); 39% of children who stuttered scored at least one standard deviation above the mean on the Revised Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale, suggestive of higher anxiety. In contrast, only 6% of children who did not stutter scored at least one standard deviation above the mean. The correlation was .82 for children who stuttered between greater vulnerability to bullying and self-reported anxiety. A bidirectional relationship is hypothesized between high anxiety and bullying of children who stutter.

Conclusion

Most of the people with speech disorders share somewhat similar characteristics. Their mode of speech was very rushed which can lead to more stuttering. Same time they share the characteristics of impatience and time urgency. Their impatience can add on to their anger and follows lower levels of aggression when compared with that of those who do not stutters. A speech therapist and psychologist can develop some feasible strategies that may enable the stutterers to deal effectively with other peoples and also to develop a better functioning of their life. The findings of the present investigation is helpful for clinicians to get an awareness that people presenting for help with managing their stuttering are likely to have chronically raised levels of various psychosocial and many adjustment problems. Through the present study, it is possible to know more about the factors affected to a stutterer and can give a better ability to understand the disorder and help the individual to cope with it in positive and healthy ways.

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