

# Assessment of Primary School Teachers' Knowledge about Stuttering of School-Age Children at First Al-Karkh Education Directorate in Baghdad City

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## Abstract

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

**Methodology:** The study started from the period of 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 to the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 knowledge 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 (53.5%) of the study sample have poor knowledge about stuttering of school-age children, and the no-significant relationship between teachers' demographical characteristics and their knowledge about stuttering.

**Conclusions:** The study concludes that most of the teachers' had poor knowledge about 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 for primary school teachers about stuttering to improving their knowledge about stuttering in the school environment.

**Keywords:** Primary School Teachers, Knowledge, Stuttering, School Age Children.

## Introduction

Stuttering is the most prevalent fluency disorder; it is a disruption in the flow of talking characterized by the repetitions of sounds or words, sound prolongations, and blocks, that may affect the rate and rhythm of speech, these core behaviors may be accompanied by avoidance of words, or speaking situations, physical tension, and negative reactions<sup>17, 29, 31</sup>. It is a complex problem, also known as stammering<sup>6,10,15,18,19,20</sup>. Stuttering is a common disorder that exists worldwide and in all cultures and races<sup>1,4,12,21</sup>, is indiscriminate of

intelligence, income, and occupation, it affects people of all ages and both gender, despite the difference in prevalence rates. Nearly 5% of all children stuttering for a period of their life, although there is no known cure for stuttering, 75% of children who stutter (CWS) will outgrow or recover spontaneously without any treatment by late childhood, and remaining about 1% with lifetime disorder<sup>25</sup>. This can be attributed to factors such as the age of onset, gender, duration of stuttering moments, and family history<sup>25</sup>.

Although there are many theories and abundant research about the stuttering, the specific etiology of stuttering remains unknown<sup>5</sup>, most scholars agree that stuttering has a multifactorial etiology. This means that stuttering is most likely the result of the interaction of genetics, environmental factors (such as stressful life events, parent attitudes), and developmental factors (such as physical, cognitive, speech-language skills)<sup>21</sup>. These factors are typically combined and can be the deciding factor in a child spontaneously recovering or becoming a person who stutters their entire life<sup>29</sup>.

Teachers carry a large share of the responsibility for children's educational development, this responsibility may be greater when it comes to children with disabilities<sup>24</sup>. Moreover, teachers' empathy and behavior as their interactions with CWS can have an effect on the way these children are viewed and treated by their peers<sup>14</sup>.

School-age children spend a significant amount of time at school, and there is no doubt that teachers are authority figures who can have a significant influence on their lives during early years of life<sup>1,2,3,22</sup> also, teachers play an important role in the educational development of CWS, their attitudes can significantly affect the performance of school-age children in the classroom, as well as their progression, Many CWS testify that stuttering negatively impacted their self-confidence in school, academic capacity, and relationships with teachers and peers.

## 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 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 to 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and aims to assess knowledge of primary school teachers' about the stuttering of school-age children, and find out the relationships between primary school teachers' knowledge about 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:** The instrument was constructed by the investigators to measure the primary school teachers' knowledge about stuttering, 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.

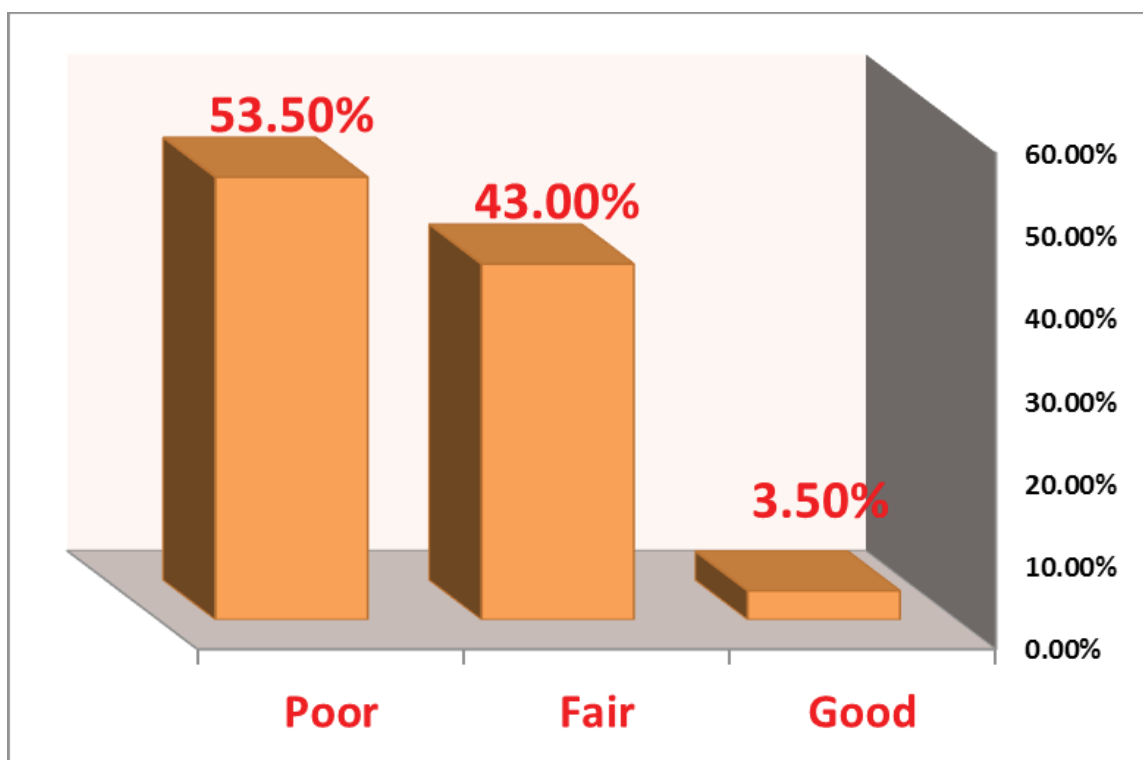
**Part II: Stuttering Knowledge Scale:** This part of questionnaire format comprised of a multi choices questions (26 items) concerning the teacher knowledge about stuttering, true and false choices have been scored and rated on two levels dichotomous scale true answer and false answer, (2) points for the true answer and (1) point for the false answer. The total score ranged from a maximum score of 52 to a minimum 26 with the higher score indicated of more complete knowledge of stuttering while the lowest score indicated poor knowledge.

**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 20<sup>th</sup> of February until the 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2019.

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

## Results

This result indicates that most of the study sample were represented (34.1%) within age groups of (40-49) years, and (83.8%) were females. Also, the highest percentage (93.2%) of the study sample are living in an 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%: (50.00 – 66.66) Poor; (66.67– 83.33) Fair; (83.34– 100) Good**

**Figure (1): Distribution of the Teachers' knowledge according to levels of Assessment**

The results in figure (1) illustrate that more than half (53.5%) of the study sample represents poor knowledge.

### Discussion

Totally, the result of the current study revealed that overall knowledge about stuttering of school-age children of the majority of teachers was poor knowledge, which represented more than half of study sample, and over a third of the sample had fair knowledge, and only (3.5%) had good knowledge about stuttering (figure 1). The findings and evaluation of the teachers' knowledge in the present study, lead to consider teachers' responses as unsatisfactory, especially if take into account that the majority of questions were not practical but theoretical. The findings of this study were in agreement with previous study conducted by St. Louis, (2005) they reported that study sample had poor knowledge about stuttering and agree with (de Britto Pereira et al., 2008) they mention that study sample had poor knowledge about stuttering. Also agree with <sup>13</sup> who mention that teachers demonstrate an overall poor knowledge about stuttering.

### Conclusions

Most of the primary school teachers were poor knowledge about the stuttering of school-age children, and there is no significant association between teachers' attitudes toward stuttering and their demographic characteristics.

#### Recommendations:

Education program about stuttering is fundamental to increase the teachers' knowledge about stuttering, and using mass media for educating the community as a whole and not teachers only.

**Financial Disclosure:** There is no financial disclosure.

**Conflict of Interest:** None to declare.

#### Ethical Clearance

All experimental protocols were approved under the College of Nursing and all experiments were carried out in accordance with approved guidelines.

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