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Impact of Stuttering on the Life of University Students who Stutter

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Abstract: This study aimed to investigate how stuttering impacts students' academic life, interpersonal relationships, their pattern of speech-related fear and anxiety, the impact of their emotions on the severity of stuttering, and their thoughts, beliefs, and feelings towards stuttering. Fifteen Students with stuttering (SWS) from three different universities in Bangladesh participated in an interview session conducted by the investigator, where they responded to eleven open-ended questions comprising four thematic domains. The findings revealed that stuttering significantly affects the quality of life of SWS as they tend to avoid verbal communication. They avoid interacting with teachers or participating in presentations and viva sessions, which results in low grades. Students are also concerned about their future career opportunities. They perceive their disfluency of speech very negatively, and negative feelings like fear and anger exacerbate their speech difficulties. However, most of the students think stuttering does not affect their relationships with family members and friends. The experiences of SWS are mostly unrecognized in Bangladesh's academic setting due to the lack of research on this topic in Bangladesh. This study can enhance the awareness and understanding of general people and professionals who deal with SWS about their challenges, which can lead to adequate support and empathy creating a more inclusive academic setting.

Keywords: Stuttering, University Students, Students with Stuttering (SWS), Academic Challenges, Quality of Life.

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1. Introduction

Stuttering, characterized as a speech disfluency, not only impacts verbal communication but also has significant psychological and social consequences (Guitar, 2013). It has been recognized for centuries with significant contributions from both eastern and western research traditions (Venkatesan, 2024). Incidents of stuttering can be found in the history of biblical times where stuttering symptoms were reported in Moses (Garfinkel, 1995). In an attempt to explain the causes of stuttering and its origin, researchers produced a range of theories and models (Packman & Attanasio, 2017). Involuntary disruption of verbal fluency, including blockages, extension, and repetition of sounds, syllables, or words, as well as secondary behaviors such as increased eye blinking, lip or jaw quivering, head jerks, and clenched fists, are the hallmarks of stuttering (Rehman et. al, 2022).

The prevalence of stuttering varies significantly across different populations and age groups. Research indicates that stuttering affects approximately 5% to 10% of preschool-aged children, with a notable recovery rate of 65% to 85% as they grow older (Sander & Osborne, 2019). In Portugal, it is estimated that stuttering affects around 1% of the adult population, and 100,000 people in total are affected by stuttering (**Alarcão**, 2023). While the prevalence of stuttering is relatively low in the adult population, its impact on individuals' social and emotional well-being can be profound. However, the prevalence of stuttering in Bangladesh is a complex issue as it is not extensively documented, as awareness about stuttering, healthcare access, and treatment practices for these people are not given much emphasis.

While stuttering is often viewed as a disorder primarily affecting speech fluency, it is essential to recognize the emotional and psychological dimensions that accompany it, such as anxiety and

low self-esteem, which can further complicate the experience of those affected and impact their life negatively. Individuals with stuttering avoid speaking as they are treated differently. Personal experiences, biographical accounts, and empirical research consistently indicate that individuals who stutter may encounter feelings of humiliation, embarrassment, and anxiety, challenges in communication, and a pervasive sense of discontent with life attributable to stuttering (Craig et al., 2009; Iverach & Rapee, 2014). This experience is not uncommon in SWS as they feel deprived, misunderstood, and stigmatized. They often tend to avoid speaking as they do not want to be bullied or looked down on by their classmates, seniors, juniors, and teachers. Research suggests that school-aged children have negative encounters or experiences in academic settings (Daniels et al., 2012). These experiences significantly hamper students' competency in educational participation, which leads to an adverse impact on students' academic performance as well as the overall quality of life. The awareness of stuttering and its impacts on students' academic lives is needed to help these students grow without hindrance.

Research from different cultures and countries revealed that stuttering impacts students' psychological health and their academic life. However, in Bangladesh, fluency disorders are not explored, explained, or emphasized enough, which leads to unawareness of the sufferings of Bangladeshi SWS. To address this gap in research on Bangladeshi SWS, this study aims to investigate

a) The effects of stuttering on the academic life of SWS
b) The impact of stuttering on the interpersonal relationships of SWS
c) The impact of the emotions of SWS on their stuttering
d) The SWS's thoughts on future job opportunities

2.   Literature Review

2.1. Stuttering

Stuttering is a distinct speech fluency disorder affecting individuals of all ages. It can persist into adulthood if untreated. Stuttering is primarily categorized into three common types: developmental stuttering, psychogenic stuttering and neurogenic stuttering. Among these three types, the most common one is developmental stuttering which starts from early childhood due to an underlying neurological abnormality affecting 5 to 10% of preschoolers (Sander & Osborne, 2019). The psychogenic stuttering results from psychological factors and may produce an atypical pattern of speech that is different from developmental stuttering (Mišura, 2020). Neurogenic stuttering can occur at any age due to trauma or injury of the brain (Mišura, 2020). According to Morgan et al. (2023), the common characteristics of stuttering are:

- Repetition of speech sounds, words, or syllables
- Prolongations of speech sounds, words, or syllables
- Hesitation in speech
- Blocking in speech

From the linguistics perspective, it has been found that word length and frequency can predict the events of stuttering, such as longer words and low frequency words are more likely to be stuttered (Warner et al., 2023). Besides these speech and language features, stuttering has some physical involuntary behaviors that are mostly not noticeable to the general eye. These features are known as secondary characteristics of stuttering, which mostly evolve once the individual becomes aware of his stuttering. Some researchers suggested these movements as the characteristics of Tourette syndrome, which evolves or pairs with

developmental stuttering (Thirumalai et al., 2015; Nilles, Berg, Fleming, Martino, & Pringsheim, 2023). According to Thirumalai et al. (2015), the common secondary behaviors include:

- Involuntary facial, eye, mouth, neck, shoulder, limb, trunk, and pelvic movements
- Adventitious sounds
- Motor or vocal tics

2.2. Impacts of Stuttering on Academic Life

The academic experience of a student who stutters tends to involve significantly higher levels of anxiety and greater challenges than that of students without stuttering. Klompas & Ross (2004) investigate the life experiences of 16 South African adults who stutter. The results of that study show that participants' academic performance at school was impacted, as they faced difficulties with presentations and bonding with teachers and classmates. The incidence of bullying by classmates came across the findings of this study, which makes these students more aware and ashamed of their disfluency of speech. A large portion of the participants feel their teachers have misunderstandings and false perceptions that SWS are not interested enough in studies. However, some of the participants think teachers became more sensitive and sympathetic towards them when they shared about their dysfluency. This study sheds light on both the positive and negative perspectives of the student-teacher relationship, but it did not explain if the students took the initiative to make their teachers aware of their conditions. As they tend to avoid situations where they need to talk or communicate with the teacher, that can play a role in these negative perceptions of teachers of their students with stuttering.

Meredith G. (2019) collected data from 120 Australian university SWS and found that they enter the Australian Higher Education system with self-reliance, resilience, and inner strength, they still report underperformance in their academic studies and limited social engagement, despite being aware of the speaking demands they would encounter in a university setting. They avoided class introductions, oral-based assessments, and socialization. A large proportion of students stated that their stuttering affects their grade and overall academic life. Another research suggests that alternative teaching or assessment supports are not available at the universities of Australia for students who stutter or have speech difficulties, which makes the selection of higher education institutions even harder for students who stutter (Meredith et al., 2012). Azios et al. (2022) explored specifically the perceptions of female SWS and found that stigma and societal expectations towards women make their academic life more difficult. They face challenges in coping with university as their family, friends, and university services are not very understanding and supportive towards them. They suggested that teachers' attitudes play an important role, as they can help or impede them. From the perspective of different countries' education systems, it can be said that stuttering hampers students' higher education.

2.3. Impacts on interpersonal relationships

While some children who stutter may face social challenges, others demonstrate strong social skills, being friendly and outgoing, and often receive support from peers (Peters and Guitar, 1991). Koudenburg et al. (2022) investigated the quality of interpersonal relationships of persons with stuttering (PWS) and found that they do not have lower quality of interpersonal relationships than persons who do not stutter. Adults with stuttering feel their relationships with people who liked them, invited them for social

gatherings, became friends with them, or even date them never hampered due to their fluency of speech (Blood et al., 2003). Klompas & Ross (2004) suggested that although it was not perceived to adversely affect participants' ability to form friendships, choose an occupation, secure employment, or maintain relationships with managers and colleagues, it was viewed as having a negative impact on their job performance and as a barrier to career advancement. Overall, stuttering did not appear to influence their family or marital life; however, most participants reported that it had negatively affected their self-esteem and self-image, and had elicited strong emotional responses. However, as PWS have reported worrying about what others think of them when they first meet someone, and worry that their stuttering may affect their social relations (St. Louis, 2001). Berchiatti et al., (2020) found that individuals with stuttering are less preferred by their peer groups than their non-stutter peers as they are perceived as shy or not interested in communication. Stuttering negatively influences specific aspects of social relationships and interactions, affecting communication dynamics. However, it does not adversely impact the love life of adults who stutter, indicating a complex relationship between stuttering and interpersonal connections (Jakovljević, 2018).

2.4. Psychological impact of stuttering

Koudenburg et al. (2022) found that PWS have negative self-esteem, which they suggested may be caused by the increase of negative cognitions and emotions as well as increased difficulty in maintaining the flow of speech. Nang et al. (2018) in a qualitative study that involved 9 women who stutter in Western Australia. The study showed that stuttering impacts all aspects of women's lives. It impacts their view of themselves and how others view them in society, their relationships, and their career opportunity. The results

also revealed that women often held negative self-perceptions and reported that stuttering had negatively impacted their quality of life.People with severe stuttering may have a higher risk of poor emotional functioning (Craig et al., 2009). According to Parsons, Ntani, Muiry, Madan, and Bricker-Katz (2024), who collected data from 470 healthcare workers with stuttering, found that situational and anticipatory anxiety is common in PWS and leads them towards avoidant behaviors. 86% of the workers reported feeling their job performance is negatively affected by their fluency problems, and they feel unprofessional and incompetent. Another study on the adult population reported significantly higher levels of general depression, anxiety, and stress, indicating a profound psychological impact of stuttering on their lives, particularly affecting education, employment, and overall well-being (Engelen et al., 2024). Even in children, significant psychological impact, including frustration, aggression, and social withdrawal was found. According to Osuji (2023), these emotional challenges arise from difficulties in expressing thoughts, causing embarrassment and hindering social interactions, which are crucial for their overall development and well-being. These psychological challenges can further impact their academic performance and quality of life, highlighting the importance of addressing stuttering in school-age children (Rocha et al., 2020).

2.5.   Research Questions

The present study aims to understand lived experiences of SWS through the following research questions:

a) How does stuttering affect the academic life of SWS?

b) How does stuttering influence the interpersonal relationships of SWS?

c) How do emotions of SWS impact their stuttering experiences?

d) How do SWS perceive their future job opportunities in relation to their stuttering?

3. Method

In this qualitative study, a purposeful sampling method was used to recruit participants. The researcher tried to cover at least the public university students of Bangladesh and collected data from two students who were not studying in the universities situated in Dhaka. There were 17 participants in total. However, due to the limited information and connection researcher failed to collect more data from students of universities outside Dhaka. Therefore, the two students who were outside of Dhaka were excluded. Ultimately, in total of fifteen self-identified University students who stutter were selected, and their interviews were analyzed. They all came from three different universities in Dhaka, Bangladesh and the inclusion criteria were: (1) presence of stuttering is already been confirmed, (2) age 18 years and above, (3) must be fluent in the Bangla, (4) Must be admitted to any University situated in Dhaka, Bangladesh. For the demographic information of the participants, see Table 1.

Table 1: Demographics of the participants

Participant Number	Name of the University	Gender	Age
1	University of Dhaka	Male	22 years
2	University of Dhaka	Male	20 years
3	University of Dhaka	Male	22 years

4	University of Dhaka	Male	22 years
5	University of Dhaka	Male	23 years
6	Jagannath University	Male	21 years
7	Jagannath University	Male	19 years
8	National University	Female	21 years
9	National University	Male	20 years
10	National University	Male	21 years
11	National University	Male	24 years
12	National University	Male	24 years
13	National University	Male	22 years
14	National University	Male	21 years
15	National University	Male	21 years

Descriptive and more in-depth information was needed for understanding the impact of stuttering on the students' lives. Therefore, data were collected through a semi-structured, in-depth interview session. The time limit for all interviews was a minimum of 25 minutes and a maximum of 40 minutes. The interview questions were based on four domains, which included a total of eleven questions formulated in Bengali. These domains covered the life experiences of these students. All interviews were audio recorded after obtaining the written consent of the participants, and a diary was maintained to take notes for the incomplete phrases or unintelligible utterances. The data were transcribed

verbatim, excluding the disfluencies like repetition, prolongation, blocking, and use of interjections for maintaining the intelligibility of speech. The transcriber fully depended on the recorded audio and notes for transcription. Data were coded and analyzed manually. Main codes and various sub-codes were selected from the transcription. They were chosen based on their redundancy and the number of occurrences. All the codes and sub-codes were arranged in a table, and then the most repeated codes with greater percentages were considered as the most important ones to present in the result section of this research.

4.   Results & Discussion

This study interviewed university students with stuttering to uncover the impacts of fluency disorders on their lives. This section narratively presents the findings following the four domains selected for the questionnaire and data collection process.

4.1.   Stuttering affects students' academic life

Most people with stuttering fear public speaking as they think it can create negative perceptions about their personality. Participants in this research also shared that they fear and avoid participating in presentations and viva. Mostly in group presentations, they prepared the presentation and contributed equally like group members; however, they did not present that in front of the teacher or classmates. One of the participants stated in this regard,

> I have never presented anything in my entire university life. Till now, if any courses require individual presentation, I will be absent. In group presentations, I do all the work and let my group members present that. I fear being laughed at by my classmates if I stutter.

Dissatisfaction with grades is also very common in SWS (Meredith & Packman, 2015). In this study, participants shared that stuttering

has impacted their grades. 66.67% of the participants think that they got lower marks in viva and presentation because of stuttering. Therefore, they think they can not compete or do better than their non-stutterer peers. Participant 1 stated,

> We have marks in presentations as well as in viva. Facing a viva is most difficult for me. It feels like I want to talk, and I know the answers, but my speech gets stuck in my throat and I become absolutely speechless. In academic life, our achievement depends not only on written exams but also on oral exams like Viva or presentation. I always fall behind because of getting low marks in oral examinations.

However, 33.33% of the participants shared that the teachers considered and helped them after consulting and sharing about their stuttering. A study by Meredith and Packman (2015) found that, in certain incidents, students purposefully underperformed and avoided communicating with teachers to avoid the stress of stuttering. They often face difficulties in verbal communication, which hinders their participation in class discussions and presentations, leading to lower academic performance (Rocha et al., 2020).

4.2.   Stuttering impacts students' interpersonal relationships

In this research, 20% of participants shared that stuttering is affecting their relationship with family members as they avoid talking to them, and 80% felt their relationship with family members was not affected at all. According to Participant 3,

> As I am comfortable with them, I stutter less while talking. But sometimes when I get angry or I am hurt, I stutter a bit more than usual, but I say what I want to say to my family. I do not avoid or ignore them. They are also used to my stuttering, and

> no reactions ever came from them, particularly for me being
> disfluent.

In the interview, 85.71% of participants said that they did not think stuttering impacts their relationship with friends. Also, 28.57% of them added that they stutter less while talking with friends because they are mostly motivated to speak by their friends. Despite having a good relationship with friends, sometimes they are made fun of or bullied by their classmates or peers for their stuttering. Research has shown that teasing and bullying are more prevalent for children with stuttering than for their fluent peers, and they identified stuttering as a predicting feature of bullying at the school level (Berchiatti et al., 2020). Participant 4 said,

> I have been bullied by my classmates. They made fun of my
> inability to speak fluently. Mostly, I felt depressed after this
> type of incident, but with time, I am learning to cope with it.

The alarming part is that all participants shared, they avoid talking with their teachers because they fear that their teachers may have a negative view towards stuttering. Studies suggested teachers are not aware enough about the physical tension or secondary behaviour of stuttering or the therapeutic techniques that speech and language pathologists suggest for stuttering (Rocha et al., 2022). They do not have any difference in knowledge about stuttering from non-teachers (Arnold et al., 2015). This may be the reason for the gap in the relationship of students with their teachers. Ultimately, they feel that their teachers have a negative perception of them, or they are not considerate. In this research, participants also shared how some incidents make them feel that their teachers have a negative view of stuttering. Participant 2 shared,

> When I was in primary school, I went to talk about my exam
> with one of my teachers. When I was talking to her, I

> stuttered and my teacher started laughing. That happened twice in my school. After those incidents, I avoid talking to any of my teachers.

Incidents like this have a great impact on students' lives. However, participants shared that the experience with university teachers is different from school or college. 57.14% of the participants shared that their university teachers considered their problems. For the most part, they were motivated by their teachers. Sometimes the teachers supported them by providing extra time to complete their presentations or viva, or taking written assignments instead of presentations. Participant number 5 shared,

> Recently, I had an individual presentation. Before the presentation, I shared with my course teacher about my stuttering and that it increases when I need to talk in front of the classroom. So, he considered my problem and gave me the opportunity to present separately when my other classmates were not present. He was very calm and patient with me and did not stop me during my presentation. This helped me a lot at that time.

Azios et al. (2022), found that students with stuttering can overcome classroom or academic challenges with the support of their teachers, classmates, and other authoritative figures at university. The support involves hearing their stuttering stories, being an active listener, and being comfortable communicating with stutterers. SWS were comfortable with professors who had basic ideas about stuttering, showed patience and empathy towards them.

4.3.   Students face speech-related fear and anxiety

All participants shared that they tend to avoid speaking situations. They had a firm belief that if they talked, people would laugh or make fun of them. Comment of participant 15,

> I always try to avoid face-to-face interactions. I hardly stutter over the phone, but while interacting face to face, I feel very hesitant. It feels like the speech is trapped in my throat. I know what I want to say, but I cannot get it out of my mouth.

Behavioral patterns related to stuttering vary from person to person. However, because individuals who stutter have been and are often teased, treated differently, and reacted to negatively, some tend to avoid situations where they would have to do a lot of talking (ordering by phone, making reservations, being interviewed for jobs, teaching), while others may experience depression related to coping with stuttering, and or anxiety about speaking (Craig et al., 2009; Iverach & Rapee, 2014).

According to Yaruss and Quesal (2004), the person who stutters avoids speaking due to their previous negative speaking experiences. They repeatedly think about their negative speaking experiences which results in tension and low self-esteem (Bleek et al., 2012). In this research, participants also shared that they face the fear of stuttering. All of them expressed that this fear is one of the main reasons that they tend to avoid talking. They shared that they became afraid and nervous before talking to strangers. Participant 11 stated,

> I avoid talking just because I feel like I am going to stutter. Then I start panicking and ultimately fail to utter even a single word.

The PWS tends to think about their stuttering all the time, and as a result, they feel nervous while talking. Most of them try not to talk at all or hide from the situations where they need to talk. They know that they are going to stutter while talking, and it can make their communication partner have negative attitudes towards them. Sometimes they also face bullying, or the listener makes fun of their

disfluency. Therefore, they do not want to let people know about their stuttering. And this hiding behavior creates more problems. Some people think that they are not social or do not have enough knowledge about the topic they are discussing. Also, Breitenfeldt and Lorenz (1999) explain that stutterers usually try to hide the fact that they stutter. People with stuttering even tend to avoid words and replace them with other words just because they perceive that they stutter most on those words. In consequence, they fail to express their thoughts the way they wanted to. In the interview, 86.67% of participants shared that they had feared words, and only 6.67% shared that they had no particular feared words; they stutter on different words in different speaking situations. Participant 10 commented,

> Sometimes I change the whole sentence so that I don't have to use that word. I also the way I wanted to express my feelings. I expressed it another way with another sentence and expression just to avoid my feared word.

Some researchers also found that people tend to avoid words as a coping or avoidance strategy for stuttering. According to Jackson et al. (2015), PWS employ some kind of strategy to change their speech production in response to anticipation of stuttering. 87% of the PWS use at least one avoidance technique or one self-management strategy. Among those strategies, the most widely used one is altering the linguistic plan by circumlocution or substitution of words. 80% of PWS exhibited the strategy of substituting words.

4.4.   Negative emotions emerge from stuttering

Emotions are the most natural part of human life. Our emotions make us who we are. These emotions have an impact on all parts of human life. The people who stutter also have an impact of emotions on their daily life, especially on stuttering. In this study, 93.33% feel

that their emotions impact their stuttering. The most popular list, sometimes referred to as "The Big Six" was used by Ekman et al. (1969) in their research on universal recognition of emotion from facial expression. The list included happiness, sadness, fear, surprise, anger, and disgust, which are still the most commonly accepted candidates for basic emotions. So, we can see that anger is one of the basic emotions of the human being. In this study, the participants gave a piece of very interesting information. They all think that their stuttering increases or they stutter more when they are angry. Here are the comments of participant 8 and participant 13 in this regard,

> I stutter more when I get angry and when I am excited about something.

> It didn't vary much if I am depressed, but my stuttering doubled when I get angry.

Again, another basic emotion is Fear, and in the interview, 53.33% of the participants expressed that their stuttering increases when they think about the consequences of their stuttering or fear the situation. Also, their stuttering increases while talking with any individual whom they fear. Participant 9 stated,

> When I talk loudly or feel angry or want to talk faster then I face increased disfluency in my speech. Also, when I fear a situation or a person, I do stutter more.

Besides anger and fear, some other emotions were mentioned by the participants that they think increase their stuttering, but they are not basic emotions. For example, time pressure, excitement, and nervousness. Some researchers have claimed that stuttering causes emotional processes, while others have claimed that emotional processes cause stuttering. Although it seems obvious that stuttering and emotional processes interact with each other,

the exact mechanism underlying the relationship appears still be elusive because it is difficult to examine the two opposite paths separately (Conture et al., 2013). In this study, participants shared that their stuttering also impacts their emotions. Mostly, negative emotions like low self-esteem, depression, hesitation, and anger emerge because of stuttering. Anxiety or stress related to stuttering is not present in children. However, as they grow older, they become cautious about their way of speaking and the anxiety emerges (Engelen et al., 2024). Individuals with stuttering perceive stuttering as shameful and speech as an unpleasant and threatening task, which develops a rigid self-concept as a stutterer (Bloodstein & Bernstein, 2008). Participant 14 stated,

> As I cannot talk fluently like my other friends, I do not feel capable enough. Also, I face low self-esteem, stress, and depression very frequently due to my stuttering. I wish that one day I would wake up from my nap and my stuttering would be gone. I no longer have to hide from the world where everything in life depends on fluent speech.

4.5.   Uncertainty about future employment opportunities

SWS not only has to worry about their resume preparation and identifying job opportunities like others, but they also have to think about their stuttering or difficulty in speaking. It is found that the job providers also have negative perceptions about PWS as they think of them as shy, anxious, weak, and diffident (Gilman, 2012). Employers in educational institutions, factories/companies, cafés/restaurants, stores, and health areas have negative attitudes towards PWS, and they think that stuttering is an undesirable quality for employers (Çağlayan & Özdemir, 2022). Students shared that their teachers sometimes showed concerns about their job opportunities and advised them to limit their career choices as they fear that SWS might not be able to hold certain positions or jobs

(Azios et al., 2022). People of all educational statuses and genders have negative perceptions about PWS's ability to work (Çağlayan & Özdemir, 2022). In this research, 93.33% of participants shared that they became depressed thinking about their future careers. In Bangladesh, most jobs depend not only on the written examination performance but also on candidates who have to do well in the job interview. So, they think if they cannot be able to overcome stuttering, they will face severe problems in getting jobs, as they face problems in the viva. Also, 60% of the participants shared fears of being unemployed. Participant 7 shared,

> I think there will be no problem in the written and preliminary tests. But I fear the interview. If I fail to give answers to their questions in the interview, it may lead to not getting any jobs. So, I am very tense about it.

Due to these fears, they all tried to cure or find a way to cure their stuttering. However, their methods were very different, such as trying to cure by themselves, using different tricks, taking advice from others, consulting with therapists, and taking speech therapy sessions. Comment of one participant 6 is added here,

> I tried to cure it by myself. I attended pronunciation classes. I tried to talk more with people so that I can get over my fear. And I have also taken speech therapy for a few months.

While talking about their cure experiences, 40% of the participants shared that they had faced stuttering-related prejudices. Some of these prejudices felt not only illogical but were also very dangerous and harmful. Participant 12 shared,

> When I was in primary school, one of my teachers suggested holding a coin under my tongue. He said this will help to improve my speech fluency.

Though this study gives us insights about students' life experiences with stuttering, it has some limitations, which can be the direction of further research in this field. Still, we do not know about the exact or even estimated number of SWS in Bangladeshi Universities. This research covered only the experiences of students from Dhaka; other divisions were excluded, so their experiences are still unheard. One of the causes was the reluctance of the participants and the lack of data about SWS. Most of the students have been hiding their dysfluency of speech for so long that they don't want to talk about this now and feel very uncomfortable. Especially the female students, only one female participated here. Studies should be done on stuttering, which include more female participants and encourage others to share their journey. As this research aimed to explore students' experiences, only relationships with family and friends were discussed. The effect on the life, career, and interpersonal relationships, like relations with relatives, partners, children, and colleagues of adults with stuttering should be researched.

5.   Conclusion

Stuttering not only affects a student's normal fluency of speech. It is more than that. It has a great impact on every aspect of life. So, awareness in society should be developed. And this research is a step towards awareness. This study can be concluded by highlighting that stuttering affects the overall aspects of the life of a university student. In academic life, these students find it hard to do well in oral examinations and presentations. Which ultimately results in low grades. Also, they fail to interact with their teachers because they mostly avoid talking to them. Therefore, this research also shows that most of the time, teachers become helpful and flexible toward the students if they share their problems with their teachers. In their personal life, they tend to avoid speaking

situations and negative emotions like low self-esteem, depression, hesitation, anger, and fear develop in them. On the aspect of relationships with friends and family, little to no effect has been found. The study also shows that all participants want to cure their stuttering and have tried different things to lessen the negative impacts of stuttering on their lives.

Note

[1]The pilot study for this paper was presented at a conference titled "Impact of Stuttering on the Life of University Students who Stutter" at the "Sixth Annual Conference on Social Research in Bangladesh" organized by Bangladesh Institute of Social Research (BISR) Trust, in November 2021.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire

প্রশ্ন -১:

আপনার কি মনে হয় আপনার কথা বলার প্রতিবন্ধকতা আপনার একাডেমিক সাফল্যকে প্রভাবিত করছে? যদি আপনার উত্তর "হ্যাঁ" হয়, তবে কেন আপনি এমন মনে করেন?

প্রশ্ন -২:

আপনি কি ভাইভা এবং প্রেজেন্টেশনে কোনো সমস্যার সম্মুখীন হন? যদি হয় আপনার উত্তর "হ্যাঁ" হয়, তবে কেন এবং কি ধরনের সমস্যা?

প্রশ্ন -৩:

আপনার কি মনে হয় আপনার কথা বলার প্রতিবন্ধকতার জন্য আপনার পরিবারের সাথে আপনার সম্পর্ক প্রভাবিত হচ্ছে? যদি আপনার উত্তর "হ্যাঁ" হয়, তবে এটি কীভাবে প্রভাব ফেলে?

প্রশ্ন -৪:

আপনার কি মনে হয় আপনার কথা বলার প্রতিবন্ধকতার জন্য আপনার বন্ধু অথবা সহপাঠিদের সাথে আপনার সম্পর্ক প্রভাবিত হচ্ছে? যদি আপনার উত্তর "হ্যাঁ" হয়, তবে এটি কীভাবে প্রভাব ফেলে?

প্রশ্ন -৫:

শিক্ষকদের সাথে আপনার সম্পর্ক কেমন? এটি কি আপনার কথা বলার প্রতিবন্ধকতার কারণে কোনোভাবে প্রভাবিত হয়?

প্রশ্ন -৬:

আপনার আবেগ ও মানসিক অবস্থা কীভাবে আপনার কথা বলার প্রতিবন্ধকতাকে প্রভাবিত করে বলে আপনি মনে করেন?

প্রশ্ন -৭:

আপনি কি মনে করেন আপনার কথা বলার প্রতিবন্ধকতাকে কেন্দ্র করে কোনো ধরনের নেতিবাচক আবেগ আপনি অনুভব করেন? কোন নেতিবাচক আবেগগুলো আপনি বেশি অনুভব করেন?

প্রশ্ন -৮:

আপনি কি যেসকল পরিস্থিতিতে কথা বলা প্রয়োজনীয় সেসকল পরিস্থিতি এড়িয়ে চলেন? যদি আপনার উত্তর "হ্যাঁ" হয়, তবে কেন?

প্রশ্ন -৯:

কোনো নির্দিষ্ট শব্দ কি আছে যেগুলো উচ্চারনের সময় আপনার সমস্যা বেশি হয়? যদি থেকে থাকে তাহলে এসব শব্দ ব্যবহারের ক্ষেত্রে আপনি কি ধরনের সতর্কতা অবলম্বন করেন?

প্রশ্ন -১০:

আপনি কি মনে করেন কথা বলার প্রতিবন্ধকতা আপনার ভবিষ্যৎ ক্যারিয়ারে প্রভাব ফেলবে? যদি আপনার উত্তর "হ্যাঁ" হয়, তবে কেন এমন মনে করেন?

প্রশ্ন -১১:

আপনি কি কখনো আপনার কথা বলার প্রতিবন্ধকতা দূর করার চেষ্টা করেছেন? কিভাবে এবং আপনার অভিজ্ঞতা কেমন ছিল?