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The P-P-P-Perceptions of St-St-St-Stuttering

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The P-p-perceptions of St-st-stuttering

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What is stuttering?

- Stuttering affects approximately 68 million people in the world, or about 1% of the world's population

- It is characterized by repetitions or prolongations of single sounds, words, and sentences or involuntary silent blocks

- Different than normal disfluencies

- Stuttering is not just the physical manifestation

- This emotional reaction – from stutterer and society - can affect a stutterer's quality of life

Previous Research

Character Traits:
- Self-esteem
- Anxiety
- Intelligence
- Extroversion and introversion
- Social appeal
- Emotional stability
- Social adjustment
- Stress level
- Sensitivity
- Shyness
- Fear
- Insecurity
- Quietness

Limitations:
- Competence
- Employability
- Education
- What types of activities they can do
- What types of jobs they can perform effectively

One study, by Colins and Blood, showed more positive perceptions towards stutterers who self-advertised

Fluency Shaping vs. Stuttering Modification

Fluency Shaping

- Goal is to achieve "fluency"

- Often natural sounding speech is lost, "fluent" speech can sound strained, rehearsed, or otherwise unnatural

- May promote avoidance behaviors (avoiding certain words, sounds, or speaking altogether) due to a fear of stuttering and a perception that it's not okay

- Very developed and various techniques can be helpful for many

Stuttering Modification

- Goal is to address negative emotions and help the stutterer stutter more easily and confidently

- Positively impacts a lot of stutterers, especially for those that do not like fluency shaping techniques

- The Successful Stuttering Management Program,

- Self-Advertising

Self-Advertisement Expanded

- Can the idea of self-advertisement be expanded to improve perceptions?

- Does this technique improve perceptions because of the education of stuttering or the stutterer giving it?

- My research project:
  - Qualitative interviews of a sample that represents my population – 7 EWU students
  - Quantitative surveys of 450 EWU students
    - Control group (230 students) were simply given the survey
    - Experimental group (220 students) listened to a 1-2 minute speech that gave basic information about stuttering

Interview Results – Negative Perceptions Held

- Unintelligent
- Slower
- Disabled
- Unprepared
- Self-esteem issues
- Unapproachable
- Shameful
- Less attractive
- Unfocused

- Quieter/shy
- Withdrawn
- Introverted
- More sensitive
- More frustrated
- Anxious
- Mentally unstable
- Limited in their professional, academic, and daily functioning

- Unsanitary (care less about physical appearance, cleanliness, etc.)
- Fearful
- Embarrassed
- Self-conscious
- Insecure
- Unconfident
- Less (or not) educated
- Guilty

Education about stuttering (like self-advertising) did show improved perceptions.

But <u>mostly</u> not statistically significant ones

So what were the complications?

My groups weren't evenly distributed

- Control group was more likely to know someone who stuttered (52% vs. 47%)

- Control group claimed to know more about stuttering than experimental group (average of 2.6 vs. 2.4 on a scale of 1-5)

Outcomes were relatively positive for both

- Perceptions in general were more positive than previous studies have shown

- Experimental Group had more positive perceptions regarding long term perceptions

- Control Group had more positive perceptions regarding first impressions

Statistical Analyses

- "Groups": Control group vs. Experimental group

- "Familiarity": Knows a stutterer vs. Doesn't know a stutterer

- "Exposure": Experimental group + Control group who knows a stutterer vs. Control group who doesn't know a stutterer

Differences that were statistically significant:

In the "right direction":

Characteristic	Test	Significance Value
In two of the three		
Anxious or Fearful (long term)	Groups and Exposure	.049 (groups), .026 (exposure)
In one of the three		
Hard to get to know (long term)	Exposure	.03
Not able to perform tasks (long term)	Exposure	.024
Difficulty in everyday communication (long term)	Exposure	.044
Something wrong with them (long term)	Familiarity	.007

Differences that were statistically significant:

- In the "wrong" direction

Characteristic	Test	Significance Value
Two of the three		
Speaks too quickly (first impression)	Familiarity and Exposure	.016 (familiarity), .006 (exposure)
One of the three		
Shy or withdrawn (long term)	Groups	.027

Interesting differences between tests

Characteristic	Test	Significance Value
In the "right direction		
Something wrong with them (long term)	Familiarity	.007
Something wrong with them (long term)	Groups	.848
In the "wrong" direction		
Shy or withdrawn (long term)	Groups	.027
Shy or withdrawn (long term)	Exposure	.929

Further Research

- Updated study on perceptions – more positive?

- Repeat with larger sample size

- Research study with the education being given without stuttering and then with stuttering to determine whether the education is what changes perceptions or the stutterer giving it

- Other ways to change perceptions?

Pictures removed due to copyright issues

Successful Stutterers

There are many stutterers who are very successful. This disorder does not have to limit people. Changing perceptions of stuttering is an essential move towards equality and empowerment.

Famous Stutterers shown here (from left to right; bottom to top): Bruce Willis, James Earl Jones, Claudius, Joe Biden, Emily Blunt, Lee Reeves, Marilyn Monroe, Lewis Carroll, Moses, Noel Ahedo, R.N., Winston Churchill, King George VI, Walt Manning, CCC SLP, Alan Rabinowitz, Sergeant Craig Curry, John Stossel

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