

## Personality Correlates of Stutterers

**Y.T. Balakrishna Acharya**

*Research Assistant,*

*Department of Clinical Psychology,*

*All India Institute of Speech and Hearing, Mysore-570 006*

### INTRODUCTION

We live in a world of communication. Speech is essentially the basic mode of communication through which we interact with others in our day to day life. It is one unique ability that distinguishes the human from the rest of the species. Communication becomes more effective when we speak naturally, fluently and clearly without any interruptions. Although this is an ability which most of us are endowed with, at times, on occasions such as when our feelings are charged with strong emotions like anger, fear, excitement etc., our speech becomes disrupted by repetitions, blocks, hesitations etc., thus affecting the total communication process. But amongst a small number of us these undesirable characteristics become so strong, so persistent that it affects the normal, natural happy communication. It may result in some associated symptoms also such as facial grimaces, restless movements of body, eye blinking, tremor in the lips etc., This kind of communication problem we label as Stuttering. (Berry and Eisenson, 1956; Bharath Raj, 1978.)

A large number of studies have been conducted both in India and abroad to know the personality characteristics of stutterers. Some of the findings have shown that they do not show typical personality patterns but they are socially withdrawn, introverted, anx-

ious etc, (Bharath Raj and Pranasha Rao 1976). Some studies have revealed that there is no significant difference between stutterers and non stutterers in their personality characteristics and also that they do not present a unique type of personality. A number of techniques have been used to assess the personality of stutterers by projective techniques, questionnaires, objective tests etc., out of which the questionnaire studies are perhaps the most frequently used.

In the above context of controversial findings about the personality characteristics of stutterers, it was decided to use a comprehensive questionnaire to cover a wide range of personality characteristics.

**Problem:** To study the personality correlates of stutterers and non-stutterers.

**Objectives:** The main aim of the study was to throw light on the personality characteristics of stutterers in comparison with non-stutterers more comprehensively. And the findings of the research has its implications in therapy to shape desirable personality pattern, thereby the stutterer to overcome his problem, in a therapeutic setting.

**Material:** R.B. Cattell's 16 -Personality Factors Questionnaire (Form C) English version was used.

**Sample:** The sample for the study consists of 50 stutterers and an equal number of non-stutterers of comparable age, education

sex etc., Stutterers who were attending the outpatient department of the Institute of Speech and Hearing and for therapy were taken up for the present investigation. Their age ranged from 20 to 37 years with a mean age of 24 years. All were males ranging in education from matriculation to Master's degree with an average of 15 years education. They were compared with a control group of 50 non-stutterers selected from the general population, matched for age education ranging in age from 17 to 28 years with mean age of 23 years.

Procedure : The R.B Cattell's 16 Personality Factors Questionnaire (From C) English version was administered to the selected sample of stutterers and non-stutterers individually according to the standard procedure. The data, thus collected were scored, and interpreted by applying appropriate statistical procedures.

Table 1 shows Mean and Standard Deviations and CR values on 16 Personality Factors for stutterers and non-stutterers groups.

Results show that mean value for stutterers and non-stutterers were 3.8 and 4.37 respectively under the trait A and getting a C.R. value of 1.29. Though the obtained difference was not significant both at 0.01

and 0.05 level, the mean score of stutterers is towards the lower end indicating tendency of reservedness, detached, socially withdrawn and critical in their outlook.

The obtained value C.R. of 1.39 for Factor B, intelligence did not reveal significant differences.

The mean scores of stutterers and non-stutterers under the factor C was 3.5 and 3.92 and C.R. value of 0.98. The obtained values lies within the normal limits which indicates no significant differences between the two groups.

In factor E the obtained mean measures of 4.6 and 5.30 respectively and the C.R. being 1.89 reveals no significant difference between the two groups as far as their assertiveness is concerned. But the obtained C.R. was nearer to 1.96 and the mean was towards higher end of the scale which indicates stutterers tend to be submissive, confessive and anxious in their character.

The mean scores of stutterers and non-stutterers under the factor F was 4.16 and 4.98, the C R. value being 1.71 indicating no significant difference in the dimension, surgency-desurgency.

In the personality factor G the mean score of stutterers and non-stutterers being 4.82 and 4.86 and C.R value being 0.11 indicates

Table 1: Personality scores of stutterers and non-stutterers.

Group	Measures	A	B	C	E	F	G	H	I	L	M	N	O	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Stutterers N= 50	Mean	3.8	4.58	3.5	4.6	4.16	4.82	4.88	4.60	5.16	5.92	5.34	6.88	5.80	4.58	4.86	4.92
	S.D.	1.92	1.46	2.14	2.04	2.40	1.82	2.35	1.46	2.05	1.84	1.97	2.21	1.36	2.28	1.92	1.94
Non-stutterers N = 50	Mean	4.34	5.04	3.92	5.30	4.98	4.86	5.24	5.20	5.4	5.52	5.70	6.38	5.52	4.28	4.72	3.86
	S.D.	2.25	1.82	1.81	1.62	2.45	1.98	1.83	1.37	1.59	1.71	1.82	2.34	1.58	1.92	2.02	2.27
	C.R. Values	1.29	1.39	0.98	1.89	1.71	0.11	0.86	2.14**	0.65	1.30	0.95	1.09	0.97	1.67	0.39	2.52**

\*\* Significant at 0.05 level.

no significant difference in their super-ego strength.

In the personality factor H the mean scores were 4.88 and 5.24 and the C.R. value being 1.83 indicates, although there was no statistically significant difference between two means, the obtained value stands near 0.05 level of significance indicating stutterers tend to be shy, impeded in speech and expressing themselves, disliking professions involving personal interactions.

The mean scores in the personality factor I for stutterers and non-stutterers being 4.60 and 5.20 and the C R. value being 2.14 which was significant at 0.05 level which indicates stutterers are tough minded, tend to be practical, responsible and sometimes unmoved (rigid).

The critical ratio for the factor L being 0.65 and the mean scores 5.16 and 5.40 for stutterers and non-stutterers respectively which indicates no significant difference on the Factor Trusting-Suspicious.

The obtained mean scores of stutterers and non-stutterers under the personality factor N being 5.30 and 5.70 respectively. The value of C.R. 0.95 did not indicate any significant difference in forthright Vs shrewd Personality dimension. Under the factor M, practical Vs imaginative, no statistically significant difference was found between stutterers and non-stutterers.

Under the factor O the mean value of stutterers being 6.88 and of non-stutterers 6.38 and C.R. value 1.09, indicating no significant difference in their personality characteristics in this factor, placid Vs apprehensive.

The mean scores of stutterers and non-stutterers in factor Q, were 5.80 and 5.52 and a C.R. of 0.97. From this it can be inferred that stutterers do not differ from non-stutterers in their personality char-

acteristics of conservatism radicalism dimension.

Stutterers and non-stutterers obtained a mean value of 4.58 and 4.28 respectively and critical ratio of 1.67 under the factor Q<sub>2</sub>, which indicates there is no significant difference in terms of their leadership qualities.

A mean value of 4.86 and 4.72 in the factor Q<sub>3</sub> for stutterers and non-stutterers and CR of 0.39 indicative of no significant difference in their personality pattern, low integration Vs high self concept control.

The mean scores obtained in the personality factor Q<sub>4</sub> were 4.92 and 3.82 among stutterers and non-stutterers respectively and a C.R. of 2.52 which indicates significant difference at 0.05 level revealing stutterers tend to be tense, excitable, restless, impatient, often fatigued and frustrated when compared with non-stutterers.

## CONCLUSIONS

It may be concluded from the above discussion that stutterers have been found to have personality maladjustment mainly in two areas. Firstly, stutterers are found to be tough minded, take responsibility, like independence, realistic and they tend to be practical. They tend to be rigid, hard and morose. Secondly, stutterers tend to be tense, excited, restless, impatient and quite often become fatigued.

In some personality traits although there was no statistically significant difference between stutterers and non-stutterers in their personality makeup they tend to be characterised by certain personality qualities. They tend to be comparatively reserved, cool, like to be alone, avoid personal contacts, detached and critical in their outlook. Secondly, they are easily susceptible to emotions, have low frustration tolerance level, neurotically fatigued and annoyed

very easily. Thirdly, they are worried, anxious, depressed and guilty.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The author thanks the Director, All India Institute of Speech and Hearing, Mysore, for permitting to carryout this Research Project and also the author sincerely acknowledges Professor, Head, Department of Clinical Psychology, Dr. J. Bharath Raj, for his guidance.

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Berry, M.F, and Eisenson, J., (1956), *Speech Disorders: Principles and Practice of Therapy*, Appleton Century Crafts, London.
- Bharath Raj, J., (1978), *Stuttering: Causes, Remedies and Prevention*, Swayam Siddha Prakashana, Mysore.
- Bharath Raj, J., and Pranesha Rao, B.N., (1976), *Some Personality Characteristics of Stutterers*, JAIISH Vol. 1(1).