

Research Priorities in Speech Pathology / Therapy in Pakistan: A Cross Sectional Survey

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To find out Research priorities in Speech Pathology /Therapy, Lahore Pakistan.

Study Design: Cross sectional study

Place and Duration of Study: This study was conducted at the Department of health Professional Technologies, the University of Lahore from January 2016 to July 2016.

Materials and Methods: Convenient sampling technique was use. The Sample Size 270 Generated by Saunders on the bases of total population. Closed ended questions have been developed from literature review and expert opining, and distributed to around 300 participants. Questionnaires were distributed among HODs, teachers and students. Part A and B. Part A of questionnaire contained personal information, part B is about research activities in Institution.

Results: Most of the respondents were between age 25 to 30 years. 86.75 % SLPs are female and only 13.35% are male. Most of the participants having Master 100(37%), only 5(1.9%) participants were Ph.D degree holder. About 58% to 94% of participants were responded that they have no published article in national, international journal and there was no journal prescription of institute. P value was less than 0.05 in responses of teachers and students.

Conclusion: Research concludes that most of participants have no journal prescriptions and they were not publishing article. It is dire need to promote research culture in speech pathology department.

Key Words: Speech Therapy, Research in Speech Therapy, Pakistan

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INTRODUCTION

The term Speech and Language treatment (SLT), Speech and Language pathology (SLP) is, is responsible for assessment, evaluation and treatment of communication disorders and swallowing issues. They also work on voice, fluency, resonance, cognition, language and hearing of any age group.

Speech and Language pathologist are also responsible for overall health of caregivers, quality of life of patients and its impact on their lives.¹

The survey of 1998-1999 was repeated in 2009-2010 in Karachi covering a larger number of educational institutions, clinics and hospitals; only to reveal a

horrific worsening to 32% in the prevalence of communication, and feeding-swallowing disorders².

A study reasoned that as expected, at present there are just seven qualified Speech Language Pathologists/Therapists (SLPs/SLTs) every one of whom have qualified abroad to take into account the requirements of these 22 million people the country over more than 22 million people in a general populace of more than 160 million experienced discourse, dialect, gulping as well as hearing issue.³

Research published in 2017 about the awareness of stuttering and self-therapy of stuttering highlights that most of the patients have awareness about stuttering but they do not know about self-therapy of stuttering. Researcher also found that most patients who has awareness of their problem, feel ease in applying self-help therapeutic strategies and these are helping them more than traditional treatment plan of stuttering. Speech therapy or Psychotherapy, both focus on the concept that there are no single criteria which can be employed to treat the speech problems of stutter. Individual differences are considered to choose the therapeutic plan⁴.

Khan (2015), published research on awareness of Augmentative and Alternative communication (AAC) device, use for persons those have complex communication need. Results of this study show that in different areas the knowledge of AAC devices are 40%

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to 80%⁵. Khan also wrote a letter to editor with the title of communication for all⁶. Journey of Speech therapy in Pakistan is progressing day by day and Speech Pathologists are developing tests and therapeutic techniques for assessments and treatment of communication and swallowing disorders. In this regards an exploratory research conducted by Pervaz and developed Checklist for the Assessment of Pragmatic Language Impairment⁷.

Although there are some studies present related to speech and Language Pathology department in the literature. But no study is found in the literature to describe the research activities in speech pathology.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This cross-sectional survey was conducted to find out the research activity in speech and language in Pakistan. The study employed descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire for a sample of individuals⁸. Data was collected from higher education institution offering BS, post grade diploma, Master and MS in Speech and language Pathology /Therapy. The study targeted all speech and language pathology institutes in Pakistan. According to records held at the Pakistan Higher Education Commission office, there are 16 institutes in the country offering speech and language pathology/therapy courses, BS (10), Masters (1), MS/M. Phil (4) and PGD (1). Therefore, the target population was all the 16 head of departments, 108 teachers and 451students.The Sample Size 270 Generated by Saunders on the bases of total population.⁹ The research instruments that were used for this study were questionnaires. These closed ended questions have been developed from literature review and expert opining, and distributed to around 300 participants. Questionnaires were distributed among HODs, teachers and students. The questionnaire has two sections, part A and B. Part A contained personal information, part B is about research activities in Institution.

Most widely used method for approximating internal consistency reliability was calculated through Cronbach’s alpha. Cronbach’s alpha is a function of the average correlations with in items and the number of items in the scale.¹⁰ Value of Cronbach’s alpha is 0.879. Data was collected during January 2016 to July 2016. Researcher himself visited to the different institutes and gates the return permission from competitive authorities for data collection. Once permission was granted the researcher proceeded to the Heads, Teachers and Students.

RESULTS

The above table shows that most of the respondents are falling between age 25 to 30 years. 86.75 % SLPs are female and only 13.35% are male. Most of the

participants having Master 100(37%), M. Phil/MS 35(13.0%) and FSC 71(26.3%). Only 5(1.9%) participants were Ph.D. degree holder.

Table No.1: Demographic Information of Respondents

Sr. No:	Options	Frequency(%)
Age of respondent	15 to 30	231(85.6)
	31 to 45	29(10.7)
	46 to 60	10(3.7)
Gender of respondent	Male	36(13.3)
	Female	234(86.7)
Category of respondent	Head of department	4(1.5)
	Teachers	41(15.2)
	Students	225(83.3)
Type of Institute University	Public	165(61.1)
	Private	105(38.9)
Qualification	Diploma	12(4.4)
	BS_SLP	29(10.7)
	MS/M.Phil.	35(13.0)
	Ph.D.	5(1.9)
	Master	100(37.0)
	FSC	71(26.3)
B.A	18(6.7)	

Table No. 2: Research Work and Resactivities in Speech and Language departments

Variables	Sub variables	Frequency	%tage
Number of articles published in National HEC accredited journal	No	236	87.4
	1 to 3	22	8.1
	4 to 6	4	1.5
	7 to 10	2	.7
	More then 10	6	2.2
Number of articles published in National HEC accredited journals in last year	No	241	89.3
	1 to 3	25	9.3
	4 to 6	4	1.5
Number of articles published in impact factor journals:	No	244	90.4
	1 to 3	18	6.7
	4 to 6	6	2.2
	7 to 10	2	.7
Number of articles published in impact factor journals in last year	No	254	94.1
	1 to 3	14	5.2
	4 to 6	2	.7
Subscription of national journals related to speech and language pathology	No journal available	158	58.5
	1	26	9.6
	2	22	8.1
	3	16	5.9
	More then 3	48	17.8
Subscription of international journals related to speech and language pathology	No journal available	186	68.9
	1	4	1.5
	2	76	28.1
	3	4	1.5

Table No.3: An Independent Sample T-Test

Variables	Category	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	p
Research Work	Teacher	45	6.73	2.895	12.016	268	.000
	Student	225	4.11	.705			

An independent sample t-test was applied to find the difference between both categories (teachers and students). Table above depicts the results that there is statistically significant difference found between teachers and students.

DISCUSSION

Most of the respondents are falling between age 25 to 30 years it means they recently joined the Speech and Language field. 86.75 % SLPs are female and only 13.35% are male, this result is opposite to the culture and ethnic prospect of Pakistan, but these results are similar to working ratio of male and female persons in health care professions.¹¹

From the results it is clear that the majority of head respondents were between 15-30 years 231(85.6%). Only few 10 (3.7%) fall in category of 46-60 years. It was also believed that as one advanced in age the more experience they gain hence this would have earned the head teacher the headship positions in their respective institutes. On the other hand, class teachers from this study some had just joined the teaching fraternity and yet to gain the required experience to head an institute. Abe said that quality of education depends on the quality of teachers and certifications of the teachers. Student's achievements are directly related to the teacher's qualification. Rotational training and qualification gave professional skills, knowledge of subject and techniques which is gain from education¹². Another paper published in 2011 highlighted academic qualification teachers who are academically qualified and those that are professionally qualified are engaged to carry out instructional process. Academic qualification includes the hold degrees like, B.Ed., B.Sc. Ed, B.A. Ed, and M.Ed and so on¹³.

Research performance of universities is now matter for global association¹⁶. Table 3.8 shows respondent number of article publish in national 10.8% and international journals 5.9% in last year and total number of articles publish in national 10.4%and international 9.6% journals. It may be due to hectic schedule, high workloads, passionate clinical practice left a little time with practitioners to focus on research publication but institutes must encourage people to participate in research activities. Malik said in 2002 cited Ibrahim in Humanizing Research Culture System through Quality Assurance Practices in the Universities of Pakistan (2016) due to the of system in higher education commission does not match to modern education , lack of train researcher and teachers , lack of facilities, teacher students ratio, inadequate assessment system, HEC unable to achieve the

international goals and quality is not up to the mark now a days in higher education^{14,15}.

Presently, there are several hurdles for research and publication; recent attempts to upgrade skills of research methodology and scientific writing are encouraging, but need to be sustained; the traditional role of clinician, teacher is being replaced with that of clinician, teacher and researcher. Suggestions for future included; combined workshops on research methodology and scientific writing skills; continuous institutional support system for research and publication, and effective mentorship.¹⁶ Organization of research conferences, workshops and seminars promote the culture of research and development in the universities R & D¹⁷.

Student's enrolment in SLP program of universities are highest in percentage is 61 to 70. Student's enrolment is directly related to quality services of universities, results of students, demands of program and research works. Student's enrolments increase due to demand and supply of the outcomes and quality of the staff. The higher the service quality the more satisfied the customers. Thus, satisfaction is based on customer expectations and perception of service quality.¹⁸

CONCLUSION

Results of this study showed that some of the students and teachers have published there research articles in national, international and Impact factor journals. However, there is dire need to develop research culture in department of speech and Language pathology in Pakistan. For this purpose encouragement of teachers and student through honorarium and promotion play an important role.

Author's Contribution:

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