

ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to examine the behavioral, cognitive and emotional effects of stuttering on a person's quality of life. More specifically, this study looked to get a more in-depth assessment regarding the complexity of this fluency disorder by looking at multiple aspects of a person who stutters' life. Quality of life was examined using qualitative analysis of both social and emotional experiences. These experiences were gathered from interviews with eight adults of varying age, gender and backgrounds, with developmental stuttering. Five major themes emerged from the qualitative analysis: Limitations across settings and contexts, effects of support systems, concept of identity, adverse reactions, and perceived public perceptions. Each major theme was further divided into sub-themes. Results of the analysis revealed majority of the participants experienced limitations in the workplace, throughout education, and in everyday life. Additionally, the majority of participants expressed being impacted by personal perspectives, insecurities from negative misconceptions, and feelings of anxiety-fear. Support of family, friends, and speech pathologists were found to be beneficial for 88% of participants. Although not expressed by the majority, the value of support groups also proved to be a major factor. Clinical implications include earlier implementation of support groups and increased education and awareness of this fluency disorder. These actions could positively impact the quality of life for people who stutter and consequently, prevent or minimize the struggles that many of these individuals experience.