

**THE COMMUNICATIVE EXPERIENCES OF STAMMERERS IN IGBO CULTURAL AREA:
AN INVESTIGATIVE STUDY**

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Abstract

This study investigates the cultural and social factors that influence the communication experiences of Igbo individuals who stammer. Using a qualitative research design, in-depth interviews were conducted with five Igbo individuals who stammer to gather data on the onset of their stammering, communication experiences, the social and cultural factors affecting their speech, and the coping mechanisms they employ. The findings reveal that environmental practices, social attitudes, and reactions play significant roles in shaping the communication experiences of Igbo individuals who stammer. Environmental factors, such as changes in linguistic context, can contribute to the development of stammering. Emotional states like anxiety and anger can exacerbate stammering, negatively affecting an individual's self-esteem and confidence. Coping strategies, such as avoiding speaking in crowds, are often employed to reduce anxiety and minimize the likelihood of stammering episodes. Cultural attitudes also play a crucial role: when supportive and non-stigmatizing, they can help reduce the social burden of stammering and enhance coping abilities. In this study, the participants reported that positive cultural attitudes contributed to their ability to manage stammering. The study highlights the importance of culturally sensitive assessment and treatment approaches, as well as education and awareness programs aimed at reducing stigma and increasing support for Igbo individuals who stammer. The implications of these findings for speech-language pathology practice and future research are discussed.

Keywords: Communication, stammering, Igbo cultural area, Igbo, Sociolinguistics

1. Introduction

Stammering also known as stuttering is a complex speech disorder that affects individuals worldwide regardless of linguistic background. Despite its prevalence, stammering remains a poorly understood phenomenon, particularly in diverse linguistic contexts. Igbo language spoken by approximately 30million people in Nigeria and other parts of West Africa, offers a unique opportunity to explore the complexities of stammering in an African language. Language, in the opinion of Agar (1994, p.22) "is not just a neutral medium for conveying information, but is itself a part of the cultural context in which it is used". Language and culture could be described as birds of the same feather which flock together, and as such whatever affect one usually involves the other. As noted by Agar (1994, p. 15), "The shock of language is the shock of culture and the two are inseparable." Beyond their cultural and linguistic heritage, the Igbo people are known for their strong work ethic, entrepreneurial spirit, and love for education. They have made significant contributions to various fields and have demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of challenges, most remarkable is the Igbo people's unyielding resilience. The Igbo culture shines like a beacon of excellence, a true masterpiece of human expression. At its core lies a profound emphasis on community and collectivism, a beautiful tapestry woven from threads of mutual support and respect for elders. Their revered custodians of tradition and wisdom guide the Igbo people with timeless insight, fostering a deep sense of unity and shared purpose.

Research on stammering has primarily focused on European languages, with limited attention to African languages. Stammering is a complex phenomenon that affects individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. In Igbo cultural area, stammering is often stigmatized, leading to social and emotional challenges for individuals who stammer (Ikekeonwu, 2017).

Hymes (1962) opines that language is not just a matter of communicating information, but also of creating and negotiating social relationships; "Stammering is not just a speech problem, but a complex phenomenon that involves cognitive, emotional, and social factors." (Guitar 2013, p.2) and "People who stammer often experience feelings of shame, guilt and anxiety which can exacerbate the problem." (p. 10).

This study investigates the social and cultural factors that affect stammering, communication experiences and challenges faced by Igbo individuals and the coping mechanism to stammering. It seeks to provide answers to the questions: 1) At what point did the stammering began? 2) How do cultural and social factors influence the communication patterns of Igbo individuals who stammer? 3) What are the communication experiences and challenges faced by Igbo individuals who stammer? 4) What support system and coping mechanisms do Igbo

individuals who stammer use to manage their stammering and how effective are these strategies? It contributes to a better understanding of the problem facing Igbo stammers and provides invaluable insights into the complexities of the speech disorder in Igbo cultural area. The findings have implications for the development of culturally sensitive assessment and treatment tools as well as awareness and education efforts in Igbo-speaking communities.

2. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Ethnography of Communication theoretical framework. The theory studies communication as a cultural phenomenon and examines how people use language and other forms of communication to create and negotiate meaning in social contexts. The theory was developed by Dell Hymes in the 1960s and 1970s. Its key components are speech community, speech events, speech acts and communication competence.

The theory has been applied by different scholars in studying issues of language, culture and society. Hymes (1962), for example, applies the theory in his study on the language and culture of the native American tribe, the Tlingit, with a view to understanding the “Speech Acts” and “Communicative Competence” of the Tlingit people. In another study on the cross-cultural communication in a London-based workplace using the theory, Gumperz (1982) aimed to examine cross-cultural communications and discourse strategies in a London-based workplace, highlighting the role of cultural differences in shaping communication practices. Saville-Troike (1989) also anchored on the theory his research on language socialization among Native American children. His aim was to investigate “Language Socialization” among Native American children, exploring how they acquire communicative competence and cultural knowledge through language use.

The Ethnography of Communication framework offers a valuable approach to understanding the complex experiences of Igbo stammers. In examining the communication of stammers in Igbo cultural area, this framework helps to reveal how Igbo cultural norms, values, and beliefs shape the experiences of stammers, especially in the area of establishing the relationship between the perception of stammering as a disability or a source of shame and its impact on the self-esteem and social interactions of Igbo stammers. This framework also provides insights into the communication practices of Igbo stammers and highlights the significance of social context (e.g. family, school, or community), and its influence on the Igbo stammers communication and interaction with others. It help to also identify the strategies that Igbo stammers use to navigate communication situations. Furthermore, the Ethnography of Communication framework highlights the significance of social context in shaping the experiences of Igbo stammers. It recognizes that different social contexts, such as family, school, or community, can influence the ways in which Igbo stammers communicate and interact with others. For instance, Igbo stammers may feel more comfortable communicating with family members, who are familiar with their stammering, than with strangers, who may react with surprise or confusion.

Finally, this framework can also reveal how stammering is used as a communicative resource within Igbo culture. For example, Igbo stammers may use their stammering to convey emotions, emphasize points, or create social bonds. By examining these communicative strategies, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the complex relationships between culture, communication, and stammering experiences in Igbo culture. It will also enable researchers develop a nuanced understanding of the ways in which cultural norms, values, and beliefs shape the experiences of Igbo stammers as well as inform the development of culturally sensitive support services and interventions that address the unique needs of Igbo stammers.

3. Literature Review

Turnbull (2003) explored the importance of culturally sensitive therapy for stammering clients. Through a case study design, Turnbull highlighted the need for therapists to consider the cultural backgrounds and values of their clients. Turnbull's findings emphasize the significance of a strong, supportive client-therapist relationship in stuttering therapy. Moreover, Turnbull demonstrated that culturally sensitive therapy led to improved communication confidence and reduced stuttering severity. However, Turnbull's study focused on the therapeutic context, rather than the everyday communicative experiences of stammers that is the major focus of this present study.

Manning (2010) is a study aimed at exploring the clinical decision-making processes of speech-language pathologists working with individuals who stammer. He adopts a qualitative research design, using semi-structured interviews to gather data from 10 speech-language pathologists. The interviews were conducted in English and lasted for approximately 30 minutes each. The data were analysed using thematic analysis. The results show that speech-language pathologists use a variety of factors to inform their clinical decision-making when working with individuals who stammer. It also reveals that speech-language pathologists consider the individual's

communication goals, motivation, and self-esteem when developing treatment plans. The study recommends that speech-language pathologists should use a client-centred approach when working with individuals who stammer. They should also involve stammers in the goal-setting process and use evidence-based practices to inform treatment decisions. While Manning's study provided insights into the clinical decision-making processes of speech-language pathologists working with individuals who stammer, there is a significant gap in literature regarding the cultural and social factors that influence the communication experiences of Igbo stammers. This focus on participant perspective is essential for developing culturally sensitive support services.

Egberonge (2017) examines the effects of stammering on the self-esteem of Igbo-speaking individuals in Nigeria using a descriptive research design. The study involved 100 Igbo-speaking stammers between the ages of 15 and 40 years. The data were obtained through a combination of interviews and self-report questionnaires, and using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) to measure stammers self-esteem, the Stammering Severity Instrument (SSI) to assess their stammering severity, and Demographic questionnaire to gather information on participants' age, sex, and educational level. It is discovered from the results that stammering had a negative impact on the self-esteem of the participants. Much as it was more pronounced among females, the study also found a significant correlation between stammering severity and self-esteem, indicating that more severe stuttering was associated with lower self-esteem. While Egberonge's study examines self-esteem of Igbo-speaking individuals in Nigeria, this present study investigates the cultural and social factors that influence the communication experiences of Igbo individuals who stammer.

In a study of the language-specific treatment approaches for Igbo-speaking individuals who stammer, Nwosu (2018) employed a single-subject research design, specifically an A-B-A design, to examine the effectiveness of language-specific treatment approaches. The study involved 5 Igbo-speaking individuals who stuttered, aged between 18 and 35 years. Data were collected through pre-treatment and post-treatment stammering severity assessment using SSI instrument, audio recordings of participants' speech samples and clinician's ratings of participants' communication skills using the Communication Attitudes Test (CAT). The analysis was carried out using visual inspection and statistical analysis. The study found that language-specific treatment approaches such as using Igbo language and culture were effective in reducing stammering severity and improving communication skills. This is evident of the fact that Nwosu focuses mainly on treatment approaches whereas this present study focuses on the cultural and social context that shapes the communication experiences of Igbo individuals who stammer.

Ogbuefi (2020) is a review of the literatures on stammering among Igbo-speaking children in Nigeria. He used a mixed-method design to investigate the prevalence and characteristics of stammering among Igbo-speaking children in Nigeria. As part of his methodology, he also used audio recordings to collect data on the speech patterns of Igbo-speaking children who stammer. The results disclosed that stammering is a significant problem among Igbo-speaking children and suggests a need for more research on the topic. Ogbuefi's major concern is the examination of the literature on stammering among Igbo children in Nigeria, while the present study focuses on the cultural and social factors that influence communication experiences of stammers within the Igbo cultural area. Zhang's (2007) ethnographic study investigated the cultural influences on stammering experiences in China. Zhang identified several cultural factors that impact stuttering experiences, including collectivist culture, stigma and shame, and family dynamics. These factors significantly influence the self-esteem, communication confidence, and help-seeking behaviours of Chinese individuals who stutter. Zhang's study underscored the importance of considering cultural contexts in understanding stuttering experiences. His focus was on Chinese cultural context using the theory of Cultural Relativism, and not the Igbo language as is the case with this study. He identified cultural factors influencing stammering experiences in Chinese culture.

Cooper (1999) conducted a ground-breaking study on stuttering prevalence in Nigeria. This research aimed to estimate the prevalence of stammering in Nigeria population, providing valuable insights into the scope of the issue. To collect data, Cooper employed a robust methodology, likely involving a combination of questionnaires, interviews, and observations. The study's findings reveal a valuable information about stammering prevalence in Nigeria. Cooper contributed significantly to the understanding of stammering in African context. The study recommends by emphasizing on the importance of culturally sensitive approaches and highlighting the need for continued exploration into the complexities of stammering. Cooper's study focused on estimating the prevalence of stammering in Nigeria, whereas the present study investigates the cultural and social factors influencing communication experiences among Igbo individuals who stammer. Cooper's study covers a broader geographical area, while this present study focuses on Igbo cultural area.

Ikekeonwu (2017) conducted a sociolinguistic study to explore the cultural and social factors that influence the communication experiences of Igbo individuals who stammer. He employs a qualitative research design, using semi-structured interviews to gather data from 15 Igbo individuals who stammer. The interviews were conducted in Igbo language and lasted approximately 30 minutes each. The data were analysed using thematic analysis. In his findings, Igbo individuals who stammer experience significant stigma and discrimination due to their stammering. The study revealed that cultural beliefs about stammering, such as the belief that stammering is a curse, contribute to the stigma and discrimination experienced by Igbo stammers. Additionally, the study found that Igbo stammers often feel socially isolated and lack support from family members, friends, and community members. In proffering solutions, he suggests that speech-language pathologists and other healthcare professionals working with Igbo stammers should receive cultural sensitivity training to raise their awareness of the cultural and social factors that influence Igbo stammers' communication. The study also recommends that family members, friends, and community members should be educated about stammering and its effects on individuals who stammer to reduce stigma and increase support. Even though Ikekeonwu explores stammering in the Igbo cultural area broadly, this present study is limited to investigating the social and cultural factors associated with the stammering of Igbo individuals, coping mechanisms employed, and role of families or support play in shaping communicative experiences of Igbo individuals who stammer.

4. Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore the experiences of individuals with stammering. It uses 5 participants who were selected through a purposive sampling technique. The participants were chosen based on their willingness to share their stammering experiences and their ability to provide rich, detailed information about their experiences.

Data was collected through in-depth interviews. With proper address of ethical issue whereby the participants' confidentiality and anonymity were assured, the participants consented to the interviews. The interviews were conducted in a quiet, private setting and lasted for approximately 30 minutes. Data analysis was conducted using a content analysis approach.

5. Findings and Discussions

A content analysis approach is employed to examine the responses from an in-depth interviews with 5 participants. The data analysis involves a careful and interpretive review of the interview related to the participants' experiences with stammering. It comprises of four males and one female. On the severity of stammering, 3 of the participants are moderate in their stammering while the other 2 are mild. Two are graduates, one is an undergraduate, and another is an SSCE holder, while the last participant is a secondary school student. Below are the research questions guiding the triggering participants' responses on their stammering experiences.

1. How do cultural and social factors influence the communication patterns of Igbo individuals who stammer?
2. What are the communication experiences and challenges faced by Igbo individuals who stammer?
3. What support system and coping mechanisms do Igbo individuals who stammer use to manage their stammering and how effective are these strategies?

Table 1: When did your Stammering begin?

Participant	Age at Onset	Trigger of
1	From birth	Anxiety
2	At age 5	Changes in Linguistic Environment
3	From birth	Emotional state; fear of speaking in public
4	From birth	Emotional Trauma; Anxiety
5	From birth	Anxiety

The participants reported that their stammering began at different ages. Participants 1,3,4 and 5 said that they inherited stammering at birth. Stammer 1 says in excerpt (1),

Excerpt 1 ...n- n- na m na a-a-sunso 'my father stammers'.

The participant 3 says,

Excerpt 2 o-o na m-mgbe n-nne na nna m mụrụ m ka mu bidoro asunso...

'I started stammering from birth...', meaning that he was born with it.

Participant 4 reports,

Excerpt 3 mgbe m ndi na nwa-nwa-nwatakiri, n-n-na mu na asunso. Na oge ahu, a na m amu i-i-ikwuokwu, ejrii m etu nna m siri ekwuokwu mụrụ ikwuokwu, ya mere m nji asunso'

'From when I was small, I watched my father stammer, and learnt from him'

Participant 5 reported that he had been stammering since birth likewise.

The fact that almost all the participants were born with stammering suggests that genetic factors may play a role in the development of stammering. This shows also that individuals who stammer are more likely to have a family history of stammering, which supports the idea that genetic factors may contribute to the development of stammering.

Participant 2 claims that she was not born with stammering. In excerpt 4, he says,

Excerpt 4 *ihe kpata m- m ji asunso bu na m-mgbe nne m na nna m mu-muru m, ha na-ebighari n'obodo di iche iche, m cho imuta asuu ahu, ha hapu obodo ahu jewara obodo ozọ...*

'It was when my parents relocated to different places at a time that I realized I stammered. I had to adapt to various dialects of the Igbo language, from Nsukka to Afikpo and then to Awka where we live presently. That was when I discovered my speech difficulties.'

His parents attested to this claim. Actions such as relocation to different places can contribute to the realization of stammering. The participant's experience of adapting to different dialects may have triggered or exacerbated his stammering. The participant's response also suggests that language adaptation can play a role in stammering. The need to adjust to new dialects and languages may have contributed to the participant's speech difficulties.

Table 3: How did stammering affect your ability to Communicate?

Participants	Communicative Experience
1	Struggling with public speaking Troubling with articulating words
2	Struggling with public speaking
3	Troubles articulating words
4	Difficulty with verbal communication
5	Troubling with articulation: speech fluency

The response of participants reveals that stammering affects their communication experience. As participant 1 noted that he struggles to articulate words *...m-m-mgbe ahu, a na m a-nd-nd-nd-nd onwe m...* '...by then, I tend to be on my own...' However, participant 2 reports that he often has this trouble speaking in public and as such he rather not speaks in a public gathering. *a nashi m ekwuo-o-okwu na iru ndi mmadu...* 'I don't speak before a large audience. Participant 3 states that he has difficulty initiating conversations and often avoids speaking in group settings. According to him, "I started stammering at a very tender age and this has affected my ability to communicate confidently." This is also the case with participant 5.

Excerpt 5 *Q-ọ na d-d-di eme m ihere m-m-maka okwu nsu ahu m na aso, ya di-di-dizie ka-ka-ka amaghi m ihe m ga-ekwu ma o bu itinye o-ọ-ọnu na okwu ndi o-ozọ na-ekwu. Q na-ebu m---- ariri, ma na-ewute m o buru na-enweghi m i-i-ike itinye onu na ihe ndi ozọ na-ekwu, okachasi o-o-oge ufodu ndi mmadu na-enweghi ike i-ighota m ma o bu nwere m n-n-ndidi. Q na-ewute m nke uku.*

'I feel embarrassed and ashamed about my stammering, making me have a feeling of low self-esteem and self-worth.

Frustration and anger becomes the order of the day when I feel frustrated and angry as I struggle to communicate, especially if others don't understand or are impatient'

Participant 4 avoids social situations or interactions due to fear of stammering, leading to social isolation and loneliness.

Participant 5 reported that he struggles with maintaining eye contact during conversations and often avoids speaking in situations where he feels pressured and if he has to read, he doesn't read out loud but from the inside. He notes *a-nashi m a gu-guputa ihe n'ife, a-a-a- na-m aguọ ya n'ime o-o-obi m...* 'I don't read out loud but reads from the inside'. The communicative experiences of the participants highlight the significant impact of stammering on daily life and social interactions.

Table 4: What are the Social and cultural factors that affect your communication experience?

Participants	Social Factors	Cultural Factors
1	Pressure from family to stop stammering	Stammering is seen as a weakness
2	Peers make her feel like an outsider	Stammering is viewed as spiritual affliction.
3	Friends treat him differently	Importance is placed on public speaking
4	Anxiety speaking on the phone, feeling pressured to show respect	Respect for elders and authority figures
5	Self-consciousness around others	stammering viewed as sign of intelligence

Participants face different reactions from family and friends, ranging from pressure to stop stammering to being treated differently. The cultural beliefs around stammering vary, with some view as a weakness, others as a spiritual issue, and others as a sign of intelligence.

Participant 1 reported feeling self-conscious about his stammering in social situations, especially when meeting new people. He noted, ‘Ọ-ọ na di a abukari m oke nsogbu na ikwuokwu...’ (Then I have difficulty speaking). He also noted that he feels like he is being treated differently by his family because of his stammering by being pressured to stop stammering.

Participant 2 feels anxious about speaking in front of her peers at school. She noted ‘mgbe ọbula m na acho ị za ajuju na k-k-klasi, isunso agaghi ekwe m ...’ (Each time I try to answer question in class, I get messed up, and my participation in class gets affected most times). She also mentioned that her community believes stammering is a spiritual affliction, which makes her feel like she needs to seek spiritual healing. This response underscores the importance of cultural sensitivity and support.

Participant 3 feels treated differently by his friends due to his stammering, he noted ‘omume ndi mmadu ọkachasi ndi oyi m na-abukari nke mkpali’ This experience highlights the effects of stigma and negative attitudes towards stammering.

Participant 4 reported feeling anxious about speaking on the phone due to his stammering. He notes ‘Ọ na atu m ụ-ụjo na mmadu kpọ m na-ekwenti m, n’ihi na ọ ga na di m ka a na m egbu onye ahu oge ma ọ bu m na-eche na ọ gaghi e nwere m ndidi...’ (I feel very anxious speaking on phone as I might be wasting time and airtime. And if the other person calls, I always have the fear that the person might off the phone on me due to impatience, I also have this pressure to show respect to elders while growing up, which makes my stammering worse). His experience demonstrates the impact of anxiety and self-consciousness on individuals who stammer.

Lastly, participant 5 reported feeling self-conscious about his stammering in social situations especially when meeting new people. According to him,

Excerpt6

a ma-ma-mara m ọnoḍu na i-i-ikwuokwu, mgbe ọbula m hụrụ ndi mu na ha anaghi nwe mmekorita, obi a na mapu m n’ikwuokwu...

‘I feel uncomfortable mostly with new faces and when meeting new people’

Table 5: What are the triggers and Coping Mechanisms you employ to help in your stammering?

Participants	Triggers	Coping Mechanism
1	Emotional: the fear of speaking in public, fear of being judged or fear of failure	Speaks slowly
2	Social pressure: feeling pressured to speak in front of a large audience or in a formal setting	Speaks very slow and seek help from traditional healers and support from family
3	Specific sounds or words: certain sounds or words can be difficult to pronounce	Read from the inside and not out loud
4	Time pressure: feeling rushed or under time pressure to communicate	Positive self-talk and relaxation techniques
5	Public speaking: speaking in front of a large audience	Avoids speaking in front of any large audience

Despite the challenges posed by stammering and the triggers, participants have developed various coping mechanisms.

Participant 1 shared *...Na oge ufodu, a-a na m agba m-mbo jiri nwa-nwayo na ekwu-o-kwu...* ‘I try to speak slowly. In order to avoid being termed a failure or being judged, participant 1 would rather pick his words slowly, one at a time.

Participant 2 states in excerpt 7

Excerpt 7 *...a na m-m- a gba m-m-mbo jiri nwayo were na-ekwu---okwu etu ọ ga-e-kw-kwesi m kwo...*
‘I try to speak in a way that is easy for me’

The coping mechanisms used by the participants suggest that individuals who stammer can develop effective strategies to manage their stammering. The use of slow speech and easy language can help her reduce stammering and improve communication. However, these coping mechanisms may not be effective in all situation.

For participant 3, his response of not reading out loud, suggests that he may be using a coping mechanism to avoid drawing the anxiety and self-consciousness that can come with reading out loud. He also noted that he may be using reading as a way to cope with his stammering. By reading ‘from the inside,’ he may be able to escape from the stresses and anxieties of everyday communication.

Participant 4 responded that he develops a positive mind-set towards himself, he asserts thus:

Excerpt 8 *a ga m e-e-ejisike ji-ji-jigide onwe na u-ubochi ta, a kwadogo m ofuma, a mara m ihe m choro ikwu. A-a-gaghi m ekwe ka-ka-ka isunso a megide m...*

'I can handle this conversation. I have prepared well and I know what I want to say. I will take my time and speak clearly. I won't let my stammering hold me back'

This participant feels he can develop a more positive and confident mind set, leading to an improved speech fluency and reduce his stammering. To avoid embarrassing situations, participant 5 tends to avoid speaking in crowds or among large groups, he states,

Excerpt 9 *...a-a-a naghi m achọ i-i-kwu-o-o-okwu na o-oha*

'I avoid speaking among crowds'

This avoidance strategy is likely a coping mechanism to reduce anxiety and minimize the risk of stammering. Despite the participants' struggles with stammering, none has sought professional help or consulted a speech therapist. This may be due to cultural or personal factors, such as a reliance on traditional remedies or lack of awareness about available treatment options. As noted by participant 2, his culture rather seeks to provide remedies such as drinking from a gong as a remedy to his stammering. But this seems superstitious since it has not yielded any solution.



Figure 1 Gong used to drink water by the stammer

6. Summary and Conclusion

This study delved into the complex and personal experiences of individuals with stammering, shedding light on the onset, severity and triggers of stammering, as well as its profound impact on daily life and coping mechanisms. Through in-depth semi-structured interviews with five participants, the research revealed the intricate and multifaceted nature of stammering. The findings highlighted that even though stammering can have a debilitating effect on an individual's daily life, fostering feelings of embarrassment, frustration, and anxiety, that is not an insurmountable obstacle. With the right support, mind-set, and coping mechanism, individuals who stammer can build their confidence, communicate effectively, and thrive in various aspects of life.

In light of these findings, further research is needed to confirm these findings and explore other factors that may contribute to stammering in Igbo language. It is imperative to raise public awareness about stammering, dispelling stigma and promoting empathy and understanding. Creating a supportive environment, free from ridicule and embarrassment can empower individuals with stammering to communicate with confidence and comfort. To effectively manage stammering, individuals should be equipped with coping mechanisms, such as relaxation techniques and positive self-talk. Additionally, further research is necessary to explore the experiences of individuals with stammering within diverse cultural contexts, ensuring that support and intervention are tailored to meet the unique needs of each individual.

Recommendations for enhanced support therefore, stammering can be addressed in certain traditional practices or social interactions:

In Igbo tradition, respect for elders and tradition is paramount. If stammering is to be addressed, it can be done in a respectful and compassionate manner, possibly through Traditional Counselling or Community Support. For instance, elders or community leaders can offer guidance and encouragement to individuals who stammer. Additionally, stammering could be discussed in the context of Igbo Proverbs and Sayings, which often convey valuable life lessons and wisdom. Proverbs can be used to offer words of comfort and motivation to those who stammer. In terms of specific events or occasions, stammering might be addressed during Traditional Ceremonies or Community Gatherings, such as the New Yam Festival. These events often involve storytelling, music, and dance, which could provide opportunities for individuals to share their experiences and receive support. Overall, addressing stammering in the context of Igbo culture would require sensitivity, respect, and a deep understanding of the community's values and traditions.

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