

KICLS 2025
Track on Communication Disorder Science
POSTERS

Knowledge and Attitudes of Kuwaiti Mothers Regarding Newborn Hearing Screening and Hearing Loss

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Abstract

Background: Early detection of hearing loss is critical for optimal language development in infants. Maternal knowledge and attitudes toward newborn hearing screening and associated risk factors play a vital role in ensuring timely intervention. In Kuwait, limited data exist on public awareness and perception of childhood hearing loss, despite the availability of universal newborn hearing screening programs.

Objective: This study aims to assess the knowledge and attitudes of Kuwaiti mothers regarding newborn hearing screening, early identification, and intervention for hearing loss, with a specific focus on risk factors and management perspectives.

Methods: A culturally and linguistically adapted version of Elrefaie et al.'s (2022) questionnaire was employed in this cross-sectional study. The revised tool consists of 37 Likert-scale statements covering five thematic domains: (1) risk factors, (2) otitis media and communication, (3) early identification, (4) early intervention, and (5) attitudes toward hearing loss management. Participants included 588 mothers in Kuwait (either in their third trimester or with infants under three months of age), recruited from public and private hospitals. Data collection is complete, and analysis is currently underway.

Ethical Approval: The study was approved by the Ethics Review Committee at the College of Life Sciences, Kuwait University, and conducted in accordance with the World Medical Association Code of Ethics.

Expected Outcomes: This research is expected to provide valuable insights into maternal awareness and perceptions, which may guide future policy development, public health strategies, and educational campaigns aimed at enhancing hearing health services for newborns in Kuwait.

Keywords: Newborn hearing screening, maternal knowledge, hearing loss, early intervention, Kuwait, risk factors, attitudes.

Training of Speech-Language Therapists in Kuwait in Managing Behavioral Challenges During Therapy with Children with Developmental Disorders: Implications for Multidisciplinary Collaboration

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Abstract

Effective speech and language therapy for children with developmental disorders often requires addressing behavioral challenges and barriers that can significantly affect therapeutic progress. This study explores the extent and sources of education and training received by speech-language therapists (SLTs) in Kuwait—in special education schools and developmental centres—in managing such challenges, with a focus on opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration.

A cross-sectional survey will be administered to SLTs working with pediatric populations with developmental disorders across these settings. The questionnaire will assess the type and level of education and training received in behavioral management, including university instruction, in-service training by employers, and independently pursued workshops or courses. Therapists will also self-rate their confidence in handling common behavioral issues such as non-compliance, escape behaviors, emotional dysregulation, and attention difficulties.

University programs in Kuwait currently offer limited behavioral management content, with no dedicated coursework within the Communication Sciences and Disorders curriculum. Clinical placements provide variable exposure to behavioral cases, and it remains unclear whether structured training is offered by employers post-graduation or pursued through collaborations with other professionals, such as board-certified behavior analysts (BCBAs).

By identifying gaps in training and opportunities for interdisciplinary support, this study highlights the importance of embedding collaborative, practical behavioral training—such as joint workshops with BCBAs—into both academic curricula and workplace programs. Strengthening communication and coordination among multidisciplinary teams can empower SLTs to manage behavioral barriers more effectively, ultimately improving speech and language outcomes for children with developmental disorders across Kuwait's educational systems.

The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Effect on ASD in Kuwait

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Abstract

This study explores the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their caregivers in Kuwait. An online survey was used to gather data from 103 caregivers using a mixed-methods approach. The findings highlight significant disturbances in daily routines, education, and therapy that resulted in developmental delays for children with autism and increased stress levels for caregivers. Families had to deal with issues such as reduced community support, behavioral issues, and restricted access to essential services. The study highlights the need for better support systems, such as services to reduce caregiver stress and flexible therapy options. These results are intended to direct the establishment of improved programs and services to support children with autism spectrum disorder and their caregivers in times of crisis in the future.

Comparative Study of the Severity of SSI-4 and OASES Scores in Teenagers

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Abstract

Stuttering is a speech disorder characterized by repetitions, prolongations, and blocks, affecting communication and psychosocial functioning. This study investigated the reliability and validity of the Arabic-adapted OASES among 45 adolescents in Kuwait (ages 13–17; 27 females, 18 males) and examined the relationship between stuttering severity and psychosocial impact. Participants completed the 80-item OASES survey, SSI-4, and UTBAS forms, along with case histories, reading, and conversational samples. Data were collected in schools, clinics, and other quiet locations. Analysis revealed a positive relationship between SSI-4 and OASES scores: higher stuttering severity was associated with greater negative impact across all OASES domains, including general speech perceptions, emotional reactions, daily communication, and quality of life. Findings support OASES as a reliable tool for evaluating stuttering in teenagers and highlight the importance of considering both severity and psychosocial effects when designing interventions. Clinically, both SSI-4 and OASES are valuable for assessment and targeted therapy.