

PREVALENCE OF GLOSSOPHOBIA AMONG NOVICE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS IN KARACHI

Ahmar Zafar*Move Better Clinic, Faisalabad.***Syed Faizan Qadri***Atia General Hospital, Karachi.***Abida Arif***Bahria University Health Sciences, Karachi.***Saba Mengal***Isra University, Hyderabad.***Rida Shahid***7 Senses Child Development Center, Karachi***Obaida Arzoo***Northwest Institute of Health Sciences, Peshawar***Ajay Dherwani***Liaquat National School of Physiotherapy***Anum Zubair***Healthcare and Wellbeing Department***Soofia Ishfaq***Jinnah Medical and Dental College, Karachi***Komal Jamil****Bahria University Health Sciences, Karachi**Corresponding author: komalansar4@gmail.comDOI: <https://doi.org/10.71146/kjmr274>

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Abstract

Background

According to the study, the level of speaking anxiety is higher in females about 27 percent, and in males is 14 percent. This condition is known as Glossophobia or fear of public speaking. Females are facing these types of phobias more in comparison to males.

Objective

To determine the prevalence of glossophobia among healthcare professionals in Karachi

Methodology

The cross-sectional study was conducted from Aug 2024 to Jan 2025, the population of the study was healthcare professionals from seven districts of Karachi and the sample size was 384, the non-probability purposive sampling technique was used. The validated questionnaire was used to determine the prevalence of glossophobia among healthcare workers. The data was analyzed through SPSS version 23.0.

Result

There were 384 healthcare workers recruited from seven districts of Karachi. The feeling of anxiousness while confronting others at the workplace was found higher in novice RMOs, The feeling of confusion when facing to public was found higher in novice physical therapists and nurses, and The shaking of hands was higher in novice nutritionists and physical therapists.

Conclusion

Our study concluded the prevalence of glossophobia was found in every novice healthcare professional i.e.: RMOs, physical therapists, nurses, and nutritionists.

Keywords: *Confusion, Phobia, Public Speaking, Epidemiology, Speaking Anxiety.*

Introduction

Glossophobia is a societal problem or societal phobia that an individual feels fear about speaking in front of an individual, or in public it is indicated nervousness in talking or speaking in public.¹ This condition is known as Glossophobia or fear of public speaking. In this situation, people face many problems like increased levels of heart rate, increases in breathing patterns, hot and cold flashes, excessive sweating than normal, and shaking in muscles of the shoulder and neck.² The main focus of speech is to express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings towards the person and receive a response.³ Females are facing these types of phobias more in comparison to males.⁴ According to the study, the level of speaking anxiety is higher in females about 27 percent, and in males is 14 percent.⁵ Glossophobia is the most common phobia that leads to the cause of death because they feel fear about speaking and get psychological, emotional, and behavioral issues.⁶

A phobia is an uncontrolled or excessive fear of an object or situation. Any type of phobia people suffer from and also have a bad impact on work, lifestyle, and personal relationships.⁷ There is a high chance of developing phobias after traumatic brain injuries, depression, and substance abuse.⁸ There are many types of phobias such as Agoraphobia, Social phobia, and Specific phobia. Agoraphobia is an anxiety disorder in which fear of being in any place or situation where a person feels unsafe or trapped.⁹ These types of people avoid large and crowded places, public transport, markets, and shops. Symptoms of social phobia like looking stupid, and fear of appearing quiet. Social phobia or social anxiety is caused by sentiments of fear and a way of thinking in social settings. Individuals have a feeling of shyness which creates fear.¹⁰ The specific phobia involves the persistent fear of any object or situation. Such as height phobia (Acrophobia), fear of blood (hemophobia), fear of darkness (Nyctophobia), Speaking phobia (Glossophobia), phobia of tight spaces (Claustrophobia), and fear of flying (Aviatophobia).¹¹

There are external and internal factors that influence glossophobia patients. The external factors include on size of the audience, the venue, the structure for speaking in public, and the time of the day.¹² On the other side, the internal factors are anxiety, low confidence, poor recalling of words, poor preparation of talking poor, physical appearance, and lack of personality.¹³ Another factor that influences personality or talking way is language. Most of the studies showed that English speaking is more problematic than others.¹⁴ Language has a great impact on people who speak in English and also impacts on who listens to the words. Because language has a great impact on people who listen to these talks. Healthcare professionals are also facing problems in speaking against the people.¹⁵ The aim of the study that to identify the prevalence of glossophobia among healthcare professionals.

METHODOLOGY

The cross-sectional study was done among the healthcare professionals of Karachi. The data was gathered from seven districts (south, north, east, west, Malir, central, Korangi) from Aug 2024 to Jan 2025. The sample size of 384 was calculated from Raosoft.com software. To select the research participants for the study non-probability purposive sampling was used. The inclusion criteria of the study were both male and female genders, novice healthcare professionals like resident medical officers, physical therapists, nurses, and dieticians working in clinical settings in Karachi, age group 20 to 55 years, having working experience of 1 to 2 years. The exclusion criteria consist of healthcare professionals working in academic setups who are not willing to participate in the study. The validated questionnaire was adopted from the previous study done in 2022¹⁶ in which demographic information of research participants with questions related to the public anxiety of healthcare professionals was asked from the research participants. The analysis of data was done by SPSS version 23.0 software.

RESULT

A total number of 384 novice healthcare professionals were added from Karachi. The demographic information of the research participants including age, gender, professions, working area, and working experience is shown in Table no:1

Table: 1 Demographic Characteristics of Healthcare Professionals

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY (%)
Age	
20-30	97 (25.26%)
31-40	134 (34.89%)
41-50	93 (24.21%)
>51	60 (15.62%)
Gender	
Male	179 (46.61%)
Female	205 (53.38%)
Novice Healthcare Professionals	
Resident Medical Officers	
Physical Therapists	86 (22.39%)
Nurses	
Nutritionist	138 (35.93%)
	91 (23.69%)
	69 (17.96%)
Working Experience	
1 years	223 (58.07%)
2 years	161 (41.92%)

Working Setups	
IPD	86 (22.39%)
OPD	112 (29.16%)
Rehabilitation centers	134 (34.89%)
Old Home	52 (13.54%)

When we asked the question from resident medical officers that weather they were feeling confused while facing the public during the practice 7.55% disagreed. The answer to the question related to the experience of hand shaking while talking to the public 7.29% responded disagree. When we asked the question about the feeling of anxiousness while confronting the public 8.85% replied agree. The answer to the question related to the feeling of comfort when someone asked anything responded 8.07% agreed. When we asked whether they were feeling confused when someone asked anything 7.03% responded disagree. While the response to the question related to their confidence during the performance of the task 6.25% replied agree as shown in Figure no:1

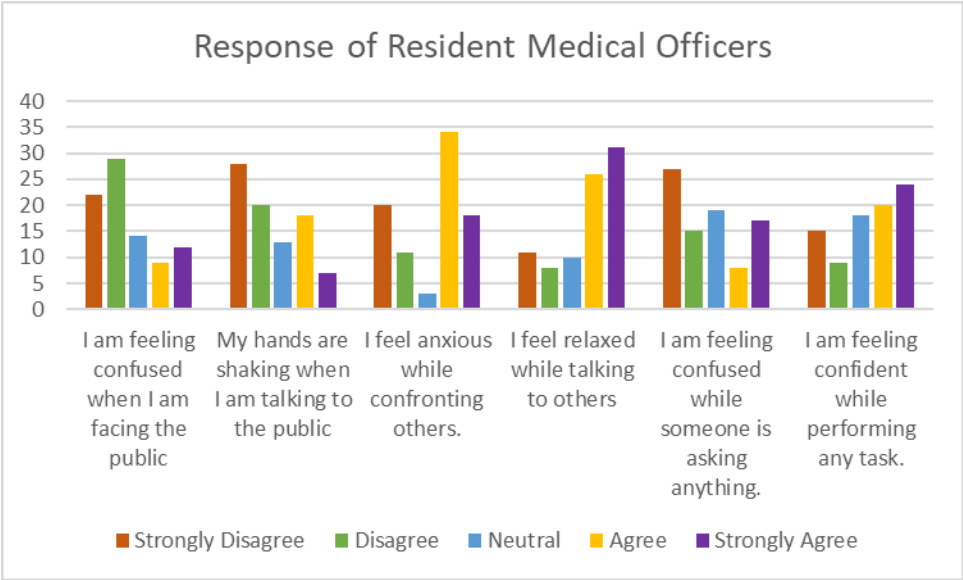


Figure No:1 Responses of RMO’s

When we asked the question from physical therapists whether they were feeling confused while facing the public during the practice 9.89% agreed. The answer to the question related to the experience of hand shaking while talking to the public 10.67% responded strongly agree. When we asked the question about the feeling of anxiousness while confronting the public 9.89% replied strongly agree. The answer to the question related to the feeling of comfort when someone asked anything responded 8.85% agreed. When we asked whether they were feeling confused when someone asked anything 10.67% responded neutral.

While the response to the question related to their confidence during the performance of the task 10.15% replied disagree as shown in Figure no:2

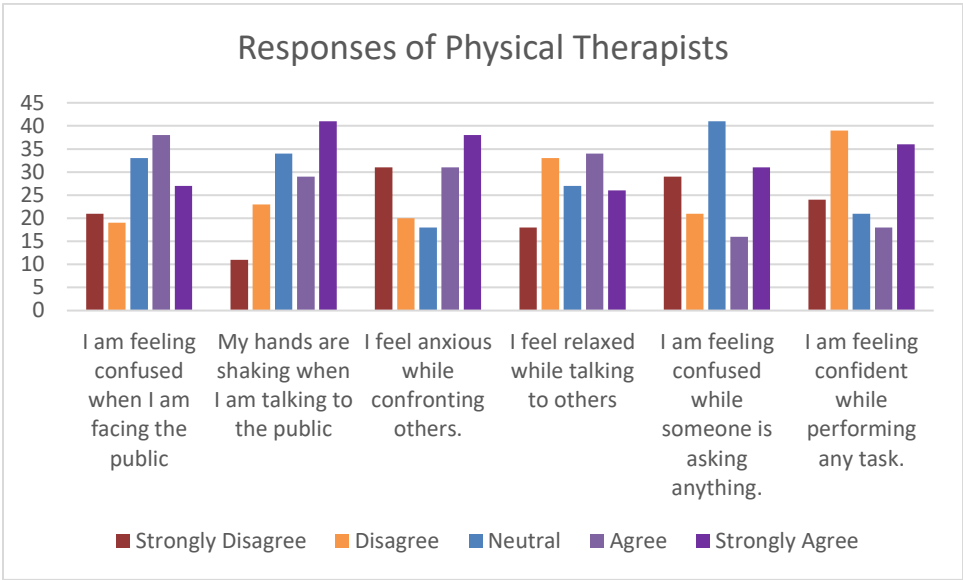


Figure No:2 Responses of Physical Therapists

When we asked the question from nurses that weather they were feeling confused while facing the public during the practice 8.07% agreed. The answer to the question related to the experience of hand shaking while talking to the public 7.55% responded strongly agree. When we asked the question about the feeling of anxiousness while confronting the public 7.03% replied neutral The answer to the question related to the feeling of comfort when someone asked anything responded 9.37% agreed. When we asked whether they were feeling confused when someone asked anything 9.37% responded strongly agreed. While the response to the question related to their confidence during the performance of the task 8.07% replied agree as shown in Figure no:3

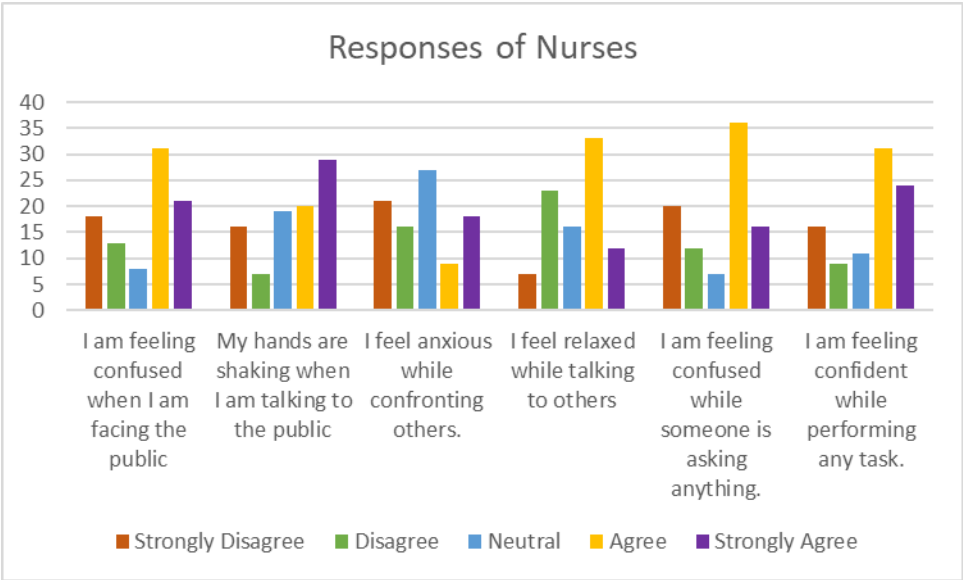


Figure No:3 Responses of Nurses

When we asked the question from nutritionists that weather they were feeling confused while facing the public during the practice 5.20% strongly agreed. The answer to the question related to the experience of hand shaking while talking to the public 6.77% agree. When we asked the question about the feeling of anxiousness while confronting the public 4.94% replied neutral The answer to the question related to the feeling of comfort when someone asked anything responded 5.98% strongly agreed. When we asked whether they were feeling confused when someone asked anything 4.94% responded strongly agreed. While the response to the question related to their confidence during the performance of the task 5.46% replied disagree as shown in Figure no:4

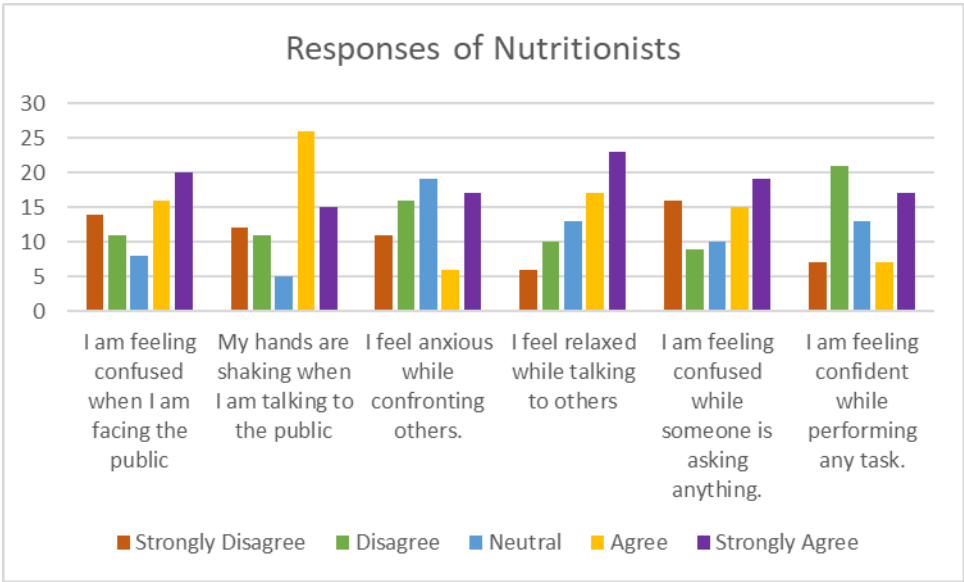


Figure No:4 Responses of Nutritionists

DISCUSSION

A societal phobia causes public fear and anxiety in the affected person and they are uncomfortable around the public while speaking, which leads them to go out of the place.¹⁷ In the present study, we determine the prevalence of glossophobia among healthcare professionals in Karachi. From our study, it has been observed that research participants are physical therapists about: 35.93% which showed the relevance of the field of physical therapy with the disease as compared to other professions.

From the present study, novice healthcare professionals mainly have a working experience of 1 year i.e.: 58.07% according to the study, novice healthcare professionals need special training related to work and its functions earlier in their careers because they need support from their experienced colleagues to gain more knowledge regarding their job description as well as to avoid any mishap in the occupational environment to become a responsible healthcare professional.¹⁸

In this study, we evaluated the symptoms of glossophobia among healthcare professionals of multiple domains through some important questions that were linked to the problems of glossophobia patients we asked questions about the feeling of confusion while facing public to healthcare professionals the rate of confusion found higher in novice physical therapists and nurses as compared to this a study done in Saudia Arabia reported, the level of glossophobia need to be addressed because of the lack of training and professional support that causes the anxiety level drooping among them.¹⁹

In the present study the question related to the feeling of anxiousness during confronting the public at the workplace so the rate of anxiousness was found higher among novice resident medical officers. In comparison to this, a meta-analysis study reported, that the anxiety of different languages is a huge hindrance in the way of learning, outcomes, and speaking around the public.²⁰

In our study the responses to the question related to the shaking of hands while talking about something in front of the public was higher in nutritionists and physical therapists in comparison to this a study reported, that there is a strong association between nervousness, stress, shaking of hands that may be related to the psychological effects of the environment that may contribute to these issues.²¹

The result of our study showed there was a lack of confidence seen in nutritionists while performing any task in the workplace. According to the study reported, self-confidence is directly proportional to glossophobia because the variables of both vary according to the time, environment, and situation.²²

CONCLUSION

From the present study, it is concluded that the prevalence of glossophobia was found in every health-related field in novice healthcare professionals but their variables and percentages vary according to the profession. And it is related to the fresh experience of healthcare workers in their clinical settings which may be reduced while gaining experience in their respective fields.

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