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EDUCATION

The Experience of Parents of Children with Communication Difficulties who are Receiving Speech and Language Therapy at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College

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July, 2024

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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A thesis submitted to Addis Ababa University's College of Education and Behavioural Studies, Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Speech and Language Therapy

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ABSTRACT

Background

Communication difficulties involving speech and language disorders can significantly impact an individual's ability to effectively communicate. Fortunately, speech and language therapy offers effective solutions to help improve communication and language skills. Parental involvement plays a crucial role in supporting children with communication difficulties by working collaboratively with speech therapists to create tailored treatment plans, provide necessary supports and accommodations in the therapy process.

Objective

This study aimed to explore the experiences of parents whose children were receiving speech and language services at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College.

Methods

Applying a qualitative phenomenological design, the research involved interviews and observations to collect data from ten parents of children with communication challenges.

Results

The study highlighted the emotional impact on families as they navigated the journey of recognizing their children's communication difficulties and challenges that parents faced, including scheduling conflicts, managing children's negative reactions during therapy, and consistently applying therapeutic strategies at home. The study also depicted effective strategies employed by parents, such as open communication and close collaborations, adapting therapy techniques, integrating play and everyday activities into therapy, respecting cultural values, and promoting positive outcomes. The identified parental efforts were aimed at helping their children develop effective communication skills, gain confidence in social and academic contexts, and foster their growth into independent individuals.

Conclusion

The study underscored the role of engaged and supportive parents in navigating emotions, overcoming challenges, and employing effective strategies to facilitate the success of speech and language therapy for their children with communication difficulties, ultimately helping them develop essential communication skills.

Recommendations

Speech therapy services should strive to actively engage parents, encouraging them to seek professional help and specialized therapy services for their children's communication challenges to maximize the benefits of speech therapy interventions for their children.

Keywords: *Communication difficulty, Speech and language therapy, Parental experience, collaboration, speech therapist, parental aspiration*

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASHA: American Speech and Hearing Association

WHO: World Health Organization

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

DLD: Developmental Language Disorder

SLD: Speech and Language Difficulty

SLT: Speech and Language Therapy

PECS: Picture Exchange Communication System

AAC: Augmentative and Alternative Communication

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Disability is present in every race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, and religion. More than a billion people, or 15% of the world's population, have some category of disability. Of these, an estimated 150 million children have a disability, with 80% of these children living in the developing world. These children often face extreme poverty, exclusion, and discrimination, and are denied the basic services offered to their peers without disabilities (WHO, 2011). The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that 90% of children with disabilities in low-income countries have never received any form of education (UNICEF, 2014a). Speech and language difficulties refer to problems in communication and related areas such as oral motor function. According to the American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA), a speech or language disorder is inability to produce sounds, understand, or express language accurately (Lee et al., 2023).

These disorders range from simple sound substitutions to the inability to understand or use language or voice. Speech disorders refer to difficulties producing speech sounds or problems with voice quality, while language disorders refer to problems understanding and using words to express ideas (Barry et al., 2024). Speech and language disorders can significantly impact a person's ability to understand and use spoken language. These disorders may manifest as difficulties in speech production, language comprehension, articulation, stuttering, voice disorders, vocabulary, grammar, or following directions. Fortunately, speech and language therapy is a common and effective treatment for these disorders, helping individuals improve their communication skills (Sharp & Hillenbrand, 2008; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016; Davidson et al., 2022). Speech and language impairment is a high-prevalence condition that may have a significant impact on individuals and society (McCormack et al., 2010). The prevalence of speech disorders in young children is estimated at 3.6% (Wren et al., 2016), and language disorders at 7% (Norbury et al., 2016). There is evidence that speech and language disorders can have long-term impacts on academic, psychosocial, and health-related outcomes (Botting et al., 2016).

Parenting is a profound and complex journey that presents both l and challenging experiences (Ramírez-Esparza et al., 2017). In essence, parents must have the personal skills to interact constructively with their children, the organizational skills to manage their lives inside and outside the home, and the problem-solving skills to address the many challenges that children

invariably present. The role of parents in the lives of their children is invaluable, encompassing various responsibilities that shape the future of their offspring. They play a significant role in nurturing and protecting their children, however, for parents of children with communication difficulties, the journey of parenting may present additional challenges. These challenges often include finding and accessing appropriate speech and language therapy services for their children (Phillips, 2000).

Parents are a vital component of service providers, working together with a team of professionals to plan treatment and provide support, services, accommodations, modifications, and therapy tailored to the individual child's needs. Parenting is the broad range of tasks or commitments parents make to encourage their child's acquisition of socially and developmentally appropriate abilities (Sandler et al., 2011). Parents play a prominent role in their children's language development, serving as their first language teachers (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2001). Their role in language development is multifaceted (Roberts & Kaiser, 2011), involving various aspects such as providing a supportive environment, engaging in interactive communication, and using learning materials (Burrell & Borrego, 2012). 2019). Parents are also members of the decision-making process in child intervention, collaborating with experts in an equal partnership to ensure the best possible outcomes (Sugden et al, 2019).

Parental involvement in speech therapy activities is crucial for the development and progress of children with communication difficulties (Alias & Ramly, 2021). The experiences of parents of children with communication difficulties can vary greatly, but they often face common struggles include the lack of necessary environmental support to meet their child's needs (Resch et al., 2010) and difficulties in coming to terms with their child's communication difficulties (Pappas et al., 2015).

There is a lack of long-term relationships between researchers and these families, hindering a deep understanding of their experiences. However, some studies have explored the experiences of parents of children with communication disorders. For example, a systematic review and qualitative meta-synthesis found that parents of children with complex communication needs face barriers accessing support for their children's mental health, including a lack of professional knowledge and awareness of developmental language disorder (DLD) (Berenguer et al., 2022).

Another study found that parents of children with speech or language disorders may face obstacles regarding their child's education, social skills, and emotional development (Levickis et al., 2020). Parents may blame themselves for their child's communication

disorder, and this can lead to psychosocial effects for both the parent and the child. Speech-language pathologists can work with parents to provide therapy and support, and early identification and intervention are crucial to minimize the long-term impacts of these difficulties (McGill et al., 2020). Since, there is a lack of research addressing experiences of parents of children with speech and language difficulties including the challenges and other burdens on these parents, this study will focus on exploring the experiences of parents of children with communication disorders.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Lack of awareness and visibility of speech and language disorders can lead to a lack of service provision and information to enable parents to make sense of their child's disorder (McGregor, 2020). Furthermore, parents may seek the opinions of several professionals to ascertain the underlying cause of their children's speech and language disorders in the hope that "the professional who knows the cause of the problem will also know the most effective way to treat it" (Kamhi, 2004). However, there is limited information or research available on how parents in Ethiopia perceive or understand their children's speech and language difficulties.

Patient values and preferences are one of the three pillars (clinical expertise, patient values and preferences, and best available research evidence) of evidence-based practice (Dollaghan, 2007). However, parental voices, opinions, and expertise are often not recognized by professionals in the decision-making process. Improved understanding of parental views and experiences is important because they inform intervention and policy and enhance outcomes. Parents sense very early in their child's life that "something is wrong" with the child's language development and their worries may not be taken seriously (Roulstone, et al., 2016). According to Marshall et al., (2017), parents viewed themselves as competent facilitators of their children's language development by using strategies such as starting language input early, spending time talking to children, and giving children opportunities to use their language through interaction and socialization. However, parents are responsible for their child's speech and language disorders, revealing worries that perhaps they did not give their children enough attention (Roulstone et al., 2016).

Increasing parent-child turn-taking in interactions and improving parent responsiveness to communication appears to be associated with positive child language outcomes (Roberts & Kaiser, 2011). Families having direct input into service planning or delivery perceive these services as more responsive to their children's needs (Siebes et al., 2007). During service

learning, opportunities are used to develop new modes of practice that address human occupation and communication needs in communities (Kathard & Moonsamy, 2015). Variations in parent-child interaction features are associated with differences in children's language development both within the population of typically developing children and between children with and without language impairment (Roberts & Kaiser, 2011).

Most of the needs for intervention services go unfulfilled and become age-inappropriate speech and language difficulties as a result of parental experience. There are a limited number of speech and language therapists and it is difficult for parents to search and get these professionals. Though, recognition of parental intervention strategies has become a high-demand service for children with speech and language difficulties, the beginning of therapy service provision is difficult. However, more study is required to fully comprehend how parental experiences in intervention strategies might contribute to successful treatments of different speech and language disorders; examining parents' experience in Yekatit 12 Hospital.

There is a significant gap in research regarding the real-life experiences of Ethiopian parents raising children with speech and language difficulties, particularly within their cultural context. Despite the global recognition of the challenges faced by parents in caring for a child with speech and language difficulties, there is still a lack of comprehensive understanding of the lived experiences and needs of these parents in Addis Ababa at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College. It is crucial to prioritize family-centered care, which aims to support caregivers while meeting the needs of children with speech and language disorders. However, there is currently a lack of understanding of the specific experiences and needs of parents caring for children with speech and language difficulties in Addis Ababa, as well as a lack of research focusing on the experiences of parents at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College. The study explored the experiences of parents of children with communication difficulties who were receiving speech and language services at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College by delving into the experiences and perspectives of parents as they navigate the intricacies of raising their children, drawing from their stories and insights.

1.3. The Objective of the Study

The overall objective of the study was to qualitatively explore the experiences of parents of children with speech and language difficulties who were receiving speech and language services at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College for at least three months.

1.4. Research Questions

1. How do parents of children with speech and language difficulties perceive their child's speech language difficulties and therapy services provided by Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College?
2. What challenges do parents face due to their children's speech and language difficulties?
3. How do parents cope with challenges and provide therapy for their children with speech and language difficulties?
4. What aspirations and ambitions do parents have to address their children's speech and language challenges?

1.5. The Significance of the Study

This study aimed to provide valuable insights into the experiences of parents in the study settings, ultimately informing the development of more effective support services for parents of children with communication difficulties at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College. Additionally, it shed light on parents' intervention strategies to improve speech and language difficulties in children. This can uncover opportunities for centers, clinics, and hospitals to better integrate parents' experiences with therapy strategies, ultimately leading to improved outcomes for children facing speech and language difficulties.

Furthermore, this study contributes to additional knowledge that encourages collaboration between parents and professionals by addressing any gaps or shortcomings. The study also serves as a valuable resource for international organizations, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, program developers, policymakers, and schools, providing support for parents in accessing opportunities for raising awareness, counselling, and income-generating activities. Moreover, the study focused on understanding the experiences, challenges, perspectives, and aspirations of parents of children with speech and language difficulties. This enables speech therapists to emphasize these issues in their future therapy delivery and address the gaps in the current literature. By gaining insights into the experiences of parents, the study can inform and improve the quality of speech and language therapy. The study can also be beneficial for other academics and practitioners interested in researching the same field and serve as a valuable source of information for future studies.

1.6. The Scope of the Study

Examining the experiences of parents of children with communication difficulties who are receiving speech and language services at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College was the goal of this study. The scope of this study focused on the experience of parents who have children

with communication difficulties and who were seeking speech and language services at Yekati 12 Hospital Medical College for at least more than three months to gain a comprehensive understanding of their perspectives, challenges, and satisfaction with the services provided. This study mainly focused on examining the factors that contribute to their decision to seek speech and language services, their experiences during the assessment and therapy process, challenges they encounter, their perceptions of the child's disability and the effectiveness of the services, and their overall satisfaction with the support received.

Additionally, the study explored any variations in experiences based on factors such as the age of the child, the severity of the communication difficulties, and the socioeconomic background of the parents. Generally, the study explored parents' perceptions after their children's diagnosis, the challenges faced by parents, types of strategies they use when providing therapy, and aspirations and ambitions for improvement in speech and language difficulties. This was achieved by using interview questions and an observation checklist to investigate appropriate, comprehensive, well-defined, and validated experiences of parents of children with speech and language difficulties.

1.7. Conceptual Definition of Terms

Speech and language disorders: refer to problems in communication and related areas such as oral motor function. These disorders range from simple sound substitutions to inability to understand or use language or oral-motor mechanism for functional speech and feeding (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016).

Speech: refers to how we say sounds and words through verbal expression of language, usually produced through the coordination of various oral structures such as the tongue, lips, vocal cords, and the respiratory system (Seikel et al., 2023).

Language: refers to the system of verbal and non-verbal symbols used by individuals to convey meaning, share information, and interact with others which encompasses spoken, written, and signed forms of expression, allowing people to communicate thoughts, emotions, and intentions (Hardini & Sitohang, 2019).

Therapy: refers to the treatment or intervention provided by a qualified professional aims to promote healing, alleviate symptoms, and improve overall well-being to facilitate positive changes, enhance coping strategies, and promote the individual's ability to function and thrive in various aspects of life (Loncke, 2017).

Speech Language and Therapy: A comprehensive program designed to prevent, screen, identify, assess, diagnose, refer, offer assistance, and counsel individuals who have or are at risk of speech and language difficulties (Loncke, 2017).

Speech-language pathologists: refers to trained professionals to assess and treat individuals with speech and language disorders, aiming to improve their communication skills and overall quality of life (Nicolosi et al., 2004).

Center-based therapy: is a primarily individual-focused, medically oriented, and institutional approach where individuals with disabilities receive therapy services such as specialized physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and speech language therapy designed and controlled by professional (Dambi & Jelsma, 2014).

Language disorders: refers to the disorders that involve the processing of linguistic information. Problems that may be experienced can involve grammar, semantics, or other aspects of language. These problems may be receptive, expressive, or a combination of both (Nicolosi et al., 2004).

Disorder: A syndrome that shows up as a psychological, biological, or developmental mechanism supporting mental functioning that has broken down and is the source of a clinically significant disruption in a person's thinking, emotion control, or behaviour (World Health Organization, 2016).

Disability: a connection between persons with disabilities and the environmental, social, and psychological constraints that keep them from participating fully and equally in society (Vehmas & Mäkelä, 2009).

Parents' experience: refers to the accumulation of knowledge, skills, and understanding parents gained through practical involvement, observation, and active participation in events, situations, or activities that encompasses the personal interactions, perceptions, and learning acquired as a result of engaging with different circumstances and environments (Esposito & Setoh, 2021).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Definition of Communication Disorder

Communication disorders encompass a wide range of challenges in speech and/or language development that differ from typical development. Speech disorders involve difficulty in producing specific sounds or words accurately (articulation or phonological disorders) or in speaking fluently (fluency disorders), while language disorders involve difficulty in understanding (receptive language) or expressing oneself (expressive language) compared to their peers (Barry et al., 2024). Approximately 8% of children in the US aged 3 to 17 years are affected by a communication disorder (Black et al., 2015). However, it is important to note that current data and prevalence estimates have limitations in distinguishing between children with a delay in speech and language development and those with specific speech and language disorders (Black et al., 2015).

Speech is the beautiful art of expressing thoughts and emotions through a combination of sounds, while language is the incredible tool that allows us to comprehend, reason, conceptualize, and understand the world around us. In early childhood, speech and language delay are among the most common challenges, with a prevalence ranging from 2.3% to 19% (Menbere et al., 2023). Speech delay occurs when a child's conversational speech sample is either more incoherent than expected for their age or is marked by speech sound error patterns not appropriate for their age. It's interesting to note that more than two-thirds of children in the neurology clinic were found to have speech and language delays, which is a significantly high percentage compared to other studies (Van der Linde et al., 2016).

2.2. Experience of Parents in Speech and Language Therapy

The experience of parents of children with communication difficulty is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. Parents of children with communication difficulties face various challenges, including coping with their child's diagnosis, managing their child's behaviour, and navigating the support needs of their children. Parents often experience high levels of stress due to the communication impairments of their children (Miranda et al., 2019). Additionally, parents may encounter difficulties in accepting their child's diagnosis, dealing with discrimination, and making significant physical, emotional, and mental sacrifices (Abdullah et al., 2022). Furthermore, the challenges extend to balancing time management for their children and addressing their talents and exercise (Dewi et al., 2021).

For parents whose children face speech and language difficulties (SLD), speech and language therapy (SLT) can be a transformative experience. This journey, however, can be filled with a

range of emotions and challenges. At the core lies a deep desire to see their child thrive and communicate effectively. Parents often describe feelings of frustration, worry, and a strong motivation to help their child overcome these challenges (Smith et al., 2014). Parents embarking on the SLD journey often experience a period of adjustment. They may grapple with new information about SLD, navigate healthcare systems, and confront the emotional toll of their child's diagnosis (Roberts et al., 2019).

Many parents actively seek support systems and communities. This can involve connecting with other families facing similar challenges, online forums, or support groups (Davies, 2014). These connections provide valuable peer support, shared experiences, and a sense of belonging. Parents often emphasize the importance of a collaborative relationship with therapists. Open communication, addressing concerns, and feeling empowered to participate in their child's therapy are crucial aspects of a positive experience (Davies, 2014). The SLD journey is rarely linear. Parents may experience a range of emotions, including hope, frustration, and moments of pride as they witness their child's progress (Roberts et al., 2019). As they navigate the healthcare system and educational settings, parents often develop strong advocacy skills. They learn to articulate their child's needs and ensure they receive appropriate support (Davies, 2014). Parents recognize that SLD therapy is often a long-term commitment. They develop resilience and resourcefulness as they learn strategies to support their children's communication development at home and in various settings (Roberts et al., 2019). Understanding these common experiences can provide valuable insights for therapists and support systems working with families on the speech and language difficulties journey. By fostering open communication, collaboration, and a sense of empowerment, therapists can create a more supportive environment for both parents and children (Davies, 2014).

2.3. Parent involvement in Speech and Language Therapy

The involvement of parents in children's speech-language therapy (SLT) programs is crucial, as parents play a significant role in supporting their child's communication development (Damiao et al., 2024). However, traditional evaluation methods in SLT have primarily focused on measuring child outcomes, neglecting the importance of factors such as parental satisfaction, engagement, and knowledge acquisition (Glogowska & Campbell, 2000). There is a growing recognition of the need for a more holistic approach to evaluation that considers not only child progress but also the involvement and satisfaction of parents.

Furthermore, it is increasingly recommended for parents to be involved in the monitoring of their children's health and development, particularly in early intervention programs for children with developmental difficulties (Serra & Akamoğlu, 2014). Speech and language

therapists working with children often involve parents and carers in the delivery of treatments, equipping them with the skills and knowledge to continue therapy at home (Pappas et al., 2008).

2.4. Understanding Parental Perception of Children's Communication Challenges and Therapy Options

Parent-implemented intervention is gaining popularity as an effective early language intervention for children with language impairment (Stephan & Manning, 2017). Since parents are typically involved in their children's development from the start, they have a great opportunity to spot potential speech and hearing issues early on, particularly those related to oral-facial functions, oral language, and hearing (Wolff & de Goulart, 2013). By creating natural learning opportunities and motivating interactions between children and their parents, this approach allows parents to expand their children's language skills (Roberts & Kaiser, 2012). Study by Roberts & Kaiser, (2011) also shows that positive changes in parent-child interactions and the home language environment contribute to the development of children's language skills. As parents use these language strategies to enhance their children's language skills, they become more confident in their ability to implement the intervention at home and support their children in everyday activities (Wanicharoen et al., 2022).

Recognizing and addressing speech and language delays in children is crucial for their development. Parents play a vital role in this process and may sometimes find it challenging to understand their child's speech difficulties (Sunderajan & Kanhere, 2019). However, early intervention is key in child care; there are various ways for parents to support their children's speech and language skills (Jensen de López et al., 2021). A study by Lindsay & Dockrell, (2004) on parents of children with speech and language difficulties revealed that parents concern about their child's needs and the quality of therapy services.

It's important for parents to be proactive in encouraging speech development at home through communication, reading, and incorporating speech and language activities into daily routines (Jensen de López et al., 2021). Furthermore, parents can support their child in virtual or modified in-person settings by communicating their child's needs using social stories and creating conducive work environments for their child (Sunderajan & Kanhere, 2019). Overall, by being attentive and proactive, parents can make a significant impact on their child's speech and language development (van Kleeck, 2013).

2.4.1. Parents' Perception of their Child's Speech and Language Difficulties

Early identification of speech and language difficulties is essential for providing the right support and intervention. Parents play a crucial role in recognizing the signs of speech and

language difficulties in their children, often being the first to notice if their child is struggling with speech or language development (Clegg et al., 2013). By paying attention to their child's communication milestones and seeking professional evaluation if they have concerns, parents can ensure that their child receives the necessary support (Bishop & Snowling, 2004).

Understanding parents' perceptions and knowledge about speech and language difficulties is vital for developing effective interventions and support systems (Whalley & Munro, 2006). Research in this area can help identify common misconceptions or barriers that parents may face in seeking help for their child. It can also provide insights into the best ways to educate and support parents in promoting their child's communication development (McLeod & Locke, 2009). Supporting children with speech and language difficulties requires a collaborative effort involving parents, educators, speech-language pathologists, and other professionals. By increasing awareness and understanding of speech and language difficulties among parents and the broader community, we can work towards creating more inclusive and supportive environments for children with communication difficulties (Meador, 2014).

2.4.1.1. Parental Awareness and Recognition

The studies show that parental awareness of speech and language disorders (SLDs) varies widely. While some parents can identify difficulties in their children early on, others may not notice or downplay these challenges (Clegg et al., 2013). This variation in recognition can significantly impact the timely support and intervention that children with SLDs receive. It underscores the importance of increasing awareness and understanding of SLDs among parents and caregivers to ensure early identification and appropriate assistance for children with speech and language difficulties. Factors influencing awareness include parental knowledge, expectations for child development, and socio-cultural norms (Bishop & Snowling, 2004). Parents often rely on comparisons with other children and professional guidance for confirmation of speech and language difficulties. This indicates that parents may look for reassurance by observing the behaviour and performance of other children, and also seek input from experts in the field to confirm or better understand their child's speech and language difficulties (Mearns & Wintgens, 2001).

2.4.1.2. Parental Perceptions and Attributions

The feelings of guilt, worry, and frustration that parents may experience when they acknowledge their child's speech and language difficulties are quite common. It is natural for parents to feel guilty, as they may wonder if they could have done something differently to prevent or address the issue earlier. Worry is also a common emotion, as parents are concerned about their child's well-being and future communication abilities (Harvey &

Spencer, 2019). Additionally, frustration can arise from the challenges of navigating the complexities of speech and language difficulties and finding the right support for their child. This acknowledgement of parental emotions underscores the importance of providing support and resources for both the child and the parents in managing speech and language difficulties. Parental perceptions of communication challenges and intervention strategies encompass how parents understand their child's communication difficulties, interpret signs of these challenges, and perceive the impact on their child's well-being and social interactions (Rivera-Figueroa, Marfo, & Eigsti, 2022). It also includes their beliefs about the underlying reasons for the difficulties, emotions experienced, familiarity with intervention options, and their involvement in their child's therapy. Additionally, it involves their perceptions of the potential benefits and drawbacks of different intervention strategies and the accessibility of therapy services and support systems (Harding et al., 2022).

The attributions for speech and language difficulties can vary among parents. Some may blame themselves, while others may attribute the difficulties to genetics or environmental factors. This indicates that there are different perspectives on the causes of speech and language difficulties, and it may be important for parents to seek professional guidance to better understand and address these challenges (Watts Pappas et al., 2016). Cultural beliefs and stigma prevent parents from seeking help for their children's speech and language. This is due to a desire to maintain family privacy, cultural beliefs such as spirit possession, and the fear of being judged within their communities (Paradice & Adewusi, 2002). It is crucial for healthcare professionals to understand and respect cultural influences in order to effectively support families and reduce stigma within diverse communities. This approach ensures that all children receive the mental health care they deserve (Paradice & Adewusi, 2002).

2.4.1.3. Information Needs and Support Systems

Parents often find themselves in need of clear, accessible information about speech and language difficulties for their children. This includes guidance on intervention options and the prognosis for their child. In a 2000 study by Stephenson & Dowrick, the importance of addressing this need was emphasized, highlighting the crucial role of healthcare professionals and educators in effectively communicating with parents and providing them with the necessary resources to support their child's development (Stephenson & Dowrick, 2000).

Support groups and professionals play a significant role in providing information, validation, and coping strategies. Support groups offer a sense of community and understanding, allowing members to share experiences and learn from each other. Professionals, such as therapists, counsellors, and support workers, can provide personalized guidance and support

to help individuals navigate their specific circumstances (Zigron & Bronstein, 2019). By accessing support groups and seeking guidance from professionals can gain valuable insights, find validation for their experiences, and learn effective coping strategies to improve their well-being (Zigron & Bronstein, 2019).

Effective communication and collaboration between parents and professionals are essential for building trust and supporting the success of interventions. Open and clear communication between parents and professionals, such as teachers, therapists, or healthcare providers, is crucial for the success of any support program for children (Carr, 2014). When parents and professionals work together and share information effectively, it can lead to better outcomes for the child. This collaboration involves sharing observations, concerns, and goals, as well as developing and implementing strategies to support the child's development and well-being. It also helps in building a strong partnership based on mutual respect and understanding, creating a supportive and nurturing environment for the child (Carr, 2014).

2.4.1.4. Impact on Family Dynamics

Speech and language difficulties can create tension and frustration within families as they strive to support a family member facing these challenges. Sibling relationships may be affected as the focus and attention within the family shift towards the individual with speech and language difficulties, potentially leading to feelings of neglect or jealousy among siblings. Furthermore, parents experience increased levels of stress and anxiety as they navigate the complexities of supporting their children. It is crucial for families to seek support and resources to effectively manage these challenges and cultivate positive relationships and mental well-being for all family members (Meador, 2014).

Research by Bhat et al. (2012) emphasizes the significance of families finding positive ways to adapt and support each other in order to thrive in the face of adversity. The development of resilience within families is essential for their ability to effectively cope with and overcome challenges. Resilience refers to the capacity to bounce back from difficult experiences and to effectively adapt to change. When families cultivate resilience, they are better equipped to support each other and navigate through tough times. This can involve building strong communication and problem-solving skills, fostering a sense of unity and cohesion, and seeking external support when needed (Bhat et al., 2012).

2.4.1.5. Cultural and Socioeconomic Variations

Cultural beliefs and access to resources can influence how parents understand and experience speech and language difficulties (Paradice & Adewusi, 2002). These factors can shape parents' understanding and experience of these difficulties because they affect the

recognition, support, and treatment of these issues (Carter et al., 2009). Additionally, parents' cultural beliefs can impact how they perceive and respond to their child's speech and language difficulties. Stigmas or misunderstandings surrounding these difficulties, can lead to delays in seeking help or using appropriate resources. Moreover, access to resources plays a significant role in parents' understanding and experiences of speech and language difficulties (Carter et al., 2009). Furthermore, healthcare systems can also influence how parents understand and experience speech and language difficulties (Brown et al., 2006).

The impact of socioeconomic factors on parental knowledge, advocacy skills, and access to intervention has been extensively documented in academic studies (McLeod & Locke, 2009). Parents who have limited access to healthcare services or specialized support may face challenges in accessing appropriate interventions for their child. Trickett et al. (2001) presented evidence that highlights the impact of socioeconomic status on family stability, parenting practices, and the developmental outcomes of children. The predictors of neglect within low socioeconomic status families shed light on the unique challenges faced by these families (Ondersma, 2002). It is understood that socioeconomic factors, such as income and education, significantly influence parental knowledge, advocacy skills, and access to intervention for children's development and educational outcomes (Ondersma, 2002).

2.4.2. Evaluation of the Therapy Options from Parents' Perspectives

Healthcare providers can gain valuable insights into the accessibility and impact of therapy services on both the child and the family by seeking feedback from parents. This information can help identify areas for improvement, address any concerns or barriers to care, and tailor the services to better meet the needs of patients and their families. Speech and language therapy services play a crucial role in supporting individuals with communication difficulties (Price & Nicholl, 2013). The evaluation of these services from parents' perspectives is essential to ensure the effectiveness and quality of the therapy. It allows for understanding the experiences, satisfaction levels, and areas of improvement that parents may have identified. By obtaining feedback from parents, healthcare providers can make informed decisions to enhance the services and address any concerns or issues raised (Williams, 2019).

By involving parents in the evaluation process, hospitals can also foster a sense of partnership and collaboration, as well as ensure that the therapy aligns with the needs and goals of both the child and their family (Wallace et al., 2022). Using feedback from parents to evaluate the speech and language therapy services provided by hospitals ensures that the therapy is effective, meets the needs of the individuals receiving it, and promotes the overall well-being of both the child and their family (Prelock & Deppe, 2015). In order to assess the

effectiveness and quality of speech and language therapy services provided by hospitals, it is crucial to consider the perspectives of parents. Parents offer valuable insights into their child's progress and experiences with therapy, making their input essential for evaluating the impact of the services. By involving parents in the evaluation process, hospitals can gain a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their speech and language therapy programs (McAllister et al, 2018).

This information can be used to make improvements, address any concerns or issues raised by parents, and ensure that the therapy services meet the individual needs of each child (Haukedal et al., 2018). Additionally, parents' perspectives can shed light on potential areas for improvement in terms of access, communication, and coordination within the hospital's speech and language therapy department. This feedback can be used to enhance the overall effectiveness of the therapy services and ensure that parents could feel supported and heard in their child's journey towards communication development (Law et al., 2019). Furthermore, parents' feedback can help hospitals foster a sense of partnership and collaboration with families, leading to personalized therapy plans, better outcomes for the child, and a positive overall experience for both the child and their family (Papoudi et al., 2021).

2.5. Challenges Faced by Parents of Children with Communication Difficulty

Speech and language disorders (SLDs) in children encompass a wide range of challenges that can impact a child's ability to communicate effectively (Mohammed et al., 2023). These difficulties like speech production, language comprehension, and social communication skills. Speech and language difficulties can significantly affect a child's daily life, including their interactions with others, expression of needs and emotions, and participation in academic and social activities (American Speech Language Hearing Association 2020).

The impact of communication difficulties on parental stress is evident, with studies highlighting the relationship between higher stress levels and the difficult behaviour of the child (Miranda et al., 2019; Poon & Ho, 2023). Moreover, the need for effective support and coping strategies for parents to manage the challenges is associated with their child's communication difficulties (Miranda et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2014). It is crucial to recognize the compounding effects of pre-existing mental health conditions and recent bereavements on children, as well as the communication and emotional difficulties experienced by parents grappling with their own grief while supporting their children (Harrop et al., 2021).

The potential impact of communication disorders on individuals and their relatives is hard to quantify, but clinical experience shows that these issues can affect a person's relationships, self-image, and ability to learn both formally and informally (Wolff & de Goulart, 2013). The

challenges faced by parents are emotional and psychological aspects and practical issues such as understanding the role they should play in their children's online learning (Hadhrami & Saadi, 2021). Additionally, parents of children with language difficulties are more aware of the difficulties in social communication, classroom discourse, and literacy, highlighting the multifaceted nature of the challenges they encounter (Lee & Lee, 2021).

The crisis in speech and language therapy for children and the challenges faced by patients and parents in the United Kingdom have been well documented in recent years (Carlowe, 2008). A range of problems and failings in service provision have been highlighted, including long waiting lists, lack of clear care pathways, inconsistent or variable service availability, a lack of communication and joined up work between different professionals and services, and the absence of a family-centered and integrated multidisciplinary approach. The challenges faced by parents while seeking speech language therapy for their children and as a result of their children's disorders have been the focus of several research endeavours. Studies by Paula et al. (2020) have identified barriers such as limited access to specialized services, financial constraints, and social stigma as significant challenges encountered by parents.

2.5.1. Emotional and Social Challenges

The emotional and practical impact of dealing with a child with a speech and language disorder has been studied in relative detail in publications in the last 10-15 years, such as Carlowe (2008). Research has identified the negative impact on family functioning and carer mental health, feelings of stigma and guilt, the practical strain of organizing and attending appointments, and school concerns for a child's self-esteem (Carlowe, 2008). The association of parental stress and children's behavioural issues and communication needs has also been considered in author response to manuscripts and reviews in the field (Baker et al., 2002).

According to McMurray et al. (2019), parents of children with communication disorders might experience anxiety, isolation, and strain on family relationships. Witnessing their child's daily struggles to express themselves, connect with others, and navigate social situations can lead parents to feelings of isolation, guilt, and helplessness. Misunderstandings from others, social stigma, and navigating a complex healthcare system further amplify the emotional burden and struggle to find the right resources and support (Prior & Sacks, 2004). Study by McMurray et al. (2019) highlight the increased prevalence of anxiety, depression, and stress among parents raising children with communication difficulties compared to the general population. They may face anxiety and stress while trying to support their loved ones. This can lead to frustration and a sense of being overwhelmed by the process of seeking help (Law et al., 2017; McMurray et al., 2019).

2.5.2. Isolation and Daily Communication Hurdles

Beyond the emotional impact, families face persistent obstacles in everyday communication. Deciphering their child's unspoken needs, managing frustration and meltdowns triggered by communication breakdowns, and adapting daily routines to accommodate different learning styles are just some of the hurdles parents encounter. (Green et al., 2007) emphasize the constant vigilance and emotional labour required to anticipate needs and interpret non-verbal cues, leading to exhaustion and decreased personal well-being. The wider impact of speech and language difficulties or communication needs on affected children and their families has been thoroughly discussed by authors such as Carlowe (2008).

Through a diverse range of subjects, such as social isolation, access to the National Curriculum, and local bursaries, the differing level of adverse circumstances for a child depending on the support network around the family, and the greater impact suffered by children with social communication disorder compared with other types of speech and language difficulties (Carlowe, 2008). The common challenges faced by individuals and families include stigma surrounding mental health can lead to feelings of shame and discrimination, making it difficult for individuals to seek help or talk openly about their struggles (McMurray et al., 2019). This can lead to feelings of isolation as they may not feel comfortable sharing their struggles with others. Furthermore, the strain on family relationships is a common issue, as the dynamics within the family unit may be affected by the challenges posed by mental health issues (Law et al., 2017).

2.5.3. Practical and Financial Burdens

The practical and financial demands are substantial. Accessing qualified therapists, specialized schools, assistive technology, and other interventions can be costly and challenging, particularly for families facing limited resources. Navigating bureaucratic hurdles and advocating for adequate support within education and healthcare systems adds another layer of complexity. Theidon & Summers (2012) highlight the financial strain on families due to therapy costs, equipment, and additional care, often leading to reduced work hours or career sacrifices. Financial constraints may also pose a barrier to accessing necessary mental health services, as therapy and treatment can be costly.

In general, common challenges faced by parents and children include stigma, financial constraints, limited access to qualified therapists, and navigating complex healthcare systems. Additionally, there may be limited availability of qualified therapists in certain areas, particularly in rural or underserved communities (Theidon & Summers, 2012).

2.6. Parental Strategies in Providing Therapy

According to Davidson et al. (2022), the exploration of strategies employed by parents when providing therapy for children with speech and language difficulties is a topic that has garnered increasing interest in the literature. The studies conducted by Davidson et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of various strategies utilized by parents, such as home-based exercises, communication enhancement techniques, and active participation in therapy sessions. By understanding these strategies, valuable insights can be gained into the supportive role of parents in the therapeutic process, ultimately contributing to the development of comprehensive intervention programs that emphasize parental involvement (Davidson et al., 2022).

In speech therapy setting, parents play an integral role in supporting their children's speech and language development by actively engaging in therapy sessions facilitated by speech-language therapists (SLTs) (Davies, 2014). This active participation can encompass a range of activities, including observing demonstrations, practicing techniques alongside professionals, and receiving personalized guidance on implementing strategies in the home environment. By collaborating with SLTs and immersing themselves in the therapy process, parents can effectively reinforce and generalize therapy goals outside of clinical settings, ultimately enhancing their child's progress and overall communication skills (Davies, 2014).

During therapy sessions led by speech-language therapists, parents often demonstrate an active interest in their child's progress by posing questions regarding their child's individual needs, seeking explanations for the therapy techniques being used, and inquiring the long-term objectives of the therapy (Davies, 2014). By seeking clarification and understanding from professionals, parents not only gain insight into their child's therapy but also empower themselves to better support their child's communication development both during and beyond therapy sessions. This collaborative dialogue between parents and therapists fosters a deeper understanding of the therapeutic process and ensures that parents are well-equipped to play a significant role in their child's speech and language intervention (Davies, 2014).

The unfamiliar and potentially frightening environment of a hospital can be a source of stress and anxiety for children (Davies, 2014). Parents play a vital role in mitigating these negative emotions by providing emotional support and encouragement during therapy sessions. Their presence fosters a sense of security and familiarity, making children feel more comfortable and willing to participate in therapy activities (Davies, 2014). This emotional support creates a foundation for successful therapy and can contribute to the child's overall well-being during their hospital stay.

Beyond attending therapy sessions, parents play a crucial role in their child's progress by implementing the learned strategies at home (Dennis & Charlton, 2017). This ensures consistent practice, a key factor in solidifying newly acquired skills. To achieve this consistency, parents creatively integrate therapy activities into daily routines. Playtime becomes an opportunity to practice communication skills through games and storytelling, while mealtimes can be used to work on vocabulary development and turn-taking conversations (Dennis & Charlton, 2017). By seamlessly integrating therapy into everyday life, parents promote the generalization of these skills, allowing their child to utilize them effectively in various contexts. Parents create a communication-rich environment by using clear and concise language, expanding on their child's utterances, and engaging in frequent interactions. This can involve activities like storytelling, singing songs, and playing games (MacIntyre, 2018).

They also utilize play as a natural context for promoting communication development. This can involve following the child's lead, narrating actions during play, and providing opportunities for turn-taking and conversation (Davies, 2014). Parents play a critical role in supporting their children's speech and language development, particularly for those with diagnosed difficulties. Beyond implementing formal therapy techniques, parents often develop a unique set of informal communication strategies used at home to promote their child's progress. These strategies can be highly effective and are tailored to the specific needs and communication style of their child (Davies, 2014).

According to Davies et al. (2017), Parents naturally repeat and rephrase new words and concepts to enhance their child's understanding and production. This can involve repeating key words during conversations, providing clear and concise instructions, and rephrasing if their child's initial attempts are unclear. Visuals can be powerful tools for promoting communication development. Parents may use pictures, gestures, sign language, or objects to represent words and concepts, aiding comprehension and expression (Roberts et al., 2019). Using picture cards during story time or showing gestures alongside spoken instructions can provide additional support. In addition, parents instinctively modify their interactions to facilitate communication. This can involve speaking slower, using shorter sentences, and incorporating wait time to allow their child sufficient processing time to respond. Parents may also simplify their language or rephrase complex concepts into simpler terms (Dennis & Charlton, 2017).

While informal strategies are valuable, collaboration with speech-language therapists (SLTs) and training in specific techniques can significantly enhance their effectiveness (Roberts et

al., 2019). Therapists can provide guidance on tailoring these strategies to address the child's specific needs and developmental level. Training can equip parents with practical tools and strategies. One of such strategy is the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) (Charlop-Christy et al., 2002). This system uses picture cards to help children who have difficulty speaking communicate their wants and needs. By exchanging these cards with their communication partner, children can effectively express themselves, fostering independence and reducing frustration. Strategies like narrative intervention help parents become better storytellers. This improves their child's language development and engagement by making storytelling more interactive and interesting (Neal & Brady, 2022).

2.7. Aspirations and Ambitions of Parents

It's important to recognize that parental aspirations can be influenced by various factors, including cultural background, family dynamics, and the severity of the child's SLD (Dennis & Charlton, 2017). Open communication and collaboration between parents, therapists, and educators are vital to ensure that goals are realistic, achievable, and aligned with the child's specific needs and difficulties.

2.7.1. Parental Aspirations for Children with Speech and Language Difficulties

The journey can be a complex one, filled with both challenges and hope for parents of children with speech and language difficulties (SLD) (Davies, 2014). These challenges can encompass feelings of grief, frustration, and uncertainty about the future (Roberts et al., 2019). However, there is also immense hope and a deep desire to see their child thrive. Understanding these parents' goals, aspirations, and ambitions for their children is crucial. By acknowledging both the challenges and the hope that parents carry, therapists and healthcare professionals can build strong, collaborative relationships that empower parents and ultimately support the well-being of the entire family unit (Dennis & Charlton, 2017). There are the different aspects parents may prioritize their aspirations.

2.7.1.1. Functional Communication

A primary goal for many parents of children with speech and language difficulties is to see their children develop effective communication skills (Davies, 2014). These skills empower children to express their needs and wants clearly, fostering a sense of independence and allowing them to actively participate in daily life. Effective communication encompasses a variety of methods, and the ideal approach may vary depending on the child's specific needs. To do so, developing spoken language skills remains a top priority for many parents (Davies, 2014). Therapists can work with children to improve articulation, vocabulary development, and sentence structure, allowing them to express themselves verbally. Furthermore, for

children who face challenges with spoken language, AAC methods can provide a vital alternative. AAC encompasses a range of tools and strategies, such as picture boards, sign language, and speech-generating devices. By utilizing AAC, children can effectively communicate and engage with the world around them (Davies, 2014). In many cases, a combination of spoken language and AAC methods proves most beneficial. This allows children to leverage their strengths in both areas and maximize their communication potential (Davies, 2014).

2.7.1.2. Social Interaction and Emotional Well-being

The desire of parents for their children to develop strong social connections and experience positive emotional well-being is a natural and important aspect of parenting (Roberts et al., 2019). When children have improved communication skills, they are better able to achieve these goals. Effective communication enables children to interact with their peers, take part in various activities, and express their emotions in a healthy manner. This can lead to more fulfilling social experiences and overall well-being for children (Roberts et al., 2019).

Effective communication allows children to initiate interactions with peers, express themselves clearly, and understand others' perspectives. This fosters a sense of belonging and connection, building strong social bonds (Bach & Grant, 2015). Clear communication is crucial for participating in games, group activities, and classroom discussions. When children can express themselves and understand instructions, they become more engaged and derive greater enjoyment from these activities (Dickinson & Porche, 2011). Children with strong communication skills can articulate their feelings, seek support when needed, and resolve conflicts constructively. This fosters a sense of emotional security and reduces frustration (Herndon et al., 2013).

By improving their communication skills, children gain the tools they need to build meaningful relationships, navigate social interactions with confidence, and express their emotions in a healthy way. This ultimately contributes to their overall well-being and sets them on a path to social and emotional success (Bach & Grant, 2015).

2.7.1.3. Academic Achievement

Parents may have aspirations for their children to excel academically (Davies, 2014). Effective communication skills are fundamental for learning and success in school, and parents may seek strategies to support their child's educational journey. Clear communication allows children to grasp complex concepts, follow instructions, and participate actively in classroom discussions. They can ask clarifying questions, express their understanding, and learn from their peers (Bach & Grant, 2015).

Strong communication skills encompass not just spoken language but also reading and writing abilities. These are essential for academic success, allowing children to access information, complete assignments, and express themselves through written language (Snow, 2017). Effective communication fosters positive social interactions and collaboration within the classroom. Children can work effectively in groups, share ideas, and learn from one another, creating a more enriching learning environment (Bach & Grant, 2015). As children progress through school, the ability to communicate their needs and challenges becomes increasingly important. Strong communication skills allow them to advocate for themselves, seek help from teachers, and navigate academic difficulties (Davies, 2014). Understanding this critical link between communication and academic success empowers parents to become active partners in their child's speech and language therapy (Davies, 2014).

2.7.1.4. Future Independence

A core ambition for many parents is to see their children develop the independence needed to navigate life successfully as adults (Roberts et al., 2019). This concept of independence goes beyond simply living alone. It encompasses a range of skills that empower children to manage their daily lives effectively, fostering a sense of self-reliance and confidence. As discussed previously, strong communication skills are fundamental for independence. Children need to express their needs and wants clearly, ask for help when necessary, and advocate for themselves in various situations (Davies, 2014). In addition, the ability to understand and articulate one's own rights, needs, and preferences insure self-advocacy. Children with strong self-advocacy skills can confidently express themselves in educational settings, healthcare environments, and social interactions (Davies, 2014).

Daily living tasks like personal hygiene, meal preparation, and medication management become increasingly important for independent living. Effective therapy can equip children with the strategies and routines necessary to manage these tasks independently (Roberts et al., 2019). Furthermore, life inevitably presents challenges. Therapy can help children develop problem-solving skills, allowing them to identify obstacles, brainstorm solutions, and make informed decisions independently. Effective therapy goes beyond simply addressing communication difficulties. By incorporating these aspects of independence into the therapeutic approach, therapists and parents can work together to prepare children for a future filled with confidence and self-sufficiency (Roberts et al., 2019). The journey of raising a child with speech and language difficulties (SLD) can be fraught with challenges. However, families facing these challenges often demonstrate remarkable resilience and resourcefulness (McConkey et al., 2023).

2.7.2. The Parents Attitudes on Speech and Language Therapy Outcomes

Successful therapy extends far beyond the walls of a clinic for children facing speech and language difficulties. Research consistently highlights a strong connection between a parent's perspective and their child's progress in speech and language therapy specifically (McConkey et al., 2023). This connection can be likened to a ripple effect, where parental attitudes influence not only their own involvement but also the overall therapy environment and ultimately, the child's motivation and progress. Parents who view therapy positively are more likely to actively participate in sessions, diligently practicing strategies at home, and collaborating effectively with therapists (Nevas & Farber, 2001).

A positive parental attitude creates a nurturing and supportive environment for the child. Parents who believe in their child's potential create a foundation of motivation and emotional support (Davies, 2014). This translates into a willingness to engage in therapy activities and a growth mind-set that celebrates even small victories. Positive reinforcement fosters a sense of accomplishment and keeps the children motivated on their communication journey (Davies, 2014). Parents with realistic expectations about the therapy process are better equipped to manage their anxieties and provide consistent support for their child. Understanding the nature of SLD and the gradual nature of progress allows them to celebrate milestones and maintain a positive outlook. This emotional stability provides a secure base for the child to navigate the challenges of therapy (Davies, 2014).

2.8. Implications for Improving Therapy Services and Support for Parents

The crucial role of parental attitudes in a child's progress with speech and language therapy (SLT) demands a re-evaluation of current practices. Research consistently highlights the strong connection between a parent's perspective and their child's success in therapy (Dennis et al., 2017). This recognition necessitates significant improvements in therapy services and support systems for parents.

2.8.1. Fostering Collaboration and Open Communication

Speech and language therapists should include introductory sessions specifically focused on parental concerns and expectations which can foster a collaborative approach from the outset (Davies, 2014). In addition, therapists should prioritize open communication with parents, addressing concerns promptly, and ensuring they feel comfortable asking questions (Nevas & Farber, 2001). Developing therapy goals collaboratively with parents and providing regular feedback on progress can empower parents and keep them engaged (Roberts et al., 2019).

2.8.2. Equipping Parents with Strategies and Resources

Offering workshops or training programs to equip parents with strategies for practicing communication skills at home can significantly enhance therapy outcomes (Roberts et al., 2019). Furthermore, providing parents with access to educational resources on SLD, therapy approaches, and developmentally appropriate communication strategies empowers them to become active partners in their child's journey. Connecting parents with support groups or online communities can foster a sense of belonging, shared experiences, and access to valuable peer support (Davies, 2014).

2.8.3. Parental Stress and Emotional Well-being

Speech and language therapists can help address parental stress and emotional well-being by incorporating strategies such as relaxation techniques or mindfulness exercises (Neal & Brady, 2022). This indicates that therapists can play a role in supporting not only the communication development of children but also the well-being of their parents. Additionally, building strong referral networks with mental health professionals can ensure that parents receive additional support if needed (Davies, 2014). This collaborative approach highlights the importance of addressing the holistic needs of families, recognizing that parental well-being can impact the overall success of therapy for children.

2.8.4. Tailoring Therapy Approaches

Incorporating family-centered therapy approaches can create a more holistic environment where the entire family unit feels supported and empowered (MacIntyre, 2018). Therapists should be mindful of cultural backgrounds and tailor communication styles and therapeutic approaches to best suit each family's needs (Davies, 2014). By implementing these strategies, therapists and therapy centers can create a more supportive environment for both children and parents. This collaborative approach, built on open communication, shared goals, and empowered parents, is key to optimizing therapy outcomes and fostering long-term communication success for children with SLD (Davidson et al., 2022).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Research Approach and Design

The study employed a qualitative research approach, aiming to examine situations in their natural context by offering detailed explanations that provide a deeper understanding of participants' backgrounds (Maxwell, 2012). Qualitative research primarily addresses "what" and "how" questions, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the participants' circumstances (Green & Thorogood, 2014). This approach delves into the daily lives of parents to gain insights and interpretations from their point of view (Draper, 2004). Participants' own descriptions of their lived experiences were central to this research (Creswell, 2007).

Phenomenology, as a form of qualitative research, focuses on understanding individuals' lived experiences within the world through a systematic approach designed to elucidate these experiences and living conditions (Neubauer et al., 2019). By considering the practical aspects of situations, phenomenology aids in providing explanations (Donalek, 2004). Phenomenological studies explore human experiences as narrated by individuals, emphasizing direct experiences rather than abstract concepts (Creswell, 2014).

Therefore, the researcher opted for a phenomenological research design as it is deemed appropriate for describing the experiences of parents in raising and supporting children with speech and language difficulties in this study. In addition, this design was selected as it helps to understand and explore individuals' lived experiences and how they make meaning of those experiences. In the context of this research title phenomenological research design is relevant because it allows for a deep and nuanced exploration of the subjective experiences of parents in their interactions. The study, which explored the experiences of parents of children with speech and language difficulties who are receiving services at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College, officially commenced in September 2023 with a projected completion period set for June 2024.

3.2. Research Site

The study was conducted at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College, which provides speech-language therapy services for children with disabilities. Located in Arada Sub-City, Woreda 06, Addis Ababa City Administration, this hospital was selected by the researcher due to its status as a leading government healthcare institution offering comprehensive and high-quality care for children with disabilities, including those with speech and language disorders. The

hospital employs domestic speech and language professionals who possess the necessary training and experience in this field.

Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College was chosen for its commitment to providing free services to children with developmental disabilities experiencing communication challenges, with over 2,500 beneficiaries benefiting annually. The hospital's wide range of services catering to both children and adults with communication disorders also influenced the researcher's decision to select this site. Furthermore, the hospital's track record of successfully delivering speech and language therapy services made it a suitable choice for this study.

3.3. The Study Participant

In selecting participants for qualitative research, it is essential to specify the sampling method, sample size, and selection procedure to ensure that the findings yield rich and meaningful data (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). In the context of a phenomenological research design, participants must have lived experiences related to the issue under study and have navigated through the specific situation being investigated (Delve & Limpaecher, 2022c). For this research, participants were chosen based on their first-hand experiences in raising and supporting children with speech and language difficulties, with the goal of gaining insights into their motivations and behaviours.

Typical inclusion criteria include types of parents, length of therapy time, clinical characteristics, and parent-child relations. Therefore, the standards that were identified to select target participants were based on being: biological parents of children diagnosed with speech and language difficulties, parents of children with speech and language difficulties who always attend the therapy sessions, parents who spend more time, parents whose children have received speech and language therapy for more than three months and are currently receiving speech and language therapy services at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College, and parents who are able and willing to communicate their experiences in dealing with their children's speech and language difficulties and the therapy services. In addition, parents who do not meet the above standards were not identified as study participants for this study.

3.3.1. Sampling Techniques

The researcher employed purposive sampling, a non-random technique, to select participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research question or objectives. Purposive sampling involves selecting individuals who meet the required sample selection criteria and is particularly useful for facilitating a more profound analysis and understanding of individual

circumstances (Krueger & Neuman, 2006, p. 34). The use of purposive sampling was justified by its ability to identify individuals who possess a deep understanding of the situation, exhibit specific characteristics pertinent to the study, and are willing to share their innermost feelings and lived experiences. This approach was informed by methodological considerations and the researcher's professional judgment.

This helped to ensure that the participants are able to offer valuable insights and perspectives that can contribute to a thorough analysis and understanding of the research phenomenon. Hence, the researcher typically used purposive sampling to ensure that the selected participants can provide the most relevant and insightful information, ultimately contributing to the depth and quality of the research findings.

3.3.2. Sample Size

In qualitative research, determining the appropriate sample size is a matter of judgment and expertise, influenced by various methodological and practical considerations (Vasileiou et al., 2018). However, the sufficiency of the sample size is based on the specific attributes of the study, the nature of the phenomenon under scrutiny, the quality and depth of the data, and the researcher's expertise (Emmel, 2015). Sample size determination is inherently contextual and partly influenced by the scientific paradigm, with different qualitative research paradigms calling for varying sample size requirements (Boddy, 2016). The primary objective in selecting a sample size is to advance knowledge and comprehension of the phenomena being explored, thereby facilitating the nuanced and thorough analysis characteristic of qualitative research (Vasileiou et al., 2018).

The decision by the researcher to select a sample size of 10 parents of children with speech and language difficulties aligned with the notion of attaining comprehensive data in qualitative research endeavours. The selection of the study participants was in line with the recommendation to select participants for achieving data saturation in qualitative research. In addition, the samples used in phenomenological research must be small (Bartholomew, 2021). Hence, the choice to incorporate 10 participants into this study was consistent with established guidelines and principles within the academic literature, ensuring a thorough investigation and understanding of the parents' experience.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

The purpose of data collection is to gather dependable information for analysis in order to deliver convincing and credible responses to the research questions (Canals, 2017 & Aguinis et al., 2021). The data collection tools that the study utilized in investigating the experiences of parents of children with speech and language difficulties at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical

College are interviews and observations. These approaches facilitated a more thorough investigation and interpretation of the participants' experiences within the research setting. The qualitative data collection tool was enhanced through feedback from advisors, input from other experts and professional colleagues to verify the content's accuracy and reliability, the utilization of diverse data collection methods for triangulation, and the implementation of a pilot test (Richards & Hemphill, 2018).

The pilot test involved interviewing and observing two parents who possessed nearly similar characteristics to the actual target group of the study, but who were not included in the study participants. The aim was to identify any ambiguities, misunderstandings, or inconsistencies in the questions and to check if the questions were generating the intended responses. The feedback from the pilot test helped in refining the interview questions and observation checklists and ensuring their reliability. Additionally, the researcher sought feedback from advisors and other experienced observers or experts in the field who could provide valuable insights to improve the validity of the interview questions and observation checklist. The use of these two data collection tools helped the researcher for triangulation purposes and to check the consistency between what parents said and did.

3.4.1. Interview

The researcher developed an interview guide containing pertinent questions to maintain consistency throughout the interview process. Phenomenological research relies on interviews as a suitable method for data collection, enabling participants to articulate their experiences in-depth and accurately, thus allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the phenomenon under study (Bevan, 2014). The main objective of phenomenological interviews is to elucidate the meanings of events, necessitating ample time to delve into the phenomenon and requiring the researcher to possess exceptional interviewing skills (Lauterbach, 2018).

Hence, the researcher engaged in interviews with participants using semi-structured questions to gain deeper insights into the experiences of parents of children with speech and language disorders. Prior to the interviews, rapport was established with the participants, and their consent was obtained. Following this, an agreement was reached to commence the interview sessions. The interviews with participants were structured to address all research inquiries. On average, individual interview sessions lasted around an hour, with each session being recorded using a digital sound recorder for accuracy and later analysis.

3.4.2. Observation

The goal of using observation as a data collection tool in research is to develop a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under study that is as objective and accurate

as possible (Musante & DeWalt, 2010). To achieve this, the researchers immerse themselves in the social setting, observing and recording the evidence as it occurs. This involves developing checklists and recording detailed field notes from direct observation, paying attention to the activities of the parents to identify events that demonstrate their lived experience (Nespor, 2012). The systematic process of observation focuses on various activities to illustrate the differences between them (Denzin, 2008). In this study, the researcher conducted observation by immersing himself in the study setting to observe and record the evidence as it occurs during therapy for later reference. This approach helps to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the analysis and mitigate potential biases in the data collection process (Allen, 2010). Therefore, observation of the participants in this study was also used for the purpose of triangulation and checking the consistency of data gathered through interviews. The average duration of individual observation was approximately two therapy sessions for each participant, lasting about 30 minutes.

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

In qualitative research, researchers utilize various philosophical assumptions, strategies, data collection methods, analyses, and interpretations to gather data from participants in their natural settings. This involves developing questions, procedures, and techniques for data collection, followed by analysis and interpreting the findings (Creswell, 2007). Prior to commencing the research, the researcher sought approval from Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa Health Bureau, and Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College.

Once approvals were obtained, the researcher conducted a two-hour meeting with participants to explain the study's objectives and methods, facilitating their involvement and ensuring accurate data collection. Consent forms were provided to participants to sign if they agreed to take part. Subsequently, logistical arrangements were made, including orienting respondents and scheduling specific dates, times, and venues for data collection sessions.

It is understood that language can influence how participants construct responses by shaping their cultural and cognitive viewpoints (Andreenkova, 2018). To capture relevant and authentic data, the research tools were initially prepared in English and later translated into Amharic for the interviews. Finally, the researcher proceeded to gather data from participants through interviews and observations.

3.6. Data Analysis Approach

Data analysis is a procedure utilized to inspect, model, and transform information to determine helpful insights and provide resolutions for making informed decisions (Billups, 2019). Qualitative data analysis involves turning non-numerical data into insights (Sechelski

& Onwuegbuzie, 2019). The researchers may apply thematic analysis by categorizing the collected data into thematic areas. Researchers document and catalogue all pertinent quotes of the participants related to the study topic first to give them equal weight in relation to the participants' viewpoints. Then researchers identify the central elements of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2014; Warren, 2020). Subsequently, the analysis of this study focused on elucidating the practices, convictions, thoughts, experiences, and emotions of the study's participants. Following this, the researcher systematically organized interview guides and observation notes in order to comprehend the phenomenon within the study's scope. In addition, the data analysis process of this study involved coding or categorizing the data into themes, allowing the research to distil extensive raw data into meaningful patterns and identify significant trends. Ultimately, the researcher derived inferences from the data and constructed a coherent chain of evidence.

Creswell (2007) emphasized the importance of using the participants' actual words to highlight themes, enabling readers to assess the relevance of interpretations and maintain the authenticity of the participants' experiences. Therefore, the findings were presented using direct participant quotes and observation notes. Key points were organized into segments within themes using descriptive and narrative language. Subsequently, the discussion incorporated the findings with a review of relevant literature, the researcher's expertise, and evidence-based judgment, integrating participants' expressions followed by the researcher's explanations. So, the data interpretation involved the process of inductive reasoning, synthesizing information, and making reasoned inferences.

3.7. Research Ethics

The ethical considerations related to the well-being of study participants must be carefully addressed to safeguard their rights. It is imperative for researchers to be mindful of ethical issues both before and during the research process (Walker, 2007). To ensure the collection of relevant and ethical data, the research prioritized confidentiality and privacy. Strict measures were in place to safeguard the confidentiality of the data, and participants were assured that the information obtained through data collection tools was used solely for academic purposes. Research inputs and outputs were securely stored and archived, and data was only collected from participants who provided their informed consent. Additionally, the researcher duly acknowledged all documents and resources that were utilized in the study. By implementing these measures, the researcher ensured the protection of study subjects' rights and maintained ethical standards throughout the research process.

The study proceeded only with the approval of the study title from Addis Ababa University. In addition, ethical clearance to conduct the study was obtained from Addis Ababa Public Health and Emergency Management Directorate. The results of the study were also disseminated to Addis Ababa Public Health and Emergency Management Directorate.

3.8. Conceptual Framework

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF) framework, developed by the World Health Organization, provides a comprehensive approach to understanding health and disability. The ICF framework consists of three main components that can be directly applied to this study:

1. **Body Functions and Structures:** This component includes the physiological and psychological functions related to speech and language, as well as any structural impairment in the communication system of children.
2. **Activities and Participation:** This focuses on how communication difficulties affect the daily activities of both children and their parents, including participation in therapy sessions and social interactions.
3. **Environmental Factors:** This examines the external factors that influence the experiences of parents, such as healthcare services, community support, and educational resources available at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College.

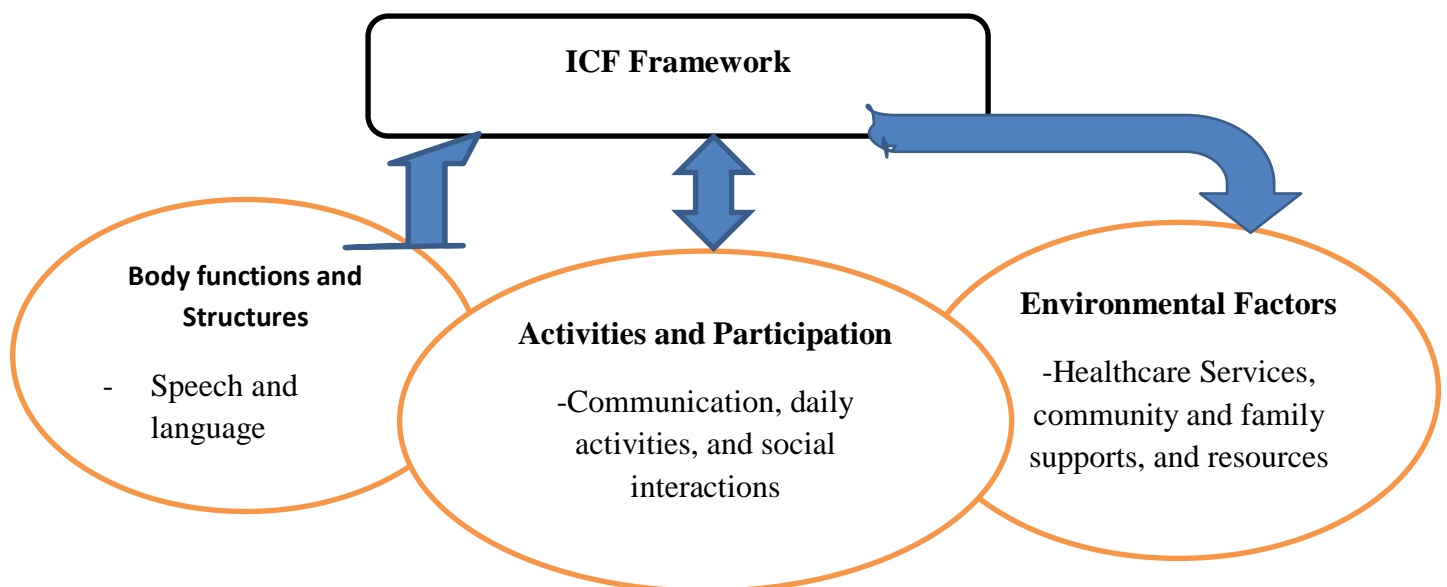


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

In mapping research questions with the ICF components, the perception of difficulties and therapy services is linked to Body Functions and Structures, as well as Activities and Participation. This exploration focuses on how parents perceive their child's communication challenges and the effectiveness of the therapy services they receive. Understanding these perceptions helps identify the specific body functions affected and how these impairments translate into activity limitations and participation restrictions in daily life. Challenges faced by parents can be examined through the lens of Environmental Factors. Investigating these factors allows researchers to identify barriers or facilitators that impact effective communication and therapy. For instance, aspects such as accessibility to services, social support, and community attitudes can significantly influence both the child's and the parent's experiences. When considering coping strategies, it is essential to explore how parents adapt to challenges, which involves both Activities and Participation and Environmental Factors. Parents develop various strategies that facilitate their child's participation in therapy and daily activities while navigating environmental barriers. Lastly, the aspirations and ambitions of parents are tied to Personal Factors and Environmental Factors. Understanding how parents envision their child's future and the resources they believe are necessary for achieving these goals provides insight into their motivations.

To effectively gather data on these aspects, semi-structured interviews and observations were utilized. Semi-structured interviews were designed to target each ICF component, asking parents about specific challenges related to environmental factors and their impact on their child's participation in therapy. Observations provided valuable insights into the dynamics of therapy sessions, highlighting how environmental factors influence interactions between parents, children, and therapists. This structured approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding communication challenges and therapy services for children.

To analyse the data using a thematic approach, findings were categorized according to the ICF components. This categorization helped identify patterns and relationships among the various factors influencing the experiences of parents. Overall, employing the ICF as the conceptual framework achieved a holistic understanding of the experiences of parents of children with communication difficulties. This approach not only enhanced the depth of qualitative exploration but also aligned the research with established models of health and disability, enabling a more comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing parental experiences in the context of speech and language therapy.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE STUDY FINDINGS

This study delved into the lived experiences of parents whose children have communication difficulties. The primary focus of this research involved conducting semi-structured interviews with these parents to gain insights into their personal journeys. Drawing upon semi-structured interviews with ten parents, the study shed light on their unique perspectives. These interviews were supplemented by researcher observations to provide a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences. The study delved deeper, painting a richer picture of each parent's background, their child's specific challenges, and the family dynamics that influence their experiences. These findings were then analysed and categorized into four distinct thematic areas, each delving into different aspects of the parents' experiences with raising children who have communication challenges.

4.1. The Study Participants Demographic Characteristics

The researcher engaged with these participants through a combined approach of conducting interviews and making astute observations, resulting in a rich source of data.

Table 1

Profile of the Study Participant Parents

No	Parents Code	Status of Parent	Marital Situation	Age	Academic Background	Occupation of Parents
1	P1	Mother	Married	45	Grade 8	Coffee Seller
2	P2	Mother	Divorced	27	Grade 12	Has no job
3	P3	Mother	Married	35	Diploma	Stopped working
4	P4	Mother	Divorced	35	Grade 6	Merchant
5	P5	Father	Married	32	Degree	Has no job
6	P6	Mother	Unmarried	37	Grade 10	Barberess
7	P7	Father	Married	39	Grade 5	Keeper
8	P8	Mother	Divorced	39	Grade 8	Merchant
9	P9	Father	Married	40	Grade 12	Stopped working
10	P10	Mother	Unmarried	31	MA	Government personnel

The above table provides a profile of the study participants' parents, highlighting their demographic characteristics including their parental status, ages, marital status, occupations, and educational backgrounds. The ages of the parents range from 27 to 45 years old, with the majority (six out of ten) being between 31 and 39 years old. The table includes both mothers and fathers, with a mix of married, divorced, and unmarried parents. The marital status of the parents is also diverse, with six being married, three being divorced, and one being unmarried. The educational levels of the parents vary, with some having completed Grade 6, Grade 8, Grade 10, Grade 12, Diploma, or a Degree. The highest educational level achieved is a Master's Degree (MA). The occupations of the parents include various jobs such as coffee seller, barberess, merchant, government personnel, and others. Some parents have stopped working or are unemployed.

Table 2

Profile of the Study Participant Children

No	Cases Code	Sex	Age	Diagnostic Age	Type of Communication Difficulty	Number of Siblings		
						M	F	T
1	C1	F	12 years	5 years	Speech/Articulation	0	0	0
2	C2	F	11 years	5 months	Language/Expressive	1	1	2
3	C3	M	6 years	9 months	Language/Expressive	0	1	1
4	C4	M	7 ^{1/2} years	2 years	Language/Expressive	0	0	0
5	C5	F	3 ^{1/2} years	1 year	Speech/stuttering	0	0	0
6	C6	F	6 ^{3/12} years	3 months	Speech/Childhood apraxia	0	0	0
7	C7	M	5 years	6 months	Speech/Articulation	0	0	0
8	C8	F	4 years	5 days	Language/Expressive	2	1	3
9	C9	M	6 years	2 months	Speech/Articulation	2	0	2
10	C10	M	3 years	2 ^{1/2} years	Language/Expressive	0	1	1

The above table provides a profile of the study participant parents' children, including demographic characteristics including sex, age, diagnostic age, type of Communication difficulties, and number of Siblings information. The ages of the children range from 3 years to 12 years old, with the majority being between 3 days and 7^{1/2} years old. The table includes

both male and female children, with a roughly equal distribution. The children have various types of communication difficulties, including speech/articulation, language/expressive, and speech/stuttering. The diagnostic age for each child is also provided, indicating when they were first identified with their communication difficulty that ranges between 5 days and 5 years old. The table also lists the number of siblings for each child, ranging from 0 to 3.

The study findings, as compiled by the researcher, present a detailed overview of the participants' demographic characteristics, including status of parents as well as their children's demographics were meticulously detailed, providing a comprehensive snapshot of the individuals involved. This contextual information allows the reader to connect with the parents experiences on a deeper level.

4.2. Parental Perceptions of Child Speech & Language Difficulties and Therapy Services

The study participants' parents were asked about their initial perception or recognition and emotional response to their child's communication difficulties. In their responses, parents expressed various initial thoughts, including concern about their children's communication. Upon realizing their children's speech and language difficulties, all parents experienced a mix of emotions such as worry, frustration, and sadness. They felt overwhelmed by the situation and uncertain about how best to support their child's needs. Two participant, P4 and P7, parents initially perceived their child's challenges as a normal part of development, but as the children grew older, they realized that the difficulties persisted, causing concerns about their children's ability to communicate effectively. Additionally, one participant parent, P9, admitted to being confused and unaware of her child's problems. Furthermore, one parent expressed feelings of guilt and questioned her parenting abilities in light of her child's challenges.

The respondent parents in the study unanimously reported being aware of delays in their child's speech and language development, such as limited babbling, unclear speech, and difficulty understanding instructions. Two of the parents, P2 and P5, became aware of speech difficulties during routine doctor visits, while eight of them became aware as developmental milestones were not observed. The P3 participant in the study stated about her initial recognition and emotional response as a result of her child's communication difficulties as follows:

“Upon learning about my child's developmental problems at the age of one, I initially struggled to understand and address her communication challenges. As she grew older, I noticed the difficulties intensifying, particularly in her ability to communicate

effectively. I experienced a range of emotions, including concern, frustration, and dejection. I also felt overwhelmed and uncertain about how to best support my child's needs, and grappled with feelings of guilt and self-doubt regarding my parenting skills or questioned my parenting abilities in light of supporting my child.”

Six of the study participants' (P3, P5, P6, P7, P9, and P10), responses indicated that they decided to seek help and therapy for their children and found therapy services at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College after receiving recommendations from paediatricians. Three of the parents (P1, P4, and P9) mentioned that the suggestion came from a day-care setting, while one parent, P2, mentioned advice from a preschool teacher. The common factor among all participants was the growing realization of how speech and language difficulties were affecting their child's daily life. This led them to acknowledge the necessity of professional assistance and intervention to help their children overcome these challenges and enhance communication skills.

All the study participants' parents provided positive feedback on their interactions with the speech and language therapists. They particularly appreciated the therapists' expertise, effective communication style, and use of engaging and interactive therapy techniques. Each parent noted that the frequency of therapy sessions was customized to suit their child's specific needs, ensuring a personalized and responsive treatment approach. In relation to the above idea, one parent respondent, identified as P8, shared her experience of seeking help and therapy for her child and finding therapy services at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College as follow:

“After deciding to find help and therapy for my child, I discovered the therapy services offered at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College through a recommendation from my child's doctor. I have been thoroughly impressed with the therapy services my child receives at the hospital. The expertise and exceptional communication skills demonstrated by the therapists have not only reassured me but also instilled a sense of confidence in the treatment being provided. The therapists' engaging and effective therapy methods have proven to be highly beneficial for my child's needs. I greatly appreciate the personalized approach taken by the therapists in tailoring the frequency of therapy sessions to specifically address my child's communication challenges. This individualized attention and care have undoubtedly contributed to the positive progress observed in my child's development. I am genuinely satisfied with the level of support and assistance my child is receiving at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College, and I am optimistic about the positive impact it will continue to have on my

child's growth and well-being. I valued the communication and collaboration I had with my child's therapist.”

In this study, all participants were questioned about their perceptions of their children's communication difficulties and progress. It was found that while all parents acknowledged that their children faced communication challenges; three of them (P2, P7, and P9) had a limited understanding of the specific speech and language difficulties affecting their child's ability to communicate effectively with others. Among the participants, two parents, P1 and P5, noted that their children experienced speech difficulties, which manifested in issues such as articulation problems and unclear pronunciation. Additionally, four participants (P3, P4, P8, and P10) mentioned that their children were unable to produce speech for communication and expressing their needs. Furthermore, one parent, P6, elucidated that his child struggled with naming certain letters, indicating a specific challenge related to language skills. All participants explained that their children actively use gestures in communication and expressing needs.

The study participant parents unanimously expressed overall satisfaction with their child's progress in speech and language development. The areas of improvement highlighted by these parents include speech clarity, increased vocabulary, better comprehension, and confidence in communication. Although three of the parents (P1, P4, and P10) expressed a desire for faster progress, they remained hopeful and satisfied with the progress their child had made in various areas of speech and language development. All parents reported that they have observed improvements in their child's ability to engage in conversations, express their thoughts and ideas, and interact with peers.

All participants stated that they were grateful for the support and interventions provided by the therapists and were committed to their child's on-going progress and development. They all said that these improvements have positively impacted their children's ability to communicate, leading to increased confidence and self-esteem. A parent assigned the code P1 shared her journey in her perceptions of her child's communication difficulties and progress as follows:

“I noticed that my child was facing challenges in communication when she was five. Although I have limited knowledge about the specific speech issues affecting my child's ability to communicate effectively with others, I now understand that my child experiences speech difficulties, particularly with articulation problems and unclear pronunciation. The specific challenge that my child finds difficult is naming certain letters, which has been a hurdle in developing language skills. Despite these

challenges, I have observed that my child actively uses gestures to communicate and express needs, which has been a helpful alternative method for her. Currently, her speech clarity has improved, and I have noticed an increase in communication. She has become confident and has self-esteem in communicating her thoughts and ideas, and I have seen her engage in conversations with peers. I am grateful for the support and interventions provided by the therapist. The therapist and I have been committed to my child's on-going progress and development, and our combined efforts have positively impacted my child's speech improvement. Although I would have liked to see faster progress, I remain hopeful and satisfied with the progress my child has made. I believe that the therapy services have been instrumental in supporting my child's development, and I am committed to continuing this journey.”

In response to the question about how parents initially attempted to cure their child's communication problem, various unconventional methods were tried. P1, P5, and P7 sought the help of a spiritual healer, believing that their child's communication disorder was caused by evil spirits. P4 took her child to a local shrine, where the healer performed rituals and gave her holy water to administer to her child. Despite the healer's assurances, there was no improvement in her child's condition. Similarly, P5 took his son to a mosque, hoping that the blessings of the Almighty would cure his stutter. However, after several visits, he realized that his son's stutter persisted. In addition, P7 took her son to church, praying for a miracle to cure her child's speech-related communication disorder. She also sought the help of a faith healer, who claimed to have the power to heal through prayer. Unfortunately, her son's condition remained unchanged.

On this issue, P2, on the other hand, tried a more unusual approach, taking her son to a local shrine or guardian spirit, where they performed rituals and recited prayers to ward off evil spirits. However, her son's language disorder continued unabated. P6, who is a barberess, took her daughter to traditional healers and medicine providers after hearing about them from one of her customers, believing that these practices would help her daughter overcome her communication disorder. Unfortunately, her daughter's condition remained unchanged. P10, desperate to cure her son's language-related communication disorder, tried to hire a psychiatry nurse who claimed to help her child communicate more effectively. However, her son's progress was limited. In contrast to the aforementioned methods, four parents (P3, P4, P8, and P9) recognized the limitations of these approaches and sought professional help from speech therapists, who can provide evidence-based therapies to help children overcome communication disorders.

The researcher's observations on parental perceptions of children's speech and language difficulties and therapy services revealed compelling insights. The data obtained from these observations not only confirmed the information gathered through interviews with the parents, but also highlighted the emotional impact on parents. For instance, one participant parent showed a heartfelt response to their child's challenges by shedding tears when discussing the activities they did at home based on the therapist's recommendations. Additionally, eight of the participants (P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P8, P9, and P10) demonstrated strong confidence in child intervention, actively engaged in the decision-making process, played proactive roles during therapy, and wholeheartedly embraced and implemented the therapist's recommendations.

4.3. Challenges Parents Face Due to Their Children's Speech and Language Difficulties

Each participant's parents were asked questions about the challenges they face due to their children's speech and language difficulties. All of the parents stated that they confront significant impacts on their children's daily lives. They clarified that children with speech and language difficulties face challenges such as missed learning opportunities or activities, limited social interactions, and decreased self-esteem. Six of the parents (P2, P3, P4, P6, P8, and P10) noticed their children struggling to communicate effectively, leading to frustration and difficulties in expressing their needs and thoughts. They also mentioned that their children felt isolated in social settings and had difficulty making friends due to communication challenges. One parent, P1, reported that her child struggled to participate in classroom discussions, follow instructions, and engage in learning activities due to communication difficulties, which also affected his play-dates, social interactions, and self-esteem. Another parent explained that her child withdrew herself from or avoided situations where communication is required. A code P4 parent shared her journey about the challenges that impact her child's daily life as follows:

“As a single mother of a child with communication difficulty, I knew my child have faced various personal obstacles. My child's daily life has been significantly affected, including missed learning opportunities and limited social interactions. I have witnessed my child struggling to communicate effectively, leading to frustration in expressing needs and thoughts, feeling isolated in social settings, and having difficulty making friends. Additionally, my child found it difficult to participate in classroom discussions, follow instructions, and engage in learning activities due to communication difficulties. It is because of his communication difficulty, he

withdrawn from school. I have observed that my child had trouble expressing himself and often felt misunderstood, which negatively impacted his self-esteem. Furthermore, my child tended to withdraw or avoid situations requiring communication, further highlighting the challenges we faced. These communication difficulties have had a profound impact on various aspects of my child's life and have indirectly affected my own life as well.”

For the questions asked on challenges in scheduling and attending therapy sessions, the study participants' parents stated that they all encountered difficulties in scheduling and attending therapy sessions due to a range of factors, including transportation logistics issues, financial constraints, and conflicting appointments. Two parents (P1 and P2) specifically mentioned the challenges of balancing therapy with work, school schedules, and other social commitments, expressing how overwhelming it can be. One of the parents, P7, mentioned that lack of communication and coordination with therapist led to inefficiencies and confusion, resulting in misunderstandings, inconsistencies in therapy approaches, decreased confidence in the therapy process, and hindered progress. All participants emphasized that these obstacles can negatively affect the consistency and effectiveness of therapy sessions, causing frustration and raising concerns about their child's progress. One of the parents, code P5, explained his experience about the challenges in scheduling and attending therapy sessions as follows:

“As parent of child with communication difficulty, I have encountered multiple challenges when it comes to scheduling and attending therapy sessions. One significant hurdle is coordinating transportation and balancing work and other responsibilities. Despite the therapy sessions being free of charge, financial constraints still pose a challenge. Conflicting appointments for either myself or my child can also make it difficult to find mutually suitable session times. However, my top priority is ensuring that my child receives the essential support he needs; I am committed to overcoming these obstacles to prioritize our well-being. I firmly believe in the importance of following the therapist's recommended therapy schedule for my child's benefit.”

All participating parents in the study were asked to describe the negative reactions their children exhibited during therapy sessions. The respondents unanimously reported a range of negative reactions, including frustration, anxiety, and resistance/avoidance during the first two therapy sessions. The parents expressed their struggle in managing these reactions and feeling overwhelmed by the therapy process, which led to decreased motivation and

commitment. They found it challenging to effectively engage their children, but they discussed and implemented adjustments with the therapist. One of the parents assigned the code P6, who was asked to document her experiences of the negative reactions her child exhibited during therapy sessions, said:

“During the initial therapy sessions, my child struggled to adapt to new environments and engage with unfamiliar people, making it difficult for them to feel at ease and communicate openly. The tasks in the first and second sessions were too challenging, leading to slow progress and frustration. Furthermore, my child's sensory issues, such as sensitivity to certain textures, noises, and bright lights, added to the challenge. To address these concerns and ensure my child feels supported in therapy, I proactively discussed and implemented adjustments with the therapist.”

Participant parents unanimously encountered challenges in consistently applying therapy strategies at home due to time constraints, lack of resources, or difficulty in using techniques learned during therapy sessions. They expressed frustration in maintaining consistency, which could affect the effectiveness of therapy and the child's progress. All study participant parents noticed emotional and behavioural changes in their children related to communication difficulties, such as anxiety, frustration, and decreased self-esteem. They mentioned that these changes impacted their own well-being and the overall quality of family life, leading to worries about their child's emotional and social development. Furthermore, five (P2, P3, P6, P8, and P9) of the parents also reported experiencing emotional and behavioural changes themselves as a result of the challenges their children faced in communication. The parent, assigned the code P7, explained the difficulties he faced in implementing therapy strategies and the emotional and behavioural changes he observed in his child as follows:

“My wife and I have been struggling to keep up with the therapy strategies for our kid. It's tough juggling work, household responsibilities, and making sure we're implementing the techniques correctly. We worry that our inconsistency might be hindering the progress. We've noticed how communication difficulties are affecting our child emotionally and behaviourally, leading to anxiety, frustration, and lower self-esteem. Seeing him struggle like this also takes a toll on us and affects the overall dynamics of our family. It's a challenging situation, and we're doing our best to support our kid through it.”

Six respondents (P1, P2, P4, P6, P7, and P8) explained that they encountered negative reactions and social stigma from others due to their child's communication difficulties. This included judgment, criticism, and exclusion, leading to feelings of isolation, guilt, and

decreased self-esteem. Three of the six participant parents (P1, P7, and P8) expressed their struggles in navigating these social challenges and feeling overwhelmed by the need to advocate for their child's needs and rights. On the other hand, four (P3, P5, P9, and P10) participant parents did not report any social stigma; instead, they found their community to be supportive. The common challenge reported by all participants was the lack of understanding and patience when interacting with their children prior to starting speech and language therapy at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College. One of the parents, P2, mentioned that a lack of communication and coordination with the therapist led to inefficiencies and confusion, resulting in misunderstandings, inconsistencies in therapy approaches, decreased confidence in the therapy process, and hindered progress.

The researcher observed the challenges parents face due to their children's speech and language difficulties. The data from these observations revealed that parents openly discussed the difficulties they encountered regarding their children's speech and language challenges. Data from the observations regarding communication and coordination challenges with the therapist showed that 8 parents (P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P8, P9, and P10) had effective communication and coordination with the speech and language therapist for their children. These 8 participants were able to communicate, participate in therapy, and ask questions without hesitation. However, two (P4 and P7) parents experienced difficulties in communication and coordination with the therapists during their child's therapy sessions.

4.4. Parental Strategies in Coping with Challenges and Providing Therapy

The other prepared interview question for the parents aimed to explore their coping strategies and approach to providing therapy for their children. Four of the parents (P1, P6, P9, and P10) highlighted their open communication with their child's therapist, discussing effective strategies, progress updates, and addressing concerns. Three (P2, P3, and P5) parents mentioned regular weekly meetings and discussions with the therapist to exchange feedback and tailor therapy approaches to their child's specific needs. However, two (P4 and P7) parents reported limited communication with the therapist. The researcher's observation also confirmed that the two of the parents had limited communication, while the rest communicated actively with the therapist. In response to questions about adapting strategies across different settings, all the participants' parents described using and adapting therapy strategies across the clinic, home, and playground to create consistent learning opportunities and facilitate their child's speech and language development, aiming to reinforce therapy

goals. One of the study participants' parents, P9, shared his coping strategies and approach to providing therapy for his child, as explained below:

“I maintain open communication with my child's therapist, where we discuss effective strategies, provide progress updates, and address any concerns. We have weekly meetings to exchange feedback and customize therapy approaches to meet my child's individual needs. I employ a variety of techniques to improve communication and speech skills, including active listening, allowing time for responses, using visual aids, offering choices, speech therapy, language enrichment, and integrating pictures and other systems.”

All participants emphasized their commitment to integrating play and everyday activities into therapy routines tailored to their child's individual needs, mood, strengths, and interests. Three parents highlighted the use of play as a natural and enjoyable method for enhancing communication skills, maintaining motivation, and targeting specific communication goals. Additionally, one parent, P2, shared how they fostered social interaction by encouraging peer engagement and modelling appropriate communication behaviours to support therapy goals. Furthermore, seven (P2, P3, P5, P6, P8, P9, and P10) participant parents underscored the importance of involving other family members or caregivers in the therapy process. They expressed that sharing strategies and techniques learned from the therapist with other involved individuals created a supportive environment for their child, reinforcing therapy goals and promoting consistency in implementing strategies. However, three (P1, P4, and P7) parents did not involve other family members due to living alone and lacking support.

The study participant parents unanimously expressed a strong desire for more information and resources to feel confident in supporting their child's speech and language development. Five (P1, P4, P5, P7, and P9) participants mentioned the challenge of limited materials and training opportunities to meet their child's specific needs. Two (P2 and P10) parents found valuable support and resources from organizations, providing them with insights and emotional support. One participant, P8, highlighted the importance of connecting with other parents facing similar challenges for encouragement and solidarity, even though he didn't have such opportunities. Additionally, six of the parents (P2, P3, P5, P6, P9, and P10) addressed that they seek professional consultation, attend support groups, and utilize technology-based therapy resources. P1 of the study expressed a strong interest in obtaining additional information and resources on how to incorporate play and everyday activities into therapy routines as follows:

“As a mother of a child with communication difficulties, I have found that integrating play and everyday activities into tailored therapy routines has been essential. Play has enhanced my child’s communication skills and maintained motivation. Involving family members and caregivers in the therapy process has created a supportive environment for my child. I encountered challenges in finding resources, valuable support from organizations, and connecting with other parents having the same history, and became successful. Even though professional consultation, attending support groups, and utilizing technology-based therapy resources have been beneficial, I haven’t found such a chance to help my child achieve outcomes.”

The study participant parents discussed the importance of integrating cultural and family values into therapy practices, such as using familiar language or activities relevant to their cultural background. They all emphasized the significance of incorporating traditional games or rituals into speech and language activities. One parent, P10, even shared that she uses religious canticles as therapy methods and practices. The study participants unanimously expressed their admiration for the therapists' activities and offered valuable suggestions for the therapist and the hospital to better support them. All of the participants recommended that the therapy session per week should be at least two days. In addition, two (P4 and P7) participants recommended that speech therapists should prioritize clear communication, collaborate with families, and provide practical tools and strategies for home use, along with support and guidance to address the unique needs of each family and child.

The researcher observed how parents cope with challenges and provide therapy for their children. The data from these observations were consistent with the data obtained from in-depth interviews with the parents. During the observation, eight parents (P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P8, P9, and P10) were seen assisting therapists, managing their child's behaviour, working together with therapists, adapting and utilizing various therapy strategies, incorporating games and everyday activities into therapy, and creatively using resources during therapy. However, two of the parents (P4 and P7) were not as active as expected.

4.5. Parents Aspirations and Ambitions for Children's Speech and Language Difficulties Improvement

The final guiding research question for the parents aimed to explore their aspirations and ambitions for their children's improvement in speech and language difficulties. In their responses, six (P1, P3, P5, P6, P9, and P10) parents expressed their aspirations for their children to communicate effectively, express their thoughts, and understand others. Three of the parents (P2, P4, and P8) dreamed of their children feeling confident when speaking,

whether in social situations or daily life, including everyday conversations, storytelling, asking questions, and sharing their ideas. One of the study participants' parents, P7, had a dream and a desire for his child to actively participate in conversations, make friends, and build strong social relationships, eliminating frustration and misunderstandings.

All participants clearly stated that they aimed for their children to achieve age-appropriate language milestones, including language skills that contribute to academic achievements. Four (P4, P6, P8, and P10) of the study parents envisioned their children thriving in school, keeping up with lessons, and confidently participating in class discussions. One of the study participants' parents, P9, explained his aspirations and ambitions for his children's improvement in speech and language difficulties as presented below:

“My biggest hopes and dreams for my child's speech and language development are for him to be able to communicate his wants, needs, and thoughts effectively with those around him. I want him to be able to express himself clearly, both verbally and non-verbally, and to be understood by family, friends, teachers, and others in his life. I hope my child will achieve include being able to produce speech sounds correctly, developing vocabulary, and using language to engage in back-and-forth conversations. I also hope he will be able to use language to build meaningful social relationships and participate fully in school and other activities.”

All participants' parents explained that they seek on-going speech therapy by professional speech therapists to provide targeted interventions and equip their children with the tools and strategies to improve communication. However, they also mentioned that they had no connections with other parents facing similar challenges, even though this can provide valuable guidance and emotional support. Two (P5 and P10) of the study participants looked for online resources, apps, and learning materials to supplement therapy, practice communication skills, and encourage reading together to enhance vocabulary and comprehension. Five of the study participants' parents (P1, P2, P3, P5, and P10) used playtime to promote their children's language development.

The study participants' parents unanimously envisioned educators, speech therapists, and parents collaborating to address the speech and language difficulties of their children to ensure consistent support across environments. Five parents (P4, P6, P7, P8, and P9) desired thorough assessments to identify specific challenges and create individualized plans, as well as regular progress assessments, while two (P5 and P10) parents advocated for schools and institutions to implement strategies that promote inclusion and support children with speech

and language difficulties. Participant parent identified as P2 shared her aspirations and the mechanisms she is seeking to help her child as follows:

“To enhance my child's progress, I am actively searching resources such as speech therapy hand-outs, engaging activity ideas, and online tools to complement the work done with our speech-language therapist. My goal is to cultivate a language-rich home environment and integrate speech and language practice into our daily routines and play, taking a holistic and effective approach to address my child's speech and language difficulties. I envision the speech-language therapist and other professionals working closely with me to establish suitable goals, offer guidance and support, and provide me with the knowledge and strategies to be an effective communication partner for my child. I also look forward to collaborating with the school system to ensure a smooth transition and sustained progress.”

The study participants' parents unanimously reported that they played a vital role in nurturing their child's speech and language development to foster confident and independent communicators. Seven (P1, P2, P3, P5, P8, P9, and P10) parents stated that cultural backgrounds significantly influence communication norms and expectations, as they seek to instill cultural values related to clear and effective communication in their children. Four of these parents (P1, P2, P3, and P5) added that personal beliefs also shape their parenting approaches, celebrating individuality and nurturing their children's unique communication styles. All of the participants reported that empathy and understanding guiding approaches benefited emphasize holistic development beyond speech and language skills and overall development, recognizing that communication is a key aspect of their growth. Among the study participants' parents, P10 firmly explained the situation of treatment and aspirations of her son as follows:

“My approach is guided by the core values of empowering my child to become an effective communicator, building his confidence, and fostering independence. I aim to equip him with the necessary tools to express himself and advocate for his needs to the best of his ability. It is important for me to strike a balance between supporting my child's communication needs and nurturing his social-emotional, cognitive, and physical development. I firmly believe that communication serves as the foundation for progress in all these other areas. My cultural and personal beliefs underscore the significance of clear and respectful communication. I want my child to fully engage in our family and cultural traditions through language. I am also a strong advocate for early intervention and proactively addressing my child's communication difficulties.”

In addition to their aspirations, all of the study participants openly discussed the effectiveness of specific strategies they've tried, as well as the challenges they faced in implementing them consistently. Participants unanimously did hope their child's future, such as pursuing higher education or specific careers, can provide valuable direction for therapy goals.

The researcher observed the parents of children with speech and language difficulties while they were in therapy to explore their hopes and goals. The findings from these observations showed that six (P2, P3, P6, P8, P9, and P10) parents made efforts to meet their child's specific needs, sought advice on how to handle their child's challenges, and engaged in discussions with therapists to gather information. One of the participants, P5, in the study, had a detailed conversation with the therapist about their child's future goals. However, two parents (P4 and P7) had no initiation in communicating and coordinating with the therapists during their child's therapy sessions.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

The study's findings were carefully examined and organized into four key thematic areas. These areas provided insights into the experiences of parents raising children with communication challenges. The themes include: Parental perceptions of children's speech and language difficulties and therapy services, challenges faced by parents due to their children's speech and language difficulties, parental coping strategies and approaches to providing therapy, and parents' hopes and goals for improving their children's speech and language abilities. These themes were identified to better understand the main objectives of the study. Finally, the implications were stated to provide valuable insights for service delivery in supporting children with speech and language difficulties and their families.

5.1. Parental Perceptions of Children's Speech and Language Difficulties and Therapy Services

Study findings presented a comprehensive understanding of parents' initial perceptions, emotional responses, awareness of their children's communication difficulties, decision-making processes regarding seeking therapy, interactions with therapists, progress assessments, and overall satisfaction with speech and language development. Upon recognizing their children's speech and language challenges, parents experienced a mix of emotions, including worry, frustration, sadness, confusion, guilt, and self-doubt. These emotional responses reflected their concerns about supporting their children's communication needs effectively. Supporting these findings, the study by Harvey & Spencer (2019) stated that the parents of children with speech and language difficulties experience feelings of guilt, worry, and frustration about their child's well-being and future communication abilities. Another study revealed that parental perceptions of communication challenges encompass how parents interpret and understand their child's difficulties, view intervention strategies, and perceive the impact on their child's social interactions (Rivera-Figueroa, Marfo, & Eigsti, 2022) and factors, such as attributions for SLDs and cultural beliefs, influence how parents approach seeking help for their children (Watts Pappas et al., 2016).

The study has brought to light the significant awareness among parents regarding delays in speech and language development including limited babbling, unclear speech, difficulty in understanding instructions, and a lack of communication milestones. According to the study's findings, parents have identified various sources, such as pediatricians, day-care settings, and preschool teachers, for recommendations that lead them to seek therapy services. Supporting these findings, a study by Zigron & Bronstein (2019) revealed that parents often need clear

information about speech and language difficulties for their children, including intervention options and prognosis. Additionally, a study by Stephenson & Dowrick (2000) emphasized the crucial role of healthcare professionals and educators in effectively communicating with parents and providing necessary resources.

The driving force behind parents seeking professional assistance is the realization of how speech and language difficulties impact their children's daily lives, highlighting the urgent need for professional intervention. This finding aligns with several authorities in the field. For example, Meador (2014) emphasized the crucial importance of families seeking support and resources to effectively manage these challenges and nurture positive relationships and mental well-being for all family members. Furthermore, Bhat et al. (2012) confirmed this by underscoring the significance of families developing resilience to cope with and overcome challenges. Bhat et al. (2012) added that resilience enables families to bounce back from difficult experiences, adapt to change, and support each other through strong communication, problem-solving skills, unity, cohesion, and seeking external support when needed.

The study highlighted that parents praised therapy services at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College for therapists' expertise, effective communication, engaging therapy techniques, and personalized treatment approaches tailored to each child's specific needs. In supporting the above findings, different studies clarify that healthcare providers can enhance the accessibility and impact of speech and language therapy services by actively seeking feedback from parents. Parents' perspectives offer valuable insights into the effectiveness, quality, and areas for improvement in therapy services, ensuring that the needs of both the child and the family are met (Price & Nicholl, 2013; Williams, 2019; Wallace et al., 2022; Prelock & Deppe, 2015).

Parents noted significant progress in children's speech and language development, including improvements in speech clarity, vocabulary, comprehension, confidence in communication, engagement in conversations, and interactions with peers as positive outcomes of therapy interventions. Confirming the findings, McAllister et al. (2018); Haukedal et al. (2018) stated that involving parents in the evaluation process fosters collaboration, tailors services to individual needs, and promotes overall well-being. By incorporating parents' feedback, hospitals can improve communication, access, and coordination in speech and language therapy departments, leading to better outcomes and a positive experience for both children and families (Law et al., 2019); Papoudi et al., 2021).

The study found that parents' dedication to their child's on-going progress and development, appreciation for therapist support and interventions, and observed improvements in children's

communication skills all had a positive impact on their self-esteem and confidence. This finding is consistent with several other studies. For example, a study by Lindsay & Dockrell (2004) on parents of children with speech and language difficulties revealed that parents' concern about their child's needs and the quality of therapy services is crucial. It's essential for parents to take an active role in promoting speech development at home through communication, reading, and integrating speech and language activities into daily routines (Jensen de López et al., 2021). By being attentive and proactive, parents can significantly influence their child's speech and language development (van Kleeck, 2013).

The study revealed advancements in speech improvement, although some parents expressed the desire for faster progress. Parents expressed satisfaction with the overall progress made by their children, highlighting the transformative impact of therapy services on their children's communication skills and social interactions. Supporting the findings, Roberts et al. (2019) stated that for parents whose children face speech and language difficulties (SLD), speech and language therapy (SLT) can be a transformative experience. This journey, however, can be filled with a range of emotions and challenges. At the core lies a deep desire to see their child thrive and communicate effectively.

The study's findings underscored the eagerness of parents with children who have communication disorders to find solutions, even if it means considering unconventional remedies. However, it's important to note that these approaches are often ineffective. The experiences of the parents in this study highlight the crucial role of professional help from qualified speech-language pathologists (SLPs) who can provide evidence-based therapies to ensure the best outcomes for children. In contrast to the finding, the study by Clegg et al. (2013) stated that parents play a crucial role often being the first to notice if their child is struggling with speech or language development. Additionally, Bishop & Snowling (2004) emphasized the importance of parents paying attention to their child's communication and seeking professional evaluation to ensure that their child receives the necessary support. Another study by McLeod & Locke, (2009) identifies common misconceptions or barriers that parents may face in seeking help for their child, and provide insights into the best ways to educate and support parents in promoting their child's communication development.

5.2. Challenges Parents Face Due to Their Children's Speech and Language Difficulties

The study findings revealed the complex challenges parents face when dealing with their children's speech and language difficulties. Parents have expressed the profound impact on their children's daily lives, including missed learning opportunities, limited social

interactions, decreased self-esteem, frustrations in communication, and difficulties in expressing needs and thoughts. Some children have experienced isolation in social settings, struggled to make friends, participate in classroom discussions, follow instructions, engage in learning activities, and withdraw from communication-dependent situations. These findings are consistent with information from various studies. For example, speech and language difficulties can significantly affect a child's daily life, including their interactions with others, expression of needs and emotions, and participation in academic and social activities (American Speech Language Hearing Association, 2020). Clinical experience also shows that communication difficulties can impact a person's relationships, self-image, and ability to learn both formally and informally (Wolff & de Goulart, 2013).

The study revealed that parents face various challenges when it comes to scheduling and attending therapy sessions for their children. Challenges that hinder the consistency and effectiveness of therapy sessions, impacting the child's progress and causing concerns for parents, include transportation issues, financial constraints, conflicting appointments, and the struggle to balance therapy with work and social commitments. These findings are consistent with different studies. The first study states that accessing qualified therapists, specialized schools, and assistive technology can be difficult due to financial strain on families, while the second explains that the costs of therapy, equipment, and additional care often lead to reduced work hours or career sacrifices, posing a significant challenge for families with limited resources (Theidon & Summers, 2012). The third study provides that in addition to financial challenges, individuals and families also face stigma, which can result in feelings of shame and discrimination, making it difficult for them to seek help or openly discuss their struggles (McMurray et al., 2019). The fourth study on the other hand provides that balancing time management for their children and addressing their talents and exercise also adds to the list of challenges faced by parents (Dewi et al., 2021).

The study found that effective communication, commitment, and coordination with therapists is essential for improving the therapy process and ensuring mutual understanding and progress and in addressing children's speech and language difficulties and ensuring optimal outcomes. This finding aligns with Meador's (2014) study, which emphasizes the importance of a collaborative approach involving parents, educators, speech-language pathologists, and other professionals in supporting children with speech and language difficulties. Another study by Davidson et al. (2022) emphasizes that collaborative approach, built on open communication, shared goals, and empowered parents, is key to optimizing therapy outcomes and fostering long-term communication success for children with SLD.

The study disclosed that children's negative reactions during therapy, such as frustration, anxiety, and resistance, presented additional challenges for parents. Managing these reactions, addressing sensory issues, and collaborating with therapists to make necessary adjustments proved to be difficult due to time constraints, lack of resources, and challenges in implementing learned techniques. These findings align with previous studies that have highlighted the significant challenges faced by parents of children with communication disorders, including negative impacts on family functioning, caregiver mental health, feelings of stigma and guilt, and practical strains of organizing and attending appointments (Carlowe, 2008; Baker et al., 2002). Furthermore, research by McMurray et al. (2019) supports this by explaining that parents may experience anxiety, isolation, and strain on family relationships while witnessing their child's daily struggles.

Parents also noticed emotional and behavioural changes in their children related to communication difficulties, which affected their own well-being and family dynamics. Emotional and behavioural changes in parents themselves were reported, highlighting the significant impact of the challenges faced by children on the entire family unit. Social stigma experienced by some parents, including judgment, criticism, and exclusion, contributed to feelings of isolation, guilt, and decreased self-esteem, underscoring the need for increased understanding and support from the community. The finding is consistent with a study by Prior & Sacks (2004) which elaborated misunderstandings from others, social stigma, and navigating a complex healthcare system further amplify the emotional burden on these parents. Another study by Law et al. (2017) states that the prevalence of parents raising children with communication difficulties shows higher levels of anxiety, depression, and stress compared to the general population.

5.3. Parental Strategies in Coping with Challenges and Providing Therapy

The study findings illuminated the diverse strategies that parents use to cope with challenges and provide therapy for their children with speech and language difficulties. By fostering open communication and collaborating with therapists, parents discuss effective strategies, progress updates, and concerns, emphasizing the importance of tailored therapy approaches to meet their child's individual needs. Some parents engage in regular meetings and maintain active communication with therapists, while others face limitations in communication, highlighting the varying degrees of parental involvement in therapy sessions. Consistent with the findings of studies conducted by Davidson et al. (2022), various strategies utilized by parents, such as home-based exercises, communication enhancement techniques, and active

participation in therapy sessions, are emphasized. Another study by Davies (2014) emphasizes that parents can actively participate in their child's therapy by observing demonstrations, practicing techniques with professionals, and receiving personalized guidance for implementing strategies at home. This collaboration with speech and language therapists helps reinforce therapy goals and enhance the child's progress and communication skills outside of clinical settings.

The study findings shed light on how parents demonstrated a commitment to integrating play and everyday activities into therapy routines, aiming to create consistent learning opportunities and reinforce therapy goals across different settings such as the clinic, home, and playground. The study by Dennis & Charlton (2017) confirms the finding, stating that to achieve consistent learning opportunities and therapy goals, parents creatively integrate therapy activities into daily routines. Playtime becomes an opportunity to practice communication skills through games and storytelling, while mealtimes can be used to work on vocabulary development and turn-taking conversations. MacIntyre (2018) furthermore added that by seamlessly integrating therapy into everyday life, parents promote the generalization of these skills, allowing their child to utilize them effectively in various contexts.

In addition, the study found that by leveraging play as a natural and enjoyable method to enhance communication skills and maintain motivation, parents emphasized the importance of involving family members or caregivers in the therapy process to create a supportive environment and promote consistency in implementing strategies. The finding of this study disclosed that involving peers and modelling appropriate communication behaviours further facilitated social interaction and supported therapy objectives. The studies by MacIntyre (2018) and Davies (2014) pointed out that parents create a communication-rich environment by using clear and concise language, expanding on their child's utterances, and engaging in frequent interactions. This can involve activities like storytelling, singing songs, playing games (MacIntyre, 2018), following the child's lead, narrating actions during play, and providing opportunities for turn-taking and conversation (Davies, 2014). Davies (2014) added that beyond implementing formal therapy techniques, parents often develop a unique set of informal communication strategies used at home to promote their child's progress.

It appears that the study findings highlighted the importance of providing parents with resources, information, and support to enhance their confidence in supporting their child's speech and language development. The aspects mentioned, such as offering workshops, providing access to educational resources, connecting parents with support groups, and

utilizing technology-based therapy resources, align with existing literature on empowering parents to become active partners in their child's therapy journey. The strategies identified in the study, as well as those referenced in the works of literature by Roberts et al. (2019) and Davies (2014), emphasized the valuable role that support networks, educational resources, and training programs play in optimizing therapy outcomes for children with speech and language delays. Hence, it is essential for organizations and professionals to collaborate with parents, provide them with the necessary tools and information, and facilitate connections with other families facing similar challenges to enhance the overall support system for children with communication difficulties. Another study by Zigran & Bronstein (2019) also supports the findings in its statement accessing support groups and seeking guidance from professionals can gain valuable insights, find validation for their experiences, and learn effective coping strategies to improve their well-being.

The study findings highlight the importance of incorporating cultural and family values into therapy practices, such as using familiar language and traditional games relevant to the family's cultural background. Some parents even used religious canticles as therapy methods, demonstrating the diverse approaches tailored to individual family dynamics. The study by Paradise and Adewusi (2002) supported these findings, explaining that cultural beliefs and access to resources can influence how parents perceive speech and language difficulties. Similarly, Carter et al. (2009) found that cultural factors can shape parents' understanding and experience of these difficulties, affecting their recognition, support, and treatment.

The findings of the studies demonstrated the varied levels of parental engagement in therapy sessions and the different perspectives held by parents when it comes to attributing causes for speech and language difficulties in children. The research by Watts Pappas et al. (2016) confirmed the findings that parents tend to attribute speech and language difficulties to a variety of factors that some may blame themselves, while others may attribute these challenges to genetic or environmental factors. This highlights the necessity for parents to seek professional guidance in order to better understand and address these challenges, considering the differing perspectives on the causes of speech and language difficulties.

The studies highlighted that while many parents actively participated and showed dedication to improve their children's speech and language development, some parents displayed lesser engagement than anticipated. This emphasizes the on-going need for support and encouragement throughout the therapy process. It points to the importance of providing continuous guidance and assistance to ensure parents remain actively involved in their children's language development. Further insights from Stephan & Manning (2017) support

emphasizing the effectiveness of parent-implemented intervention as an early language intervention for children with language impairment. This approach acknowledges that parents typically play a fundamental role in their children's development from the very beginning (Wolff & de Goulart, 2013) and enables parents to enhance their children's language skills effectively (Roberts & Kaiser, 2012).

5.4. Parents' Aspirations and Ambitions for Children's Speech and Language Difficulties Improvement

The study findings provide a comprehensive understanding of parents' aspirations for their children with speech and language difficulties, emphasizing a shared vision of effective communication, confident self-expression, and successful social and academic engagement. Parents aspire for their children to achieve age-appropriate language milestones, build strong social relationships, actively participate in discussions, and excel academically, highlighting the importance of targeted interventions and consistent support from speech therapists. This aligns with existing research, which indicates that a primary goal for parents of children with speech and language difficulties is to foster effective communication skills (Davies, 2014), nurture strong social connections and positive emotional well-being (Roberts et al., 2019; Bach & Grant, 2015), support academic excellence (Davies, 2014), and cultivate the problem-solving skills and independence needed for successful life (Roberts et al., 2019).

The findings revealed that parents aspire to create language-rich home environments, incorporating play-based activities to enhance their children's language development. They prioritize collaboration with educators, speech therapists, and other parents to support therapy efforts and emphasize the need for thorough assessments, individualized plans, and regular progress evaluations to address specific communication challenges. Parents believe that a supportive environment, valuing cultural backgrounds, individuality, and clear communication, is essential for promoting holistic development beyond speech and language skills. These findings are consistent with Roberts et al. (2019), who highlight that effective therapy extends beyond addressing communication difficulties to incorporate aspects of independence, preparing children for a future marked by confidence and self-sufficiency. Moreover, the research of McConkey et al. (2023) further supports these findings by illustrating the remarkable resilience and resourcefulness of families navigating the challenges of raising a child with speech and language difficulties.

The findings revealed that parents are deeply committed to nurturing their children's communication skills with empathy, understanding, and acceptance, recognizing communication as fundamental to their overall growth. However, they also acknowledged

feeling overwhelmed at times while implementing strategies, highlighting the need for on-going support and guidance. Ultimately, parents sought to empower their children to become confident, independent communicators capable of meaningful engagement in all aspects of life, with aspirations for their children's future education and careers shaping therapy goals. This aligns with the research of Bach & Grant (2015), who emphasize that improved communication skills empower children to build meaningful relationships, navigate social interactions with confidence, and express their emotions healthily, ultimately contributing to their overall well-being and setting them on a path toward social and emotional success. Similarly, Davies (2014) found that parents benefit from utilizing play as a natural context for language development, following their child's lead, and connecting with other families facing similar challenges through online forums or support groups to gain valuable peer support, share experiences, and foster a sense of belonging. This emphasis on open communication, addressing concerns, and feeling empowered to actively participate in their child's therapy emerged as crucial aspects of a positive experience for parents.

5.5. The Implications of the Study Findings

The implications of these study findings for practice are significant and can provide valuable insights for service delivery in supporting children with speech and language difficulties and their families. This study brings forth insights into the emotional experiences of parents, awareness of speech and language challenges in children, strategies for coping with challenges, and aspirations for improvement. This knowledge can guide professionals in developing more comprehensive and personalized interventions for children with communication difficulties. By understanding the unique needs and perspectives of parents, service providers can tailor their approaches to better support families.

The research highlights the importance of frequent interaction and collaboration between parents and professionals in speech and language therapy. More regular communication can improve the effectiveness of therapy interventions and ensure that parents can feel supported and informed throughout the process. If limitations exist in the organization that hinders frequent interaction, one suggestion could be to implement regular follow-up appointments to provide updates, address concerns, and offer guidance to parents. In addition, it is essential to explore alternative strategies to enhance parent engagement and support. This could involve providing written materials, resources, and tools for parents to use at home, offering virtual workshops or training sessions, or utilizing technology-based platforms for on-going communication and progress monitoring.

The study also underscores the importance of incorporating cultural values and practices into therapy approaches to support children with diverse backgrounds. Service providers can benefit from gaining cultural competence and sensitivity to better understand and address the unique needs of each family. By creating a welcoming and inclusive environment that respects cultural diversity, professionals can enhance the effectiveness of therapy interventions and strengthen the partnership with parents. Moreover, to further enhance service delivery, on-going professional development and training for therapists and service providers are essential. This can include workshops on parent engagement strategies, cultural competency training, and best practices in communication and collaboration. By investing in the professional development of staff, organizations can ensure that therapists are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively support children with speech and language difficulties and their families.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1. Conclusion

Parents play a crucial role in early recognition of signs indicating speech and language difficulties in their children. Timely identification of such challenges is vital for providing appropriate support and intervention. Given the variability in attributions for speech and language difficulties among parents, this study set out to qualitatively explore the experiences of parents whose children were receiving speech and language services at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College. The study was structured around four primary areas of focus, allowing for the presentation of key findings within these distinct themes: parental perceptions of child speech & Language difficulties and therapy services, challenges faced by parents due to their children's speech and language difficulties, parental coping strategies and approaches to providing therapy, and parents' aspirations and ambitions for the improvement of their children's speech and language difficulties.

This study provided valuable insights into the lived experiences of parents navigating their children's speech and language therapy journeys by illuminating parental perceptions towards their children's communication difficulties, experiences with therapy services, perspectives on progress assessments, and overall satisfaction with observed speech and language development. The study delved into the emotional responses of parents, their decision-making processes, the nature of their interactions with therapists, and the tangible improvements they witnessed in their children's communication abilities. These insights underscored the critical importance of parental involvement and support in fostering effective speech and language development for children undergoing therapy. Further, the findings provide a foundation for deeper exploration into the broader implications of parental engagement, best practices in communication therapy strategies, and the development of increasingly personalized intervention approaches designed to optimize speech and language outcomes for children.

This study illuminated the multifaceted experiences of parents navigating their children's speech and language difficulties. Key findings highlighted the emotional impact on families, from initial recognition and response to navigating therapy services. Notably, the study underscored the importance of parental awareness, early intervention, and active engagement in therapy to effectively support children with communication challenges. It clarified that parents faced numerous obstacles, including scheduling difficulties, managing their children's negative reactions during therapy, and consistently applying strategies at home. The

emotional and behavioural impact of their children's communication difficulties often extended to family dynamics and parental well-being. Furthermore, the study emphasized the need for comprehensive support systems, encompassing not just direct intervention but also resources and strategies to address the emotional, social, and practical challenges faced by both children and their families.

The study findings underscored the importance of a holistic approach in speech and language therapy. This approach involves prioritizing effective communication among therapists, parents, and children, while tailoring interventions to meet the unique needs of each family. The study highlighted several key strategies for parents in supporting their children with communication difficulties. These strategies include maintaining open communication with therapists, collaborating closely with them, adapting therapy techniques, integrating play and everyday activities into therapy routines, respecting cultural values, and promoting positive outcomes. Additionally, the findings emphasized the need for more information and resources to empower parents in confidently supporting their child's speech and language development, ensuring a holistic and personalized approach for children undergoing therapy. The study findings revealed multifaceted aspirations and ambitions among parents regarding their children's speech and language development. Parents envisioned effective communication, confident participation in social and academic contexts, and the growth of independent individuals. The study findings depicted that recognizing parental aspirations, speech therapists can design more effective interventions tailored to each child's diverse requirements, ultimately empowering them to achieve their full potential. Finally, the study findings highlighted parental involvements, cultural values, and proactive coping strategies play a pivotal role in shaping children's communication journeys within a holistic and empowering environment.

6.2. Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations are intended to be provided for children encountering speech and language difficulties by parents, speech therapists, and Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College. Recommendations include:

1. Recommendations for Parents

- Proactive seeking of professional help: Parents should seek professional help and specialized therapy services to address communication challenges in their children.
- Empowerment through training and resources: Parents should advocate for training, awareness, and resources to empower themselves with effective communication strategies and practical techniques for home practice.
- Consistency and home practice: Parents should apply therapy strategies consistently at home and collaborate with therapists to manage potential challenges during therapy.

2. Recommendations for Speech Therapists

- Comprehensive information: Speech therapists should offer comprehensive information about speech and language therapy to parents.
- Consistency and home practice: Speech therapists should emphasize the importance of applying therapy strategies consistently at home and collaborate closely with parents to manage potential challenges during therapy.
- Collaborative relationships: should foster and maintain collaborative relationships among parents, therapists, and children to tailor interventions.
- Parental involvement: Speech therapists should encourage parental involvement in therapy sessions and provide opportunities for parents to ask questions and seek guidance.

3. Recommendations for the Hospital

- Resources and support: The Hospital should provide resources and emotional support to families and foster understanding, patience, and inclusivity by establishing team.
- Inclusive environments: The Hospital should foster inclusive environments that acknowledge and address the unique needs and challenges faced by children with speech and language difficulties.
- Increased therapy sessions: The Hospital should increase the frequency of therapy sessions to at least twice a week to enhance consistency and accelerate progress.
- Community outreach: The Hospital should engage in community outreach and education to raise awareness about SLDs and the importance of early intervention.

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APPENDIX 1
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION
AND
COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY AND DEPARTMENT OF NEUROLOGY

Date _____

Consent Letter

My name is Fikiru Bedasa, and I am a graduate student studying speech and language therapy at Addis Ababa University. This study is being conducted to complete the prerequisites for a master's degree in speech and language therapy. The purpose of this interview guide is to gather information from parents of children with speech and language difficulties to investigate their experiences related to their children's speech and language difficulties. Your response contributes significantly to meeting the central theme of the study.

I am pleased to confirm that the information collected from your interview will be used only for the study and will be kept confidential. Hence, I kindly request your cooperation for a clear and genuine response to the questions presented below, and I appreciate your collaborative engagement. Please note that you are under no obligation to continue sharing any kind of information and can suspend your involvement at any time during the interview process. The interview may last approximately an hour, and I may record your interview on a digital sound recorder only based on your consent. Once the final document of the study is accepted, the recorded information will be deleted.

Lastly, I want to express my sincere gratitude for your willingness to participate in this interview. Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Fikiru Bedasa

Interview Guide for Parents of Children's Speech and Language Difficulties

Background Profile of the Interviewee

1. Parental Status: Biological mother Biological father Guardian
2. Sex: Male Female
3. Marital Status: Single Married Divorcee
4. Age: _____
5. Academic qualification: _____
6. Occupation: _____
7. Child sex: _____
8. Child age: _____
9. Child diagnostic age: _____
10. Number of siblings: _____ Male: _____ Female: _____
11. Child's speech and language difficulty types: _____
12. The most concerned specific difficulty: _____

I. Interview guiding questions on the perception of parents towards children's speech and language difficulties and therapy services

1. What were your initial thoughts about your child's challenges?
2. What were your initial feelings about your child's challenges?
3. What initiated you to seek therapy for your child?
4. How did you first become aware of your child's speech and language difficulties?
5. Can you describe your child's speech and language difficulties? If yes, describe what your child can do and can't do during communication!
6. How did you know about the speech therapy services at Yekatit 12 Hospital?
7. What are your overall impressions of the therapy services your child receives? (e.g., therapists, therapy methods, frequency, communication)
8. Are you satisfied with the progress your child has made? If so, in what areas are you satisfied?

II. Interview guiding questions on challenges parents face due to their children's speech and language difficulties

1. How does your child's speech and language difficulty affect their daily life? (e.g., missed out on learning opportunities or activities, social interactions, self-esteem)
2. Can you describe any challenges you've faced in scheduling or attending therapy sessions? (e.g., transportation, financial constraints, conflicting appointments)
3. Have you encountered any communication barriers and lack of coordination with therapists or other professionals involved in your child's therapy?

4. Has your child shown negative reactions to therapy sessions? If so, list them!
5. Do you face any challenges and frustrations in implementing therapy strategies consistently? If so, please elaborate them!
6. Have you observed any emotional or behavioural changes (like anxiety or frustration) in your child related to their communication difficulties? If so, what are they?
7. Have you faced negative reactions or social stigma from others due to your child's difficulties? If so, what are they?

III. Interview guiding questions on parental strategies in coping with challenges and providing therapy

1. How did you communicate with your child's therapist about effective therapy strategies?
2. What strategies do you use and adapt at different setting to promote your child's speech and language development? (E.g. clinic, home, playground)?
3. Do you incorporate play and everyday activities into your therapy strategies based on their needs mood, motivation, or communication strengths? If so, how?
4. Do you involve other family members or caregivers in the therapy process? How?
5. What information or resources would be helpful for you to feel more confident in supporting your child's speech and language difficulty?
6. Have you found support groups or resources from other parents or organizations? If so, please mention!
7. What suggestions do you have for professionals to better support parents of children with speech and language difficulties?
8. Have you found ways to integrate cultural or family values into your therapy practices? If so, please elaborate them.

IV. Interview guiding questions on parents aspirations and ambitions for children's speech and language difficulties improvement

1. What are your biggest hopes and dreams for your child's speech and language development and to communicate effectively? (e.g., specific skills, situations)
2. Are there specific developmental stages or goals you wish your child to achieve? (e.g., school, social interactions) If so, please elaborate.
3. Are there specific resources or strategies you seek to optimize your child's progress? If so, please elaborate.
4. How do you envision professionals and institutions supporting your ambitions for your child's speech and language difficulty?

5. What values guide your approach to supporting your child's speech and language development? (e.g., empowerment, independence, self-confidence)
6. How do you balance supporting your child's communication needs with other areas of their development?
7. What are cultural or personal beliefs that shape your aspirations for your child's communication journey?
8. Is there anything else you would like to share with me that are related to your perception, challenges you face, using different strategies in supporting your child's difficulty and your ambitions for your child's speech and language development? If so, share.

APPENDIX 2

Date-----

Interview Agreement

I, Mr. Fikru Bedasa, a graduate student of speech and language therapy at Addis Ababa University, am currently conducting an MSc thesis at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College and working on data collection for my thesis. To gather important information, I have chosen to interview Mr./Mrs. _____. I agree to keep the information collected during the interview confidential and to use it only for the purpose of this targeted study. I confirm my agreement with my signature.

I, Mr./Mrs. _____, as a participant in the services given to my child at Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College, confirm with my signature that I have agreed to participate in the interview with my consent, having understood the above-stated points.

Agreement Acceptor

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Agreement Giver

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX 3

Observation Checklists

I. Background

1. Observed child parent number (code) _____
2. Date of observation _____
3. Place of observation _____

Checklists to Observe the Therapy Sessions

No.	Areas of Observation	Status of the Observed Activity		Remark (Brief Description of the Observed Activity)
		Yes	No	
I	Perception of parents towards children's speech and language difficulties and therapy services			
1.	Show Emotional response to child's challenges			
2.	Confident in child intervention			
3.	Participate in decision-making process			
4.	Play active roles in therapy			
5.	Accept recommendations of the therapist			
II	Challenges parents face due to their children's speech and language difficulties			
1.	Raise complain about transportation issues			
2.	Ask for financial support to bring child for therapy			
3.	Exhibit low self esteem			
4.	Feel Anxious during therapy			
5.	Feel frustrate during therapy			
6.	Shows negative reactions to child's emotional state			
III	Parental strategies in coping with challenges and			

	providing therapy			
1.	Assists the therapists during therapy			
2.	Easily manages child's behavior during therapy			
3.	Collaborates with therapist			
4.	Easily adapts and Uses different therapy strategies			
5.	Integrates games in therapy			
6.	Integrates everyday activities in therapy			
7.	Creatively uses resources during therapy			
IV	Parents Aspirations and Ambitions for Children's speech and language difficulties improvement			
1.	Addresses specific needs of child			
2.	Asks how to cop up with child's problems			
3.	Speaks with therapists to gather information			
4.	Discusses the child's long-term goals with therapist			

APPENDIX 4

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

የትምህርት እና የባህሪ ጥናት ኮሌጅ

የልዩ ፍላጎት እና የአካቶ ትምህርት ክፍል

እና

የጤና ሳይንስ ኮሌጅ

የቀዶ ጥገና እና የነርቭ ሕክምና ትምህርት ክፍል

ቀን _____

መግቢያ

ፍቅር በዳሳ እባላለሁ። በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ የንግግር እና የቋንቋ ህክምና የድህረ ምረቃ ተማሪ ነኝ። ይህ ጥናት የሚከናወነው በንግግር እና በቋንቋ ህክምና የማስተርስ ዲግሪ የመጀመሪያ ደረጃ ቅድመ ሁኔታ ማጠናቀቂያ የመመረቂያ ማሟያ ነው። የዚህ ቃለ-መጠይቅ ዓላማ የንግግር እና የቋንቋ ችግር ካለባቸው ልጆች ወላጆች የልጆቻቸው ንግግር እና ቋንቋ ችግሮች ጋር የተያያዙ ልምዶቻቸውን ለመመርመር ከወላጆች መረጃን መሰብሰብ ነው። ስለሆነም በውጤቱም፣ የእርስዎ ምላሽ የጥናቱን ዋና ጭብጥ ለማሟላት ከፍተኛ አስተዋፅኦ ያደርጋል። ከቃለ-መጠይቁ የሚሰበሰበው መረጃ ለጥናቱ ዓላማ ብቻ እንደሚውል እና ሚስጥራዊ ሆኖ እንደሚቆይ ላረጋግጥሎት እወዳለሁ። ስለሆነም ከዚህ በታች ለተዘረዘሩት ጥያቄዎች ግልፅ እና እውነተኛ ምላሽ ለመስጠት ትብብርዎን በትህትና እጠይቃለሁ።

ይሁን እንጂ ማንኛውንም ዓይነት መረጃ ማካፈልዎን ለመቀጠል ምንም ዓይነት ግዴታ እንደሌለብዎት እና በቃለ መጠይቁ ሂደት በማንኛውም ጊዜ ተሳትፎዎን መቋረጥ እንደሚችሉ ላሳውቅዎት እፈልጋለሁ። ቃለ-መጠይቁ ለአንድ ሰዓት ሊቆይ እንደሚችል እያሳወኩ ቃለ መጠይቁን በድምፅ መቅረጫ መመዝገብ እንድችል የእርስዎ ፈቃድ ያስፈልገኛል። የጥናቱ የመጨረሻ ሰነድ ተቀባይነት ካገኘ በኋላ የተመዘገበው መረጃ እንደሚሰረዝ ላሳውቅዎት እፈልጋለሁ። በመጨረሻም፣ ለሳተፍዎ እና ለቃለ መጠይቁ ፍቃድዎን ስለሰጡኝ እና ለጥናቱ ስኬት ለሚኖረው አስተዋፅኦ ከፍተኛ በመሆኑ በቅድሚያ ከሌብ የመነጨ ምስጋናዬን እና አክብሮቴን እገልጻለሁ።

አመሰግናለሁ

ፍቅር በዳሳ

ለወላጆች የተዘጋጀ የቃለ-መጠይቅ መመሪያ

1. የቃለ መጠይቁ ተሳታፊ ግለሰብ ሁኔታ/ማንነት መረጃ

1. የወላጅ አይነት: ወላጅ አባት ወላጅ እናት አሳዳጊ
2. ልጅ: ወንድ ልጅ
3. የጋብቻ ሁኔታ: ያገባ/ች ያላገባ/ች የፈታ/ታች
4. ዕድሜ: _____
5. የትምህርት ዝግጅት: _____
6. የሥራ ሁኔታ: _____
7. የልጅ ስም _____
8. የልጅ ዕድሜ _____
9. ለልጅዎ የምርመራ የተደረገበት ዕድሜ: _____
10. የልጆች እህት ወይም ወንድም ብዛት: _____ ወንድ: _____ ሴት: _____
11. የልጁ የንግግር እና የቋንቋ ችግር አይነት: _____
12. በጣም አሳሳቢው የተለየ ችግር: _____

2. የቃለ መጠይቅ መመሪያ ጥያቄዎች

2.1. በልጆች የንግግር እና የቋንቋ ችግሮች እና የሕክምና አገልግሎቶች ላይ ወላጆች ያላቸውን አመለካከት

1. ስለ ልጅዎ ችግር የመጀመሪያ ሀሳብዎ ምን ነበር?
2. ስለ ልጅዎ ችግር የመጀመሪያ ስሜትዎ ምን ነበር?
3. ለልጅዎ የንግግር ህክምና እንዲፈልጉ ያነሳሳዎት ምንድን ነው?
4. የልጅዎን የንግግር እና የቋንቋ ችግር በመጀመሪያ እንዴት አወቁ?
5. የልጅዎን የንግግር እና የቋንቋ ችግር መግለጽ ይቻላል? አዎ ከሆነ፣ በንግግር ወቅት ልጅዎ ምን ማድረግ እንደሚችል/ትችል እና እንደማይችል/ትችል ይግለጹ!
6. በየካቲት 12 ሆስፒታል የንግግር ህክምና አገልግሎት መኖሩን እንዴት አወቁ?
7. ልጅዎ ስለሚቀበለው የሕክምና አገልግሎት አጠቃላይ እይታዎ ምን ይመስላል? (ለምሳሌ፣ ቴራፒስቶች፣ የሕክምና ዘዴዎች፣ ድግግሞሽ፣ ግንኙነት)
8. ልጅዎ ባሰየው ለውጥ ረክተዋል? ከሆነ በየትኞቹ ለውጦች ረክተዋል?

2.2. በልጆቻቸው የንግግር እና የቋንቋ ችግር ምክንያት ወላጆችን የሚያጋጥሟቸው ፈተናዎች

1. የልጅዎ የንግግር እና የቋንቋ ችግር በዕለት ተዕለት ሕይወታቸው ላይ ምን ተጽዕኖ ያሳድራል? (ለምሳሌ፣ የመማር እድል ወይም እንቅስቃሴ፣ ማህበራዊ መስተጋብር፣ በራስ መተማመን)
2. የልጅዎ ሕክምናን ማቀድ ወይም መሳተፍ ላይ ያጋጠሙዎት ችግሮችን መግለጽ ይችላሉ? (ለምሳሌ፣ መጓጓዣ፣ የገንዘብ፣ የቀጠሮዎች መጋጨት ችግር)
3. ከቴራፒስቶች ወይም ሌሎች የልጅዎ የህክምና ባለሙያዎች ጋር ቅንጅት ማጣት እና የተግባቦት መሰናክሎች አጋጥሞዎታል?
4. ልጅዎ በንግግር ህክምና ወቅት አሉታዊ ምላሽ አሳይቷል? ከሆነ ይዘርዘራቸው!
5. የንግግር ሕክምና ስልቶችን በቋሚነት ለመተግበር ያጋጠሙዎት ችግሮች እና ፍራት አጋጥመዎታል? ከሆነ፣ እባክዎን ያብራሩዎቸው!
6. ከልጅዎ የመግባባት ችግሮች ጋር ተያይዘው ስሜታዊ ወይም የባህሪ ለውጦችን (እንደ ጭንቀት ወይም ብስጭት) ተመልክተዋል? ከሆነ ምንድናቸው?
7. በልጅዎ ችግር ምክንያት ከሌሎች አሉታዊ ግብረመልሶች ወይም የማህበራዊ መገለሎች አጋጥመዎታል? ከሆነ ምንድናቸው?

2.3. ፈተናዎችን ለመቋቋም እና የንግግር ህክምናን ለመስጠት በወላጆች የሚተገበሩ ዘዴዎች

1. ስለ ውጤታማ የንግግር ሕክምና ዘዴዎች ከልጅዎ ቴራፒስት ጋር እንዴት ተነጋገሩ?
2. በተለያዩ ቦታዎች የልጅዎን የንግግር እና የቋንቋ እድገት ለማሻሻል ምን አይነት የንግግር ሕክምና ዘዴዎችን ይጠቀማሉ? (ለምሳሌ ክሊኒክ፣ቤት፣መጫወቻ ሜዳ)?
3. ፍላጎታቸውን፣ ስሜታቸውን፣ ተነሳሽነት እና የተግባቦት ጥንካሬያቸውን መሰረት በማድረግ ጨዋታን እና የእለት ተእለት እንቅስቃሴዎችን በንግግር ህክምና ስልቶች ውስጥ ያካትታሉ? ከሆነ እንዴት?
4. በንግግር ሕክምናው ሂደት ውስጥ ሌሎች የቤተሰብ አባላት ወይም ተንከባካቢዎችን ያሳትፋሉ? ከሆነ እንዴት?
5. የልጅዎን የንግግር እና የቋንቋ ችግር ለመደገፍ የበለጠ በራስ የመተማመን ስሜት እንዲሰማዎት ምን መረጃ ወይም ግብአቶች ይጠቅማሉ?
6. ከሌሎች ወላጆች ወይም ድርጅቶች ድጋፍ ወይም ግብዓቶችን አግኝተዋል? ከሆነ እባክዎን ይጥቀሱ!

7. ልጆቻቸው የንግግር እና የቋንቋ ችግር ያለባቸው ወላጆችን በተሻለ ሁኔታ ለመደገፍ ለባለሙያዎች ምን ምክሮች አለዎት?
8. ባህላዊ ወይም የቤተሰብ እሴቶችን ከንግግር ህክምና ልምድ ጋር የሚያዋህዱበት ዘዴዎች አሉ? ከሆነ፣ እባክዎን ያብራሩዎቸው።

2.4. የልጆቻቸውን የንግግር እና የቋንቋ ችግሮችን መሻሻል ወላጆች ያላቸው ምኞት

1. ለልጅዎ የንግግር እና የቋንቋ እድገት እና ከልጅዎ ጋር ለመነጋገር ትልቁ ምኞቶዎ ምንድን ነው? (ለምሳሌ፣ ልዩ ችሎታዎች፣ ሁኔታዎች)
2. ልጅዎ እንዲያሳካቸው የሚፈልጓቸው የተለዩ የእድገት ደረጃዎች ወይም ግቦች አሉ? (ለምሳሌ፣ ትምህርት፣ ማህበራዊ መስተጋብር) ከሆነ፣ እባክዎን ያብራሩ።
3. የልጅዎን እድገት ለማሻሻል የሚፈልጓቸው የተለዩ መገልገያዎች ወይም ስልቶች አሉ? ከሆነ፣ እባክዎን ያብራሩ።
4. የልጅዎን የንግግር እና የቋንቋ ችግር ለማሻሻል ያለዎትን ፍላጎት የሚደግፉ ባለሙያዎችን እና ተቋማትን እንዴት ይመለከቱታል?
5. የልጅዎን የንግግር እና የቋንቋ እድገት ለማሻሻል የእርስዎን አቀራረብ የሚመሩ የትኞቹ እሴቶች ናቸው? (ለምሳሌ፣ ማብቃት፣ ራስን መቻል፣ በራስ መተማመን)
6. የልጅዎን የተግባቦት ፍላጎት መደገፍን ከሌሎች የዕድገት ዘርፎች ጋር እንዴት ያስተካክላሉ/እኩል ማሰኬድ ይጨላል?
7. ለልጅዎ የተግባቦት ጉዞ ምኞቶን የሚቀርጹ ባህላዊ ወይም ግላዊ እምነቶች ምንድን ናቸው?
8. ግንዛቤዎትን፣ የሚያጋጥመዎት ችግሮችን፣ የልጅዎን ችግር ለመደገፍ የሚጠቀሙት የተለያዩ ዘዴዎችን እና ለልጅዎ የንግግር እና የቋንቋ እድገት ያለዎት ምኞትን በተመለከተ ሌላ ሊያካፍሉኝ የሚፈልጉ ሀሳብ አለ? ከሆነ የካፍሉኝ።

APPENDIX 5

ቀን _____

የቃለ-መጠየቅ የዉል ስምምነት

እኔ አቶ ፍቅሩ በዳሳ በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ የንግግር እና የቋንቋ ህክምና የድህረ ምረቃ ተማሪ ስሆን በንግግር እና በቋንቋ ህክምና የማስተርስ ዲግሪ የመጀመሪያ ደረጃ ቅድመ ሁኔታ ማጠናቀቂያ የመመረቂያ ማሟያ የመመረቂያ ፅሁፊን በየካቲት 12 ሜድካል ኮሌጅ ሆስፒታል ዉስጥ እየሰራሁ እገኛለሁ። በመሆኑም ለመመረቂያ ፅሁፍ ጠቃሚ መረጃዎችን ለመሰብሰብ በሆስፒታሉ ለልጆቻቸዉ የንግግር እና የቋንቋ ህክምና ከሚያገኙ ወላጆች መካከል አቶ/ወ/ሮ _____ ለቃለ-መጠየቅ መርጫለሁ። በቃለ-መጠየቁ የተሰበሰበዉን መረጃ በምስጥር ለመያዝ እና ለዚህ ለታለመለት ጥናት አላማ ብቻ ለማዋል ተስማምቻለሁ። መስማማቴንም በፍርሚያዬ አረጋግጣለሁ።

እኔም አቶ/ወ/ሮ _____ በየካቲት 12 ሜድካል ኮሌጅ ሆስፒታል ዉስጥ ለልጄ የሚሰጠዉ አገልግሎት ላይ ተሳታፊ በመሆኔ ከላይ የተጠቀሰዉን ተስማምቼ ቃለ-መጠየቁ ላይ በፍቃዴ ተሳታፊ መሆኔን በፍርሚያዬ አረጋግጣለሁ።

ዉል ሰጪ

ሥም _____

ፍርማ _____

ቀን _____

ዉል ተቀባይ

ሥም _____

ፍርማ _____

ቀን _____