

# The Attitudes of Employers Towards Stuttering and People Who Stutter: Descriptive Research

## İşverenlerin Kekemeliğe ve Kekemeliği Olan Bireylere Yönelik Tutumu: Tanımlayıcı Araştırma

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**ABSTRACT Objective:** This study is designed to put forth how stuttering -as a disorder- and people who stutter (PWS) are perceived by employers in Türkiye and reveal attitudes of employers toward PWS in consideration of gender and educational status. The current study also investigates different responses of employers in 5 business areas (health service, education service, factory/company, cafe/restaurant, and store) and the general impression of employers toward PWS and people with a physical disability. **Material and Methods:** One hundred and eighteen employers from 5 business areas in İzmir were contacted and the data were analyzed by using the convenience sampling method. The Public Opinion Survey of Human Attributes-Stuttering (POSHA-S) is used as a measuring instrument. POSHA-S samples various beliefs, reactions, behaviors, and emotions that can identify social ignorance, stigmatization, and/or discrimination towards stuttering. **Results:** Employers consider PWS to be shy, timid, angry, and easily excitable. It has been found that employers have negative attitudes toward PWS, and stuttering is an undesirable quality for employers. No significant difference was found between the 5 business areas, different educational statuses and genders, and similar negative attitudes were observed ( $p>0.05$ ). Furthermore, employers have more negative attitudes toward PWS than they have toward people with a physical disability. **Conclusion:** There are similar negative attitudes and stigmatization towards stuttering and PWS by employers regardless of business area, age, gender, and educational status. For this reason, PWS will likely have difficulties in employment and maintaining the job, and this will negatively affect the lives of individuals.

**Keywords:** Stigmatization; employer; stuttering; POSHA-S; attitude

**ÖZET Amaç:** Bu çalışmanın amacı, kekemeliğin ve kekeleyen bireylerin ülkemizdeki işverenler tarafından nasıl algılandığını ve işverenlerin kekeleyen bireylere yönelik tutumlarını cinsiyet ve eğitim durumu değişkenlerini göz önünde bulundurarak araştırmak olup; ayrıca 5 iş alanı (sağlık hizmeti, eğitim hizmeti, fabrika/şirket, kafe/restoran ve mağaza) işverenleri arasındaki yanıt farklılıklarını ve bu alanlardaki işverenlerin, kekemeliği olan bireyler ile bedensel engeli olan bireylere yönelik genel izlenimlerini belirlemektir. **Gereç ve Yöntemler:** Uygunluk örnekleme yöntemiyle İzmir’de 5 iş alanından 118 işverene ulaşılmış, veriler kolayda analiz yöntemi ile analiz edilmiştir. Ölçme aracı olarak İnsan Özellikleri Kamuoyu Anketi-Kekemelik [The Public Opinion Survey of Human Attributes- Stuttering (POSHA-S)] kullanılmıştır. POSHA-S, toplumsal bilgisizlik, damgalama ve/veya ayrımcılığı belirleyebilecek çeşitli inanç, tepki, davranış ve duyguları örneklemektedir. **Bulgular:** İşverenler, kekemeliği olan bireylerin genel olarak utangaç, çekingen, sinirli ve kolay heyecanlanabilir olduklarını düşünmektedir. İşverenlerin, kekemeliği olan bireylere yönelik olumsuz tutumlara sahip olduğu ve kekemeliğin, işverenler tarafından istenmeyen bir özellik olduğu bulunmuştur. Beş iş alanı, farklı eğitim durumları ve cinsiyetler arasında benzer olumsuz tutumlar olduğu görülmüş ve aralarında anlamlı fark bulunmamıştır ( $p>0,05$ ). Ayrıca işverenlerin, kekemeliği olan bireylere yönelik bedensel engeli olan bireylere olandan daha olumsuz izlenime sahip oldukları görülmüştür. **Sonuç:** İşverenler tarafından iş alanı, yaş, cinsiyet ve eğitim durumu fark etmeksizin kekemeliğe ve kekemeliği olan bireylere yönelik benzer olumsuz tutumlar ve damgalamalar söz konusudur. Bu nedenle kekemeliği olan bireylerin, istihdam ve iş sürdürme konularında zorluklar yaşayacağı ve bu durumun, bireylerin yaşamını olumsuz yönde etkileyeceği olasıdır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Damgalama; işveren; kekemelik; POSHA-S; tutum

Stuttering affects an individual’s private, academic, and business life.<sup>1,2</sup> The perceptions and attitudes of the society, educators, and employers towards stuttering and people who stutter (PWS) may

also be negative due to incorrect and/or incomplete information, prejudices, and false beliefs.<sup>3,4</sup> These negative perceptions and attitudes cause stigmatization, as well.<sup>5</sup> Individuals and/or groups that are stig-

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matized are perceived as less desirable and having different attributes than social norms. These perceptions are based on physical attributes, religious beliefs, personality, intelligence, social conditions, social class, and the presence of a disability.<sup>6</sup> Experience of stigmatization is a big problem for PWS. Stuttering is a disorder that is often misinterpreted and stigmatized by society.<sup>5</sup> Due to stuttering, PWS are faced with negative experiences in social and academic life, finding a job, and during employment, similar to other disability groups that encounter negative attitudes and stigmatization in society. In today's employment market, which considers verbal communication skills as an important competence, especially for those with stuttering who are already socially rejected, disturbed, and exposed to psychological and emotional difficulties of previous negative experiences at school, it may be difficult to feel confident in finding a job.<sup>7-9</sup>

Reducing the negative attitudes faced by PWS can only be achieved by informing society about stuttering correctly and raising awareness. For this, first, it is necessary to determine the group's knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes that are aimed to be changed towards stuttering in society by using scientific methods. The prerequisite for collecting reliable data is to use a well-structured measurement tool.<sup>10</sup> In 1999, a project called "International Project on Attitudes Toward Human Attributes (IPATHA)" was conducted in the United States to develop a measurement tool that can determine the attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge of the public towards stuttering and PWS. As a result of this project, Public Opinion Survey of Human Attributes (POSHA) was developed.<sup>11</sup> The development of the tool was completed, and the tool is known today as POSHA-Stuttering (POSHA-S).<sup>12</sup> The descriptions of POSHA-S were previously presented in several studies.<sup>13,14</sup> The studies using POSHA-S have shown significant differences among countries and cultures. For instance, St. Louis and Roberts have demonstrated that attitudes towards stuttering in Cameroon are significantly more negative than those in Canada and the United States.<sup>15</sup> Another example is the study conducted by Ozdemir et al, which has shown that the public attitude towards stuttering in Türkiye is not as positive as the previ-

ous samples from "the West" and 6<sup>th</sup>-grade students have quite similar attitudes to their parents, grandparents (or adult relatives) and neighbors.<sup>10</sup> As the last example, the attitudes of a group of adult participants from Hong Kong and China were found to be more negative than most of the samples in POSHA-S database from North America and Western Europe.<sup>15</sup> In this study, the Turkish adapted version of POSHA-S was used.

Few studies have measured employers' attitudes towards stuttering and PWS.<sup>16,17</sup> In these studies, employers seem to have negative attitudes towards PWS. Therefore, this study aims to reveal the perceptions of employers in Turkey towards stuttering and PWS and their attitudes towards PWS, considering gender and educational status. It also aims to compare the employers' responses from 5 different business areas (health service, education service, factory/company, cafe/restaurant, and store) and to examine any differences in the general impressions of the employers towards PWS and towards individuals with physical disabilities.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

### ETHICAL ASPECT OF THE RESEARCH

For the use of the POSHA-S applied in the research, permission was obtained from St. Louis from the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders of the University of West Virginia, the USA, who is one of the survey developers. The study was approved by the Non-interventional Clinical Research Ethics Committee of İstanbul Medipol University (date: 8.10.2018, no: 10840098-604.01.01-E.44085), and written and verbal consent was obtained from the employers to participate in the study through an informed consent form.

### STUDY GROUP

The demographic information of the employers in the study is given in [Table 1](#). Fifty eight of the employers participating in the study were women, and 59 were men. One of the employers did not fill in the section for gender information. As for the other sections of the demographic information, a participant did not fill in the marriage status, while another did

**TABLE 1:** Demographic informations of the employers.

		n	%
Area of business	Education	22	18.6
	Factory/company	24	20.3
	Café/restaurant	24	20.3
	Store	26	22.0
	Health	22	18.6
Gender	Male	59	50.4
	Female	58	49.6
Marriage status	Married	73	62.4
	Single	44	37.6
Do you have a child?	Yes	64	54.7
	No	53	45.3
Educational status	Primary school	1	0.8
	Secondary school	3	2.5
	High school	27	22.9
	Associate degree	17	14.4
	Bachelor's degree	53	44.9
	Master's degree	16	13.6
Current employment status	Doctorate	1	0.8
	Student	1	0.9
	Unemployed	1	0.9
	Employed	113	96.6
Age	Retired	2	1.7
	30 and below	34	29.6
	Between 31 and 40	51	44.3
	41 and above	30	26.1

not fill in the section concerning whether or not s/he has a child, and still another left the current employment status blank. All these three participants also failed to fill in the section for date of birth. The ages of the employers varied between 21 and 63.

The participants of this research consisted of 5 business areas. These groups were determined as education service, factory/company, cafe/restaurant, store, and health service. The groups were named according to the business areas in which employers hire people. A total of 118 employers participated in the study, and 22 of them were from the education sector, 24 from a factory/company, 24 from a cafe/restaurant, 26 from a store, and 22 from the health sector. These 5 business areas were chosen to provide a general perspective as they cover a high percentage of employees of all ages and genders with different educational statuses in terms of the workforce in daily

life. In addition, access to the employers/personnel involved in the recruitment process due to the nature of the business areas also played an essential role in selecting these areas.

### MEASURING TOOL (POSHA-S)

In 1999, St. Louis et al. launched the IPATHA to develop a standard scale to measure public attitudes towards stuttering, which can be used anywhere globally.<sup>12</sup> POSHA-Experimental 3, which is the latest version of POSHA in 2010, was adapted into Turkish by Ozdemir et al.<sup>10</sup> The tool, the development of which was completed, is known today as POSHA-S.<sup>12</sup> POSHA-S exemplifies various beliefs, reactions, behaviors, and emotions that can identify social ignorance, stigmatization, and/or discrimination towards stuttering. It uses a paper-and-pencil format that requires graded answers which can compare one group of participants with another. Aspects of the psychometric and practical qualities of the tool were reported in recent publications, and a database of the participants from dozens of the studies using POSHA-S was created by the IPATHA initiative.<sup>13</sup>

POSHA-S includes a demographic section, a general section that compares stuttering with four other human attributes (e.g., intelligent, left-handed, mentally ill, and obese), and a detailed stuttering section.<sup>12</sup> However, we applied our study with employers. Therefore, we did not apply the standard version of POSHA-S and changed three human attributes. The human attributes other than stuttering that were included in our study are using the left hand, having high self-confidence, knowing more than one foreign language, and having a physical disability.

### PROCEDURE

Data collection was carried out for 2 months between February and April in 2019. The employers included in the study were determined using the convenience sampling method, which is one of the non-probability sampling methods. After deciding the 5 business areas, the relevant workplaces in İzmir were visited by the first author. While visiting the workplaces, the researcher considered the ease of transportation and ensured that he did not know the employers in the centers. The employers were reached at the addresses

where they work. The survey was applied to the employers who gave a written consent (who were informed and who then signed the consent form) in this meeting. It should be noted that the word “employer” corresponds to the founder, manager, director, vice director who take an active role in recruitment. When completing the survey, the employers were asked to state their general opinions, including those during recruitment processes.

To measure the employers’ attitudes towards PWS, İzmir was chosen as the target city. All the employers reside in İzmir; therefore, it is thought that the sample collected in the study can reflect the population of İzmir. İzmir is the third most populous city in Turkey. The population of İzmir in 2015 is 4,168,415.<sup>18</sup> When the active population rate of 15-64 years is evaluated, it is seen that İzmir (71.7%) is above the average of Turkey. Employment in İzmir is concentrated in the industry and services sector.<sup>19</sup>

## DATA ANALYSIS

The data were analyzed with the SPSS 22 program, and the study was conducted with a 95% confidence level. It seems to be sufficient for normal distribution when the kurtosis and skewness values obtained from the scales in the items are between +3 and -3.<sup>20,21</sup> The hypothesis that the response means differed depending on certain categorical variables were analyzed by independent samples t-test and ANOVA test which are parametric test techniques. In case of a difference in ANOVA, Tukey’s test was performed for pairwise comparisons. The comparison of the positive and negative response means was made with the dependent samples t-test. The relationship between the business area and categorical variables was examined with the chi-square test.

## RESULTS

Of the employers, 48.3% reported a generally negative impression about PWS, while 40.7% have a neutral and 11% have a positive impression.

Of the employers, 62.7% stated that they do not want to be PWS, while 1.7% stated that they want to be PWS. The remaining 35.6% stayed neutral on this matter.

According to the answers given by the employers to the questions in the section on stuttering, PWS are generally shy, bashful, nervous, and easily excited. The employers stated that during their conversations with PWS, they would try to act as if the person is speaking normally (91.5%), would not complete the words of the individual (72.9%), would feel comfortable or normal (88.1%), and would say “slow down” or “relax” to the person (48.3%). Of the employers, 34.7% thought that they had little information about PWS, while 31.4% thought they knew a little. While 45.8% of the employers had an acquaintance who stutters, 16.9% had a close friend with stuttering. Of the participants, 61.9% stated that they would be sad/worried if they had stuttering problems, 75.4% of the employers thought that stuttering is an event where the person experiences fear, and 42.4% thought it is genetic inheritance, and 97.5% of the employers believed that PWS should be treated by a speech and language therapist. According to the employers’ statements, their knowledge about stuttering is mainly from their personal experience (69.5%) and the internet (58.5%).

The *positive* response mean of the participants is  $6.12 \pm 3.21$ ; the *negative* response mean is  $13.31 \pm 3.03$ , and the *neutral* response mean is  $2.57 \pm 2.35$ . The skewness and kurtosis coefficients obtained from the means met the normality assumption; therefore, parametric test techniques were used in our analysis.

Dependent samples t-test results for the comparison of the positive and negative response means are given below (The positive and negative answers to the questions that measure the general attitudes towards stuttering and PWS in the survey include the answers given to the 21 questions in the sections C1-with 3 Choices, C2-with 3 Choices, D1, D2, D3).

A statistically significant difference was between the participants’ average positive and negative response means ( $p < 0.05$ ). The negative response mean (13.31) was significantly higher than the positive response mean (6.12). These results show that the employers have *negative attitudes* towards stuttering and PWS (Table 2).

**TABLE 2:** Comparison of the positive and negative response means.

	Mean	SD	t value	p value
Positive	6.12	3.21	-13.512	<0.001*
Negative	13.31	3.03		

SD: Standard deviation. \*p&lt;0.05

While there was no statistically significant difference among the groups from different business areas in terms of the *positive* and *negative* response means ( $p>0.05$ ), there was a statistically significant difference among them in terms of the *neutral* response means ( $p=0.009$ ). The highest *positive* response average is in the education area; the highest *negative* response average is in the cafe/restaurant area (Table 3).

There was a statistically significant difference between the *neutral* response means of the men and women ( $p=0.023$ ). Accordingly, the neutral response mean of the women (3.09) was significantly higher than that of the men (2.10). There was no statistically significant difference between the genders in terms of *positive* and *negative* response means ( $p>0.05$ ) (Table 4).

There was no statistically significant difference between the means of positive, negative, and neutral responses among the groups with different educational statuses ( $p>0.05$ ). Employers with the highest average of positive responses are those with a master's/doctorate degree; the highest negative response average belongs to employers with an associate degree (Table 5).

While the percentage of the employers with a general *negative* impression about PWS was 48.3%, the percentage of those with a general *negative* impression about individual with a physical disability was 43.2%.

While the percentage of those who *disagreed* with the statement "I would want to be PWS" was 62.7%, the percentage of those who *disagreed* with the statement "I would want to be individual with a physical disability" was 61.9%.

There was a significant relationship between the general impression towards individuals with physical disabilities and that towards PWS ( $p=0.000$ ). The majority of the employers who had a general *negative* impression towards individuals with physical disabilities also had a general *negative* impression towards

**TABLE 3:** Analysis of the response means in terms of business areas.

		n	Mean	SD	F	p value	Binary difference
Positive	Education	22	6.91	3.78	1.212	0.310	
	Factory/company	24	5.00	2.81			
	Café/restaurant	24	6.13	2.66			
	Store	26	6.58	3.16			
	Health	22	6.00	3.52			
Negative	Education	22	13.32	3.41	0.109	0.979	
	Factory/company	24	13.00	2.55			
	Café/restaurant	24	13.58	3.15			
	Store	26	13.35	2.62			
	Health	22	13.32	3.63			
Neutral	Education	22	1.77	1.72	3.523	0.009*	1-2
	Factory/company	24	4.00	2.59			2-4
	Café/restaurant	24	2.29	2.46			
	Store	26	2.08	2.30			
	Health	22	2.68	2.03			

SD: Standard deviation; One-way ANOVA; Post hoc tests/Tukey.

**TABLE 4:** Analysis of the response means in terms of gender.

	Gender	n	Mean	SD	t value	p value
Positive	Male	59	6.36	3.05	0.858	0.393
	Female	58	5.84	3.39		
Negative	Male	59	13.54	2.95	0.840	0.403
	Female	58	13.07	3.14		
Neutral	Male	59	2.10	1.98	-2.307	0.023*
	Female	58	3.09	2.59		

SD: Standard deviation; Independent samples t-test. \*p&lt;0.05

**TABLE 5:** Analysis of the response means in terms of educational status.

		n	Mean	SD	F	p value
Positive	High school and below	31	6.61	2.79	1.241	0.298
	Associate degree	17	6.59	2.35		
	Bachelor's degree	53	5.49	3.56		
	Master's degree/doctorate	17	6.71	3.41		
Negative	High school and below	31	12.97	2.50	0.211	0.889
	Associate degree	17	13.53	2.87		
	Bachelor's degree	53	13.47	3.15		
	Master's degree/doctorate	17	13.24	3.83		
Neutral	High school and below	31	2.42	2.11	1.518	0.214
	Associate degree	17	1.88	1.93		
	Bachelor's degree	53	3.04	2.62		
	Master's degree/doctorate	17	2.06	2.11		

SD: Standard deviation.

PWS (80.7%). The majority of those who had a *neutral* general impression towards individuals with physical disabilities also had a *neutral* general impression towards PWS (72.9%). The majority of those who had a *positive* general impression towards individuals with physical disabilities also had a *positive* general impression towards PWS (84.6%) (Table 6).

## DISCUSSION

The present study is the first study in Turkey to measure employers' attitudes towards stuttering and PWS, as well as being the first study in which employers were the target of POSHA-S, with which public and teacher attitudes had been examined in previous studies.

### PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARDS STUTTERING AND PEOPLE WHO STUTTER IN TURKEY

In the study, the percentage of the positive responses given by the employers to the question in which their

general impressions about PWS were asked was quite lower than that of the other answers; that is, they preferred giving mostly negative and neutral answers. At the same time, the majority of the employers answered "no" to "I would want to be PWS." When the positive and negative response means were compared, the positive response mean was found to be 6.12, and the negative response means found to be 13.31. This can clearly show that the employers had a negative impression and attitude towards PWS. These negative attitudes indicate that stuttering is an undesirable attribute by employers and can reduce the employment chances of PWS. Similar negative impressions and attitudes were observed in the study of Ozdemir et al., where public attitudes towards stuttering and PWS were measured.<sup>10</sup> However, in this study, the mean value of the negative attitude is significantly higher than in the other two studies. The reason for this can be

**TABLE 6:** Examining the relationship between the general impression towards individuals with physical disabilities and that towards PWS.

		Individuals with disability			p value
		Negative	Neutral	Positive	
PWS	Negative	n	46	10	1
		%	80.7	17.5	1.8
	Neutral	n	4	35	9
		%	8.3	72.9	18.8
	Positive	n	1	1	11
		%	7.7	7.7	84.6
Total	n	51	46	21	
	%	43.2	39.0	17.8	

PWS: People who stutter; Chi-square test. \*p=0.000

the employers' concerns about business and customer relations.

There was no statistically significant difference between the gender and educational status groups regarding the positive and negative responses to the questions measuring the employers' attitudes towards stuttering and PWS. This result shows that a higher educational level does not differ in terms of attitudes, contrary to what is expected. While Ozdemir et al. also did not find a significant difference between the gender groups in terms of the positive and negative responses in their study, they found that the distribution of negative responses did not change according to the level of education. Still, when the positive responses were considered, the number of positive responses of the group with an educational status of six years or more was more than the number of positive responses of the group with educational status of fewer than 6 years.<sup>10</sup> The educational status groups in the two studies differ in terms of year of education, which may be one reason why positive response results were found differently.

Weidner et al. compared the attitudes of American and Turkish preschool children towards stuttering by watching a short video of two avatar characters who stutter. American and Turkish preschool children marked most items as negative at a similar rate. Both groups rated the characteristics and personalities of children who stutter more negatively, but their potential more positively.<sup>22</sup>

Cangi and Alpay compared the attitudes and behaviors of Turkish and non-Turkish individuals in

their interaction with PWS in an experimental condition. Behaviorally, the Turkish group exhibited "sentence completion" and "asking consecutive questions" behaviors significantly more frequently than the non-Turkish group. In terms of interaction attitudes, the Turkish group scored significantly higher than the non-Turkish in the items responding in the first syllable, completing the statement, being serious, and anxious. The non-Turkish group scored significantly higher than the Turkish group in the qualities using gestures, empathetic, warm, positive, sincere, sympathetic, and open.<sup>23</sup> The results of our study and the studies of Weidner et al. and Cangi and Alpay support each other and show that attitudes towards stuttering are negative for different cultures and different age groups.

#### STUDIES MEASURING PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARDS STUTTERING AND PEOPLE WHO STUTTER IN THE WORLD BY USING POSHA-S

In many countries, the public attitude towards stuttering and PWS has been measured, and negative attitudes have been documented using POSHA-S. In Hong Kong and China, Ip et al., in Poland, Przepiorka et al., and in Portugal, Valente et al. measured public attitudes towards PWS.<sup>15,24,25</sup> All these three studies revealed negative attitudes similar to other previous studies. Valente et al. found that gender did not determine attitudes in line with our study, while educational status was found to be a determinant in terms of attitudes, which is inconsistent with the findings of our study.<sup>25</sup> Likewise, St. Louis also investigated the

impact of gender on attitudes towards stuttering and found that men and women exhibit similar negative attitudes.<sup>26</sup>

Walker et al. conducted a study to evaluate the opinions and attitudes of university careers consultants about stuttering and PWS, and to predict whether university careers consultants believe that they can help university students who stutter find a job. The responses of the consultants were compared with the participant responses representing the public in POSHA-S database. While the careers consultants have more positive attitudes towards stuttering and PWS than the public does, only 57% of these professionals believe that PWS can work in any job they want. Only 4% believe that university careers consultants can help PWS.<sup>27</sup>

The results of these four studies support the negative attitudes of the public and careers consultants towards stuttering and PWS. In the study by Walker et al., the percentage of the university career consultants stating that PWS can work in any profession they want is the same as the percentage of the employers who gave the same answer in our study.<sup>27</sup>

#### EMPLOYERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS STUTTERING AND PEOPLE WHO STUTTER

Hurst and Cooper conducted the first study examining the relationship between employment problems and the attitudes of people who do not stutter towards PWS. The researchers investigated the attitudes of 644 people, including personnel and industrial relations managers, by using an inventory developed to examine employers' attitudes towards stuttering. Eighty 29% of the employers stated that stuttering hinders job performance, 50% expressed that stuttering reduces employability.<sup>16</sup> Another study by Hurst and Cooper examined the attitudes of 152 vocational rehabilitation consultants towards stuttering. In that study, 78% of the consultants believed that stuttering is occupationally obstructive, while 88% thought most individuals would feel uncomfortable talking to PWS.<sup>17</sup> These studies show that vocational rehabilitation consultants and employers have negative attitudes towards PWS, which supports the findings of our study.

#### PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARDS DISABILITY AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Andersson et al. researched Swedish employers' experience and attitudes toward hiring individuals with various disabilities. The results showed that the employers had little interest in hiring individuals with disabilities, and this depended on the type of disability that the individual had.<sup>28</sup> Nota et al. examined the importance of working in the lives of individuals with disabilities and focused on employers' attitudes towards these individuals. Eighty employers were randomly assigned to two conditions ("standard condition" is presented with reference to the disability that the candidate had, and "positive condition" is presented with reference to their strengths). The type of disability and its presentation were found to affect employers' attitudes.<sup>29</sup> In a study conducted last years in Turkey, Topgül and Yıldırım focused on individuals with disabilities being a part of the social life. The results showed that the main reason for employers to employ individuals with disabilities was the presence of a quota, and approximately 80% did not consider employing an individual with a disability in the following years.<sup>30</sup> These studies, which measure attitudes towards disability and individuals with disabilities, support our study.

Potential limitations of the present study include the modest sample size due to difficulty reaching employers in specific workplaces and due to certain employers' prejudices/insecurities about surveys. A further concern relates to the sampling location, İzmir, making it difficult to generalize to all employers across Turkey.

#### CONCLUSION

We have found that employers exhibit negative attitudes and stereotypes towards PWS. No significant difference was found within the 5 business areas, different educational statuses and genders factors, and similar negative attitudes were observed. Our study shows that employers exhibit negative attitudes close to PWS and individuals with a physical disability, but negative attitudes are slightly higher for PWS. Therefore, PWS may experience similar or even more difficulties in recruitment than individuals with a



physical disability. At this point, the severity of the stuttering and the profile of PWS, and the type of disability, and the profile of the individual with a disability are important.

### Source of Finance

During this study, no financial or spiritual support was received neither from any pharmaceutical company that has a direct connection with the research subject, nor from a company that provides or produces medical instruments and materials which may negatively affect the evaluation process of this study.

### Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest between the authors and / or family members of the scientific and medical committee members or mem-

bers of the potential conflicts of interest, counseling, expertise, working conditions, share holding and similar situations in any firm.

### Authorship Contributions

**Idea/Concept:** Ayhan Çağlayan, Ramazan Sertan Özdemir; **Design:** Ayhan Çağlayan, Ramazan Sertan Özdemir; **Control/Supervision:** Ayhan Çağlayan, Ramazan Sertan Özdemir; **Data Collection and/or Processing:** Ayhan Çağlayan; **Analysis and/or Interpretation:** Ayhan Çağlayan; **Literature Review:** Ayhan Çağlayan; **Writing the Article:** Ayhan Çağlayan, Ramazan Sertan Özdemir; **Critical Review:** Ayhan Çağlayan, Ramazan Sertan Özdemir; **References and Fundings:** Ayhan Çağlayan, Ramazan Sertan Özdemir; **Materials:** Ayhan Çağlayan, Ramazan Sertan Özdemir.

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