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Development Of A Questionnaire To Determine The Clinical Assessment Practices Of Speech-Language Pathologists For Children With Speech Sound Disorders In India

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Children with speech sound disorders (SSD) can have a combination of perception, and/or production difficulties affecting their speech intelligibility and acceptability. The multilingual/multicultural context of the Indian subcontinent poses a unique concern to SLPs involved in the assessment of SSDs and little is known about the clinical assessment practices used by SLPs to identify children with SSD in multilingual context. The present study description the assessment practices used by SLPs to evaluate children suspected of having SSD in India.

Method: The study was conducted in two phases. The first phase focused on develop a questionnaire that assesses practices of speech language pathologist in assessment of speech sound production, The second phase concentrated on conducting the online survey on practicing speech language pathologists in India. A total of 102 Speech language pathologists working in different set-ups having varying years of clinical experience in the assessment and treatment of children with speech sound disorders participated in the present research. Online survey was conducted by mailing the online link to fill the questionnaire. The participants with minimum qualification of under-graduation in the core subject of speech language pathology were included. The questionnaire assessed different areas such as SLPs' academic qualification, city and state of practice, languages known by practicing SLP, work experience and work set-up with case load, age-range of children they encounter with SSD, frequent cause of SSD, referral sources, duration of assessment, assessment tools used, areas of assessment and analysis methods.

Results: The results of the survey were not intended to be subjected to statistical analyses, rather aimed at identifying themes and trends in practice pattern. Most of them specified that they (83.33%) used standardized test for child's first language, followed by language-specific speech sampling tool (48.03%), non-standardized test for child's first language (30.39%) and self-made assessment tool with local norms (13.75%). Among the 102 SLPs who answered the question, 70.59% of them used traditional SODA analysis to determine omissions, additions substitutions and distortions, followed by Place- manner-voicing analysis by 56.86% of the participants.

Conclusion: The present findings collate the SLPs assessment practices for children with SSD and may be of helpful in advocating the assessment procedures with confidence to bring the best possible outcomes.

Keywords: Speech sound disorders, Assessment practices, Traditional SODA analysis