

Portuguese Speech and Language Therapists' practices: services delivery for children with speech sound disorders

Costa, S.#; Patrício, B.+; Baptista, A.C.* & Rodrigues, S.*
 (sofiacostatf@yahoo.com; apb@eu.ipp.pt; acjesus@ualg.pt; sfromdrigues@ualg.pt)

Health School of Polytechnic Institute of Porto; + Center for Rehabilitation Research, Health School of Polytechnic Institute of Porto; *School of Health Sciences, University of Algarve (UAlgESS) and CLUL

Background

Speech Sound Disorders (SSD) are the most common and heterogenous communication difficulties among preschool children.

Factors like the number, duration, frequency, and format (individual or group) of intervention sessions can significantly influence treatment outcomes for children with speech sound disorders (SSD)¹. Despite the limited research in this area², understanding the current practices of Speech and Language Therapists (SLT) and comparing them with existing studies on service delivery for SSD is crucial.

Aim of the study

To characterize how Portuguese SLT deliver services to children with SSD.

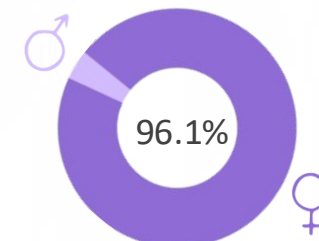
Method

A survey was conducted in Portugal using a translated and culturally adapted questionnaire from Brumbaugh and Smit's study.³ The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

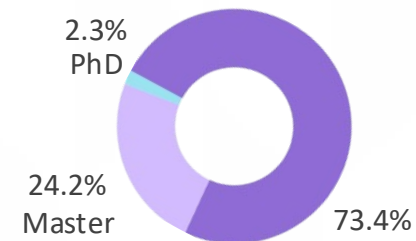
Results



128 participants



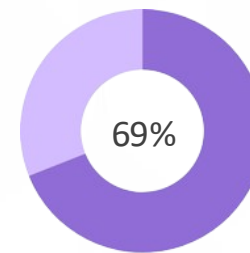
females



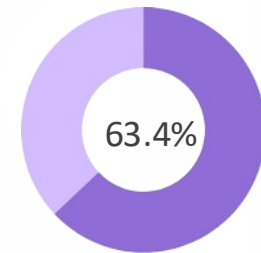
2.3% PhD

24.2% Master degree

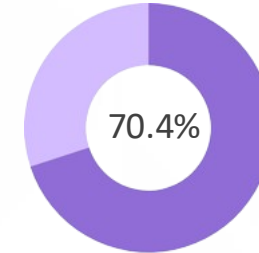
73.4% Bachelor degree



Specialized training in SSD

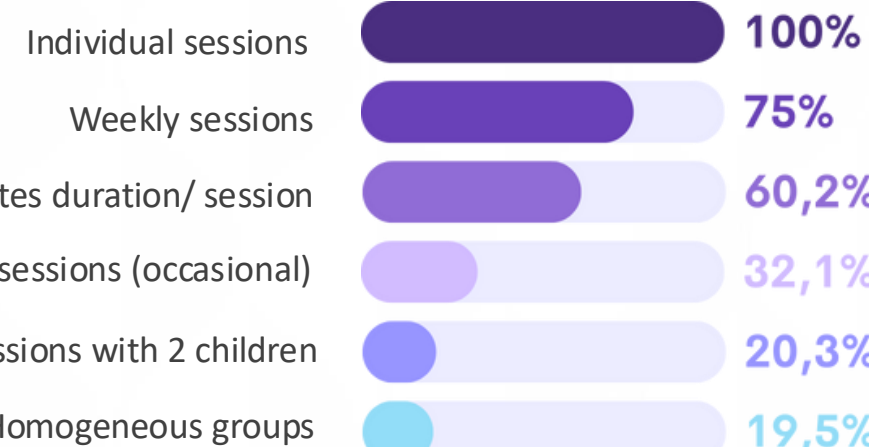


>50% preschool caseload with SSD



Private clinics

Characteristics of speech therapy sessions



Take Home Messages

Key Findings on Service Delivery Practices for Children with SSD:

- ✓ **Individual Sessions:** The predominance of one-on-one sessions underscores the importance of personalized and focused interventions tailored to the unique needs of each child.
- ✓ **Weekly Sessions:** The preference for weekly sessions suggests the value of consistent (although, not intensive), ongoing therapy to support steady progress.
- ✓ **Session Duration:** Sessions lasting at least 45 minutes provide time to engage in a variety of tasks and exercises, enhancing the effectiveness of the intervention.

More research is needed to understand how the delivery of services to children with SSD affects the effectiveness of interventions.

References

- ¹ Brosseau-Lapré F, Greenwell T. (2019). Innovative Service Delivery Models for Serving Children with Speech Sound Disorders. *Semin Speech Lang*. 40(2):113-123.
- ² Warren SF, Fey ME, Yoder PJ. (2007). Differential treatment intensity research: a missing link to creating optimally effective communication interventions. *Ment Retard Dev Disabil Res Rev.*;13(1):70-7.
- ³ Brumbaugh KM, Smit AB. (2013). Treating children ages 3-6 who have speech sound disorder: a survey. *Lang Speech Hear Serv Sch.*;44(3):306-19.