

Investigation of Services Provided by Speech and Language Pathologists during COVID-19 Pandemic: Turkey Sample

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Abstract

Purpose: Recent study aimed to investigate the services provided by speech and language therapists during COVID-19 Pandemic in Turkey.

Method: This study is a descriptive study. The sample comprised 82 speech and language pathologists (SLPs) settling in Turkey. A questionnaire developed by Mostaert, D'Haenens, Schraeyen, Vandenborre and Van Eerdenbrugh (2020) was used as data collection tool. The questionnaire was delivered to SLPs online via Google Forms. The data was collected in the first six months of the pandemic. The answers about therapy practices of SLPs were examined and the percentages were calculated.

Results: According to the results, all of the participants stated that they did not take an education about tele-practice before the pandemic. Only 39 % of the participants continued to provide therapy to their clients. 12,5 % of them served face to face therapy. The rest of them served to their clients via tele-practice by using computer applications, video or telephone. The most of the SLPs stated that they served therapy less often than the usual. Whatsapp, zoom and skype were the most preferred applications used by SLPs. Internet connection problems, sound and image quality problems, difficulties in assessment procedures such as oral examination and difficulties in maintaining eye contact and interaction were the most common problems that SLPs faced during tele-practice.

Conclusion: Due to Covid-19 Pandemic many SLPs could not deliver face to face practice and a search for alternative ways emerged. The implementation of tele-practice has gained more and more importance with the prolonged process of the pandemic.

Key words: tele-practice, coronavirus, pandemic, speech and language therapy

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