



Assessing the information needs of speech therapists working in the French Community of Belgium in order to improve a course on Evidence-Based Practice at the University of Liège



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1. Introduction

Two years ago, a course on Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) was integrated into the speech therapy curriculum at the University of Liège. We decided to analyze speech therapists' needs in order to adjust the educational program to current working conditions and to address challenges faced by clinical practitioners.

2. Methods

An online exploratory survey was launched with 2028 members of two Belgian associations of French speaking speech therapists (ASELF and UPLF) and with 40 practitioners working in collaboration with the University of Liège as supervisors to speech therapy students.

3. Major results

Participation rate = 19.8% (n=410)

Fig. 1: Process(es) used to solve the last clinical problem

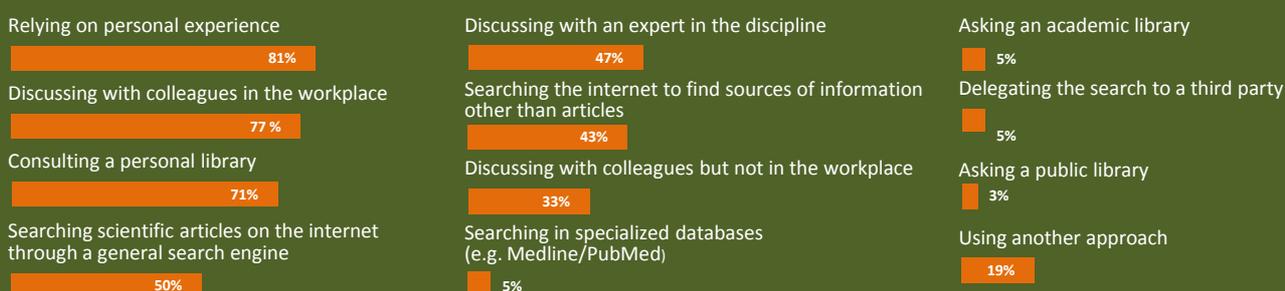


Fig. 2: Barriers to accessing scientific information

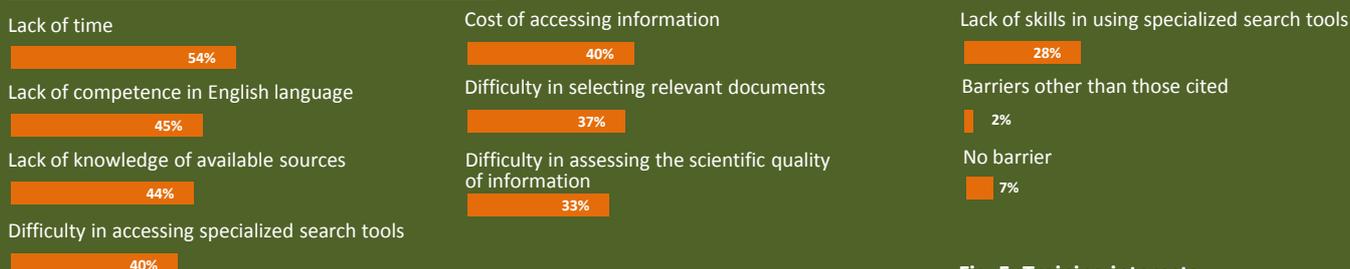


Fig. 3: Frequency of access to scientific information



Fig. 4: Level of importance of EBP for the 12.4% of respondents who knew that approach

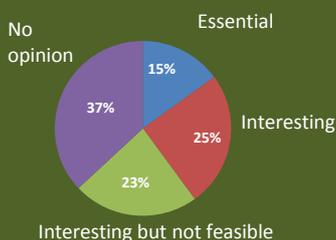
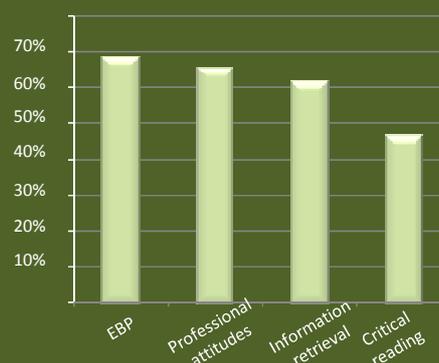


Fig. 5: Training interests



4. Discussion

The survey gathered a large amount of additional data, which still need to be analyzed. Nevertheless, as recommended by Guo *et al.* (1) and by Nail-Chiwetalu & Bernstein Ratner (2), we can already conclude that efforts need to be made to help speech therapists to develop their skills in information literacy. On the one hand, educational programs should provide EBP courses in order to anticipate the challenges of professional life. On the other hand, continuing education activities should also be offered to professionals in order to support decision making and to transform them into models for the next generation.

5. References

- (1) Guo R, Bain BA, Willer J. Results of an assessment of information needs among speech-language pathologists and audiologists in Idaho. *J Med Libr Assoc.* 2008;96:138-44.
- (2) Nail-Chiwetalu B, Bernstein Ratner N. An assessment of the information-seeking abilities and needs of practicing speech-language pathologists. *J Med Libr Assoc.* 2007;95:182-8,e56-7.