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### *SLP Myths Survey*

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**Introduction:** Myths abound and persist throughout popular culture that pertain to the profession of speech-language pathology and the individuals treated by speech-language pathologists (SLPs). SLPs' endorsement of such myths is one consequence of the large research-practice gap that is a major concern for numerous fields including speech-language pathology and education. This early-stage study explores the extent to which SLP students are operating under assumptions that are not supported by evidence and are contradicted by evidence. This study presents data from a larger study that also included SLPs (results presented separately). The long term-goal is to narrow the research-practice gap for speech-language pathology and increase provision of evidence-based services. Research aims: 1. Determine whether SLP graduate students endorse statements about myths to a greater degree for one topic versus other topics (i.e., autism spectrum disorder [ASD], children who are deaf/hard of hearing, dyslexia, language development/impairment, speech impairment) 2. Descriptively characterize the degree to which SLP students endorse specific myths and true statements

**Methods:** Participants (n = 37 graduate SLP students; mean age = 24.3 years) were recruited from (a) persons attending an on-line two-day state-wide professional development conference for SLPs and (b) social media. Participants answered questions about their perspectives on topics related to persistent myths in popular culture and/or professions related to speech-language pathology. They marked the degree to which they agree with statements on a visual analog scale (0 to 100; strongly disagree to strongly agree).

**Results:** Aim 1: Results of a one-way repeated-measures ANOVA ( $F_{4,144} = 8.25, p < .001$ ) with follow-up pairwise comparisons revealed significantly more accurate endorsement of myth-related ASD statements than each of the other four topics and significantly less accurate endorsement for dyslexia statements than each of the other four topics. Aim 2: Participants strongly refuted 10 of 34 myths, strongly endorsed 6 of 18 true statements, and failed to refute 5 myths. Very large ranges were observed for nearly all items.

**Discussion:** The participants failed to strongly refute numerous myths despite available current evidence. Nonetheless, much variation was observed across items and participants, including several areas of strength. The results provide guidance for areas of need to address (e.g., dyslexia) and to hypothesize why SLP students successfully refuted some myths, but not others. These findings align closely with SLPs' results from the same survey. Future directions include evaluating students' perspectives upon entrance and exit of their graduate programs, richer qualitative analyses of rationales for endorsement, and developing interventions that will narrow the research-practice gap broadly and related to the particular topics examined (e.g., refutation texts, targeted professional development).

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