

PREVALENCE OF VOICE DISORDERS AND ITS ASSOCIATED FACTORS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Teaching is a profession that uses voice as a primary tool, which puts a heavy demand on the teacher's voice. Voice disorders are relatively common among teachers and can cause adverse effects, including reduced quality of life, increased absenteeism from work, and increased economic costs to the country. OBJECTIVE: This study aimed to assess the prevalence, lifetime prevalence and association of psychosocial work factors and psychological distress with voice disorders among teachers. METHODOLOGY: This was a cross-sectional study using secondary data from the CLUSTER study. Data from the state of Penang was used. Total samples were 1216 teachers from public secondary schools. Complex sample analysis was conducted for descriptive and multiple logistic regression using SPSS version 23. RESULTS: Most participants were females, married, and over half were aged 40 years and above. Almost one-third of them experienced higher occupational stress. Majority of the participants were normal in terms of depression (72.1%) and stress (78.2%). More than half were having anxiety (53.9%). The prevalence of voice disorders was 11.2% (95%CI: 8.9, 14.1), and the lifetime prevalence of voice disorders was 52.4% (95%CI: 48.8, 56.0). Psychosocial work factors such as higher occupational stress (aOR=2.21, 95%CI 1.29, 3.77) and low supervisor support (aOR=1.72, 95%CI 1.05, 2.99) were associated with voice disorders. Participants with mild (aOR=4.45, 95%CI 2.71, 7.28) or severe depression (aOR=13.15, 95%CI 4.44, 38.90), mild (aOR=3.83, 95%CI 2.07, 7.10) or severe anxiety (aOR=7.37, 95%CI 3.70, 14.70) and mild stress (aOR=5.45, 95%CI 3.20, 9.26) were also associated with voice disorders. CONCLUSION: Work psychosocial factors and psychological distress play a role in the development of voice disorders among secondary school teachers. These findings can be utilised in developing, designing, and implementing interventions or programs to reduce voice disorders for school teachers.

Keywords: Voice disorders, school teachers, psychological distress, work psychosocial factor
