

Prevalence of voice disorder among primary school teachers in Bintulu, Sarawak

ABSTRACT

Teachers face one of the highest demands of any professional group to use their voices at work. Thus, they are at higher risk of developing voice disorder than the general population. The consequences of voice disorder may have impact on teacher's social and professional life as well as their mental, physical and emotional state and their ability to communicate. Objectives of this study are to determine the prevalence of voice disorder and the relationship between voice disorder with associated risk factors such as teaching activities and lifestyle factors among primary school teachers in Bintulu, Sarawak. A cross sectional study was conducted based on random sample of 4 primary schools in Bintulu, Sarawak between January-March 2014. A total of 100 full-time primary school teachers were invited to participate in the study. Data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire addressing the prevalence of voice disorder and potential risk factors. Descriptive analysis and chi-square test was used to measure the relationship between voice disorder and associated risk factors. The response rate for this study was 78% (78/100). The study found that the prevalence of voice disorder among primary school teachers in Bintulu, Sarawak was 13%. Chi-square test results revealed that factors significantly associated with voice disorder ($p < 0.05$) were smoking ($p = 0.012$), consuming alcohol beverages ($p = 0.012$) for lifestyle factors while teaching session ($p = 0.049$) for teaching activities. A low prevalence of voice disorder exists among primary school teachers in Bintulu, Sarawak. Smoking, consuming alcohol beverages and teaching session has proven to be significantly associated causing voice disorder among them.

Keyword: Voice disorder; Primary school teachers; Teaching activities; Lifestyle factors