WORKING CONDITIONS AND PROFESSIONAL VOICE USE BY PARTY BAND SINGERS

Condições de trabalho e uso profissional da voz de cantores de bandas de baile

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: to determine the working conditions and professional voice use of ballroom band singers. **Methods:** a cohort of 24 ballroom band singers (13 male and 11 female) from six ballroom bands from the city of Piracicaba, SP (Brazil). Data was obtained during Graduation Balls shows and collected through on-site observation, questionnaire and interview. **Results:** ballroom band singers are submitted to difficulties about poor infrastructure, support, accommodations and food in the places of the events that put vocal health in risk. Most participants notice changes in their voices during and after the event. Voice health care, habits, and behavior, as well as vocal warm-up are inadequate and insufficient. However, many positive aspects of the work are detected, such as social support and easy-going, calm, cooperative and motivating environment, as well as a positive perception of the work environment as a source of learning, experience, pleasure, satisfaction and accomplishment. **Conclusion:** working conditions are unfavorable to the professional use of voice and health care. This research has contributed for a better understanding of the working conditions of ballroom band singers as concerns professional voice use and voice health care, and provides support for future speech and language therapy support and intervention for these laborers in order to promote occupational health care.

KEYWORDS: Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences; Voice; Music; Occupational Health; Health Promotion

INTRODUCTION

Party band singers represent a sub-category of night singers, who are in the popular singer category; and they perform at graduation proms, birthday parties, wedding receptions, Anniversary parties, Carnaval and New Year's Eve balls, and other specifically themed parties. They use their singing voice to interpret a very eclectic repertoire composed of national and international songs of the main genres and musical styles, with the different aesthetics, vocal resources and markers that characterize them, considering that a party band singer is better evaluated by the audience according to how close his vocal interpretation comes to the one used by the singer of the song's original recording[1].

These singers dance and perform while singing and use different vocal and phonation adjustments that vary a great deal from one song to another, as well as using their spoken voice to Interact with the audience and integrate people to the repertoire[1].

On average, party bands have four singers – usually two women and two men – who take turns in songs and change of clothes. The party band team is usually composed of singers (vocalists), musicians such as guitar player, bass player, drummer, percussionist and keyboard player; dancers and a handyman (to help put up sets, sound and lighting), a lighting technician, sound effects technician, a dressing room helper, driver, seamstress, costume designer and a manager.

Brazilian literature in the field of Speech-Language Pathology has important bibliography

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surveys in professional voice that involve the singing voice[2-4]; but it is noticeable that the category of party bad singers has been contemplated in only a few studies. Furthermore, a review study about the scientific production in Speech-Language Pathology regarding popular singing showed that there is a lack of studies considering specific styles, the diversity of musical genres and the singularity of popular singing and also of those that approach general health habits and vocal well-being, work conditions and the aspects of the social identity of singers [5].

A study that focused directly on this category has evidenced problems such as: gastro-esophageal reflux; vocal fold disorders and lesions (edemas, hyperemias, nodules, chorditis, leukoplakias,granulomas, bruises and chinks); lack of proper vocal technique, of vocal health care and of knowledge concerning voice production; concluding that there is a need for Speech-Language Pathology interventions aiming towards the promotion of the vocal health of party band singers[6].

Knowledge of the aspects involved in the work conditions is needed in order to understand voice disorders and to subsidize actions aimed at the prevention of voice disorders, promotion of vocal health and Speech-Language Pathology accessory work[7,8]. The singer's voice should be analyzed in its relationships with the musical genre and the artistic and expressive demands of the performance as well as the use of spoken and singing voices in the context of professional performance, under the real live work conditions[9].

The purpose of this study is to determine the work conditions and professional voice use of party band singers.

METHODS

This is a field research of qualitative and quantitative approach that has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee at CEP UNIMEP 89/11.

The subjects were 24 singers in party bands from the city of Piracicaba (13 men and 11 women). All subjects signed a Free Informed Consent Term.

The inclusion criteria was being a singer in a party band from the city of Piracicaba (SP), being active professionally and accepting to participate in the study. Exclusion criteria were being out of activity during data collection and/or denying participation in the study. All subjects in the party bands from Piracicaba took part in the study and there were no exclusions.

The study's context was the bands' performances in Graduation Proms and the method involved live observation, a questionnaire and an interview.

The live observation to determine work conditions and professional voice use of the singers involved all moments from arrival and preparation (before the Party), up until closing and departure (after the Party), with an average of 8 hours with each band. Voice use conditions, vocal behavior and care; relationships among team members; environmental aspects (structure, accommodations, hygiene, temperature, acoustics and noise); materials and resources, food consumption, hydration and medication intake were focused during the observation.

The closed, multiple choice questionnaire involved subject identification data (gender, age, time working as party band singer) and the following questions: "Do you perform vocal warm up and/or cool down?"; "Do you notice changes in your voice before or after the party?"; "Do you think you have or have had a voice disorder?" and "How do you consider your social work environment?; "Do you rest your voice before the party?".

The data from the questionnaire received descriptive and analytical statistic treatment where the following non-parametric tests were used: Chi-Square Test and Fisher's Exact Test [10]. The adopted level of significance was 5% (0.05).

For the oral interview, two questions were asked before the party ("What is being a party band singer?" and "How do you care for your voice?") and two questions after the party ("How do you feel after work?" and "How is your voice now after the party?"). The interview was recorded in the dressing room using a netbookLG–X140 and the Voxmetria® software, version 2.0h; *Andrea PureAudio USB* adapter and an Auricular Karsect HT-2 microphone (all from *CTS informática*). The answers to the interview were transcribed for content analysis, performed by the identification of theme groups.

RESULTS

The subjects' ages varied between 18 and 53 years, and most of the fell into the 20-29 years (10 subjects – 41.6%) and 30-39 years (10 subjects – 41.6%) age groups.

The time in the activity varied between 4 months and 37 years, but most singers (20 subjects – 83.3%) were in the group between 1 and 19 years of activity.

The first activity of 50% of the singers when arriving at the party venue is of unloading and carrying to the dressing rooms their suitcases and hangers containing costumes: clothes, accessories and shoes. The suitcases weigh, approximately, ten kilograms each and, even if they have wheels, they demand physical effort in lifting and carrying them up and down the stairs that lead to the dressing

rooms. The singers usually carry their luggage while talking along the way.

The singers clean up the dressing rooms and prepare their costumes, and 95% of them talk and chat the entire time; 29% hum and do impressions of different voices and 16% yell.

Then, 83% of the singers head to the stage for sound testing, that consists of equipment testing, commands and controls for lighting and sound, instrument tuning and technical adjustments of the equipment for the spoken and singing voice. First of all, each singer, individually, speaks a few words or phrases on the microphone and sings "*a capella"* a song of the repertoire. Afterwards the group sings parts of songs from the repertoire. One subject performed a vocal warm up for sound testing. The, they return to the dressing rooms to put on their costumes, makeup and do hair. At this time, 20% perform vocal warm up (lip/tongue vibration associated to the vowel "a" in ascending glissando, for five minutes).

The infrastructure of the dressing rooms was usually precarious and offered little or no privacy at all.

One of the venues did not have any dressing rooms and the singers improvised a space with curtains, shared by men and women with no privacy or adequate lighting. In another, the dressing room had a cement floor that was very dusty. Another only had one dressing room that was assigned to the women, and the men stayed in a narrow corridor, with exposed electric wires on the wall, in uncomfortable and risky conditions. In three events, the singers were assigned the restroom used by the employees of the venue, in precarious hygiene and lighting conditions and no privacy. In other two, the bands were assigned dressing rooms with no restrooms and had to wait for performance breaks to use the social restroom in the venue, along with the guests.

Regarding food, before the party the band members did not have any food available in the dressing rooms. When the performance began, water bottles in room temperature were provided and taken by the singers throughout the party. During the performance break, in four events, the caterers provided trays with fried foods and cold sodas. In one of the events, the band was served only at the end of the party (fried foods and sodas) which had the singers approximately 7 hours without eating. It was observed that 12.5% of the subject had cold distilled and fermented alcoholic beverages.

During the band's performance, 66% of the subjects sing while dancing and performing with stage props (stairs, structures, pillars and platforms).

Between performance sequences there are costume changes, while speaking, the entire time.

The repertoire is divided among the genders, and males are the busiest. Most musical arrangements call for back vocals (a supporting voice, simultaneous to the lead singer's voice, that does not go beyond the intensity of the solo singer and that may be performed by a singer on or off-stage), usually female and in 70.8% of the time performed from the dressing room, during costume change, most times with the head down and the chest brought forward during a change of blouse or dress; or during leg elevation or body unbalance while dressing clothes or putting on shoes, therefore without adequate posture.

In regard to voice care, the use of propolis throat spray (8.3%) and chewing gum (12.5%) during the first songs of the repertoire were observed, and the purpose of the chewing gum was to "release enunciation". One singer used a scarf around her neck when leaving the party venue.

After the party is over, all singers put away their belongings and 50% carry their luggage and objects to the bus. Only 41.6% of the singers restrict vocal use after the party and try to speak less and softer. The remaining 58.3% keep talking in the noisy party environment. None of the singers performed a vocal cool down routine.

Regarding the questionnaire, 75% reported performing vocal warm up and 25% vocal cool down; and 91.66% noticed changes in their voices during or after performance; the simultaneous occurrence of three or more changes happened in 20% of the subjects and only 41.6% reported having or having had a voice disorder.

Table 1 shows the distribution of voice changes noticed by the subjects during or after the performance.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of answers to how they evaluate the work environment.

Table 2 shows the results of the statistical analysis of the comparisons regarding gender, vocal warm up and cool down, related to voice changes during or after the performance.

Table 1 – Distribution of the answers regarding the perception of voice changes during or after performance

VOICE CHANGES	freq	%
vocal fatigue	11	45
hoarseness	10	41
voice breaks	7	29
loss of high notes	6	25
lower voice	6	25
phlegm	5	20
voice loss	4	16
air in voice	3	12
dry throat	3	12
weak voice	2	8
cough	1	4
higher-pitched voice	1	4
throat pain or burning	1	4

Below are the results of the interviews, where content analysis enabled the identification of the following categories: "Voice care"; "Sensations reported after the performance"; "How they feel being party band singers/perceptions about work".

Voice Care – Few subjects worry about voice behavior and care for their voices in their daily lives.

I don't take any specific care of my voice (H1R; H2R; H1T; H3T; M2L; H2L). The only time I am careful with my voice is during the party (H1O).I am not as careful as I should be (M2T).

I do vocal warm up before singing (M1S; H3S; M1O; M1R; M1T; M2T; M1A; H1A; H2A M1L; H1L). And cool down afterwards (M1S; M1R; M1T; H1A; H1L).

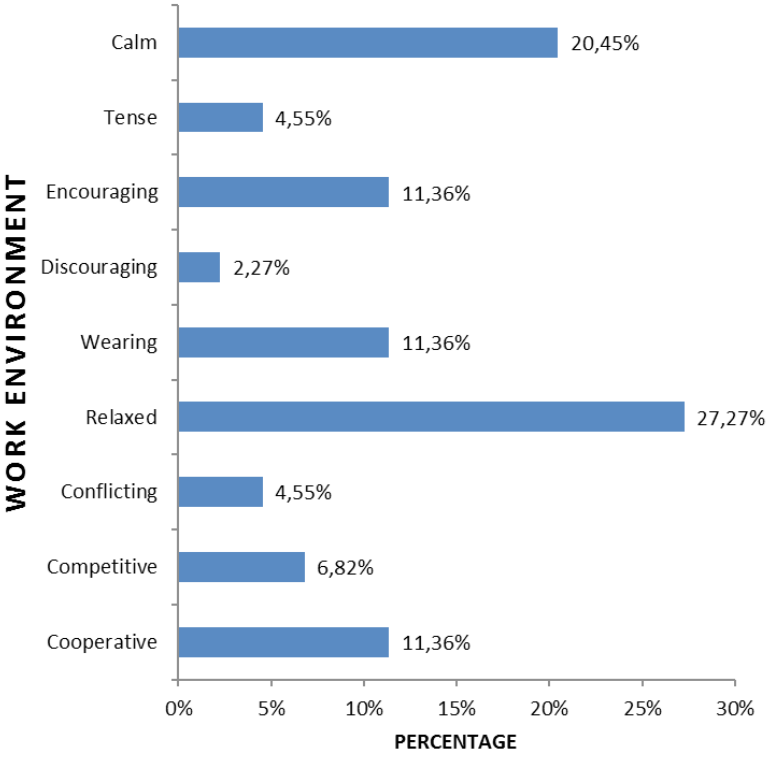

Figure 1 – descriptive analysis of the question: "how do you consider your social work environment?".

Table 2 – Results of statistical analyses conducted for the issues of gender, vocal warm up and cool down related to voice changes during or after performance

QUESTIONS	*p-value*
Vocal warm up and voice changes during or after performance	p=0.8667
Vocal cool down and voice changes during or after performance	p=0.1721
Gender and voice changes during or after performance	p=0.5551

Chi-square Test (**Fisher's Exact**) (p<0.05)

Not having cold beverages (M1S; H3S; H1O; M1R; H2T; M1A; M2A; H1L); I try to eat well (M1T). I avoid acid foods (M1S). Eating apples (H2S; MIO). Avoiding lactose (H2A); Body stretching (M1S); Drinking plenty of water (H1S; H2S; MIO; M2R; M2T; M1L); Resting, having a good night's sleep (M2O; M2R; M1T); Avoiding wind and smoke (M1R). I dress warmly and wear a scarf (H2T). I avoid cold winds (M1A); I don't smoke anymore (H2T). I avoid alcohol intake (H2A). I have a medical exam every year (M1A). I have singing lessons once a week (M1L).

I try to sing songs in my tone (M1A). Not speaking loudly (...) and less talking on performance day (H2A).Not speaking too much and not yelling too much (M2L; H2L).

Sensations reported after performance: After work, they feel general tiredness (physical and vocal), experience discomfort and notice voice changes such as vocal weariness/fatigue, hoarseness, roughness, dryness and pain; as well as body aches (mainly on legs, back/spine; feet, head and back of the neck).

My voice is thinner (...) a slight pressure on my throat (...) and burning (MIS). It is a bit hoarse and I think tired (H2S). My voice is slightly tired (H3S). I'm feeling my voice burning and it is tired (H10).Vocal fatigue (...) my voice is lower, opaque (...) a lot weaker (M1R). My voice is hoarse and breathy (H1R). Hoarse and tired (H2R). A bit tired (M1T: H1A). With a vocal fatigue, the voice gets a little lower (M1T). The voice is normal, a little bit tired, I feel a little roughness (M2T).The throat is a little dry (H1T) Difficulty speaking because the vocal folds are tired, and a little aphonic too (H2T). The voice is weak and is hoarse (H3T). It gets a little tired (M1A). Voice irritation (M2A). My throat is a little dry, I feel a bit of dryness and irritation (M1L). A little dryness and hoarseness (M2L). Very hoarse, very dry throat (H1L). A lot of hoarseness (H2L).

I am extremely tired (H1R). Physically I'm whipped (M2A).My body is pretty tired, my feet are hurting (MIS).General physical tiredness (H1A; H2L; H10). My body is tired, aching all over (H1S). Vocal tiredness, physical tiredness and leg pain (M1R). Tired, hoarse, in a nutshell: whipped (H1R). A little tired (M2R; H3S; H2T). Tired, hoarse, feeling that I have several "demons inside me" (H2R). My feet hurt, my feet soles hurt, I'm pretty tired (M2T). I'm feeling a bit of pain in my leg (H2S). feet ache (M1T; M1A). My spine hurts (H2T). Back pain and general tiredness (H3T). My leg hurts, my neck hurts and a bit of a headache (H2A). A little bit of pain at the back of my neck (M1L). Feet ache, backache and tiredness, I'm sleepy and tired all over (M2L)

How they feel being party band singers/ Perceptions about work: The work of party band singers involves both positive and negative aspects. Among the negative ones, they endure suffering and difficulties (including financial ones). Among the positive aspects, there is the fact that the job offers constant learning, experience and challenges; in addition to being a source of pleasure, accomplishment and satisfaction:

The life of a party band singer has a lot of suffering, it is difficult because we need to interpret each song in a different way (...) so there is a lot of strain on the voice (H1O). It is singing and being several styles in a single night (H1S). There is a very short-timed break, you need to change and get onstage in time for your song, whether you are tired or not; sing, interpret, dance. It is much faster and much more tiresome than being simply a singer (M1S). It is giving up a lot in life (H3T). One of the main "cons" is that we can't make ends meet doing just this, and it is also so intense, it is just so tiresome, but the positive aspects make up for the negative ones (H1A).

It is constant learning (H2R; H1L; M2T; M2L). It is a school, in addition to improving my body and artistic expression, my singing (H2S). It is a great education, both musically and socially; you are around different people and you also learn a lot in terms of body and being outgoing (H3S). It is being very eclectic (M2T). It is bringing joy to people, acquiring more stage and repertoire experience and growing professionally (M1R). It is learning, perception, freedom with the audience (M1T). It is learning a lot about music (H3T). It is a unique experience; we have the opportunity to sing several styles, several segments and songs (M2A). It is to be able to perfect a little of your voice, the techniques, the body work the mind work, each day (M1L). It helps to develop the people, and to be around other people (M2L).

I love what I do (H1R; H2A). I really like being a party band singer (M2A). I like this life a lot, I think it is a very nice business to work in, the spirits are always up, always surrounded

by beautiful people in a nice environment (H1A). I feel accomplished (MIO). It is having a passion and following this passion (M2O). It is a way of expressing my joy (H1L). It is pleasurable (H2L). To me it's a blessing (M1A). It is pure satisfaction (H1T).

DISCUSSION

As far as age, it is known that party band singers are usually young subjects, which is in agreement with studies about night singers [11]. They are in the maximum vocal efficiency cycle that ranges from 25 to 40 years of age[12]. Only 3 subjects are older than 40, age where structural laryngeal disorders begin to occur, with greater or smaller impact of aging on the voice – considering that aging varies from person to person depending on general health and life history, in addition to constitutional, racial, hereditary, feeding, social, environmental and lifestyle factors[12,13].

The fact that they carry suitcases and luggage while speaking along the way may characterize a laryngeal overload before professional voice use. Muscle strain and physical strength exercises should not be performed along with speech and vocalizations as they are generators of laryngeal tension[14].

Likewise, voice imitations impressions may be harmful[14] taking place during the entire period between arrival and preparation for the party. Vocal rest would be an interesting practice to adopt before intense professional use. Silence is healthy and a factor of voice preservation for those who have it as a work tool, as it avoids unnecessary wear and elevates the potential of voice quality, evidencing the properties referring to sound, brightness, harmonic richness and vocal purity, essential to a musical performance..

Yelling is recognized as a vocal abuse and should be avoided, since it yields a concentration of tension around the neck area, with excessive tension and contraction of laryngeal muscles (strong glottal closure, constriction of the aryepiglottic folds, strong tension of the lateral and posterior walls of the pharynx and tongue retraction) that generates a vocal overload and increases the risk of submucosal hemorrhages, edemas and lesions of the vocal folds[14].

Vocal warm up and cool down are essential for vocal health and longevity; however the data from observation and the answers from the subjects show that they recognize the need but do not perform the routines.

Night singers' failure to perform vocal warm up is confirmed by literature [1,15,16]. The warm up conducted by only a few subjects does not follow a minimum program and its total time proved shorter than recommended for the category, which would be of 30 minutes[17]. Vocal warm up should be accomplished by everyone before professional voice use in order to preserve vocal health, avoid strain and overload, increase muscle temperature and blood flow, improve vocal performance, favor mucosal vibration and flexibility, increase intensity, the fundamental frequency, harmonics, projection and vocal quality, decreasing noise[17,18]. Vocal cool down favors the transition from professional voice adjustments to habitual speech; and the lack of this practice confirms the findings of studies involving popular singers [16].

In regard to eating habits, it is known that fried foods or those rich in fat favor gastroesophageal and laryngeal-pharyngeal reflux (as well as vocal irritations) and delay digestion, and a slow digestion interferes in diaphragm movement making it harder to breathe, in addition to decreasing the available energy for singing[14]. Not eating for a long period of time is also harmful as it increases stomach acidity and favors heartburn.

Concerning drinks, fizzy drinks such as sodas favor gastric distension due to gas, harming vocal control[14]. Alcoholic beverages irritate the phonation apparatus, are aggressive to tissues and its anesthetic effect may mask pain and vocal discomfort, favoring abuse and worsening vocal quality [14].

In spite of the sensitivity to cold temperature being individual, it is known that icy food and drinks cause a thermic shock on the larynx and a discharge of mucus as well as vocal fold edema, and their intake is not advised during professional voice use [14].

The intake of cold water could occur only at the end of the party, after performances; followed by vocal rest – only by those subjects less sensitive to cold and who do not experience discomfort or voice changes because of icy beverage consumption[14].

The performances by party band singers demands intense physical activity and vocal and body co-expressivity; that puts the organism in a condition of high energy consumption, and increases the need for proteins, oxygen and carbohydrates[19]. Proteins provide muscle strength and vigor; and carbohydrates that, in providing energy, reduce fatigue and its effects (contraction reduction, loss of elasticity, increase in muscle rigidity, inflammatory responses and edemas) that cause loss in vocal quality. Potassium rich foods are also important sources for capturing energy for singers with long periods of vocal activity who needs to keep himself hydrated[19].

The food consumed by party band singers should provide hydration, proteins and carbohydrates to avoid and reduce fatigue and provide a faster recovery of the body and voice. Proteins are present in meats, eggs and dairy. Potassium may be obtained from foods such as coconut water, sugar cane juice, banana, beet, pear, melon, orange, kiwi, papaya and dried fruit[19]. Other foods such as fresh fruit and vegetable juices such as orange, grape, apple, watermelon, melon and beet provide hydration and carbohydrates [20].

The foods offered to the singers by the caterers are part of the party menus and are inadequate for singers or whoever uses their voice professionally or will rest after work, for fizzy drinks and fatty foods may increase stomach acidity during the process of digestion and cause reflux and discomfort, affecting general and vocal health as well as sleep quality[14,21]. This would be an additional factor to the problem of insufficient sleep and rest, common among popular singers[16].

Thus, not only party band members but also their producers, managers, responsible parties at the caterers and event planners should receive guidance regarding the necessary conditions for the work, performance and health promotion of artists.

When the work agreement between the band and the event planners or producers is signed, some conditions regarding type, characteristics and quality of the food to be served to the singers could be clarified; as well as the moment when these foods would be served and substituted. When signing the contract with the band, the event planners could receive guidance from a basic menu that contains healthy food that are rich in proteins, energy and easy to digest.

In this perspective, some suggestions of food that could be offered would be, for example, fruits such as grape, orange, apple, watermelon, melon, banana, kiwi and papaya; healthy sandwiches (whole-wheat bread, turkey breast or tuna fish, shredded carrots, lettuce and white low-fat cheese) and light pasta entrees (whole-wheat pasta with meat or marinara sauce). Cereal bars with fruit and dried fruits are also an option. Drinks could be: natural or flavored water, coconut water, natural fruit juices such as grape, orange, apple, watermelon, melon or pear; in addition to apple or orange tea, for example, that are very low in caffeine (provided that they are not made from black or *mate* tea). It should be noted that the foods mentioned here are only a few among many possibilities and that each singer may have specific needs, preferences, tastes and feeding issues that should be assessed by a nutrition professional that can provide assistance and guidance in elaborating the best menu for each band.

The subjects' vocal behavior during breaks and costume changes is deleterious to the voice, especially because of the noisy environment that favors sound competition with volume raise and vocal strain[14]. These moments should be used for promotion of vocal health, if vocal rest, body and vocal exercises were prioritized.

In regard to *propolis* spray, its composition usually contains alcohol that has negative effects in drying the mucosa. *Propolis* is a natural antibiotic and its use is not recommended in the absence of a bacterial infection.

Using chewing gum for enunciation reveals the lack of an adequate vocal warm up program. Furthermore its use is harmful to the normal and harmonic functioning of the stomatognathic system, alters the functional pattern of orofacial motricity and causes/worsens dental occlusion problems[22].

The findings in this study confirm the fact that professional voice care and vocal use conditions of night and party band singers is precarious[1,6,15,16]. On the other hand, taking the time to protect the neck with a scarf minimizes the impact of temperature change between the internal and external environments during the early morning hours, and is therefore very positive.

Content analysis showed that, in general, the singers do not care for their voices and/or restrain themselves to the circumstances of the party; therefore, care is insufficient for health promotion and professional voice use. The subjects are not pro-active in taking care of their voices[23].

The importance of Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) care for this category should be stressed, as the SLP is the reference professional regarding voice care and promotion of vocal health [24].

The relationship between body ache and vocal use has been approached in studies with voice professional and popular singers, focusing on the pain that are near the region of the larynx, throat pain, neck pain and pain while speaking [25,26].

Table 1 showed that the subjects' perception regarding voice changes during or after the performance are varied and involve functional aspects of voice production, discomforts and a great occurrence of aspects related to self-perception and auditory parameters, linked to disorders in voice quality such as hoarseness, voice breaks, loss of high notes and lower voice. The discomforts and changes perceived in the voice correspond to those noticed by teachers[27] who have intense voice use in unfavorable environmental and work conditions, and the prevalence of fatigue is alarming, as it is indicative of risk of voice disorder, in the same way

as the simultaneous occurrence of three or more changes.

The lack of consistency between the perception of altered voices due to workload (voice changes during or after performance) and of seeing oneself as having a voice disorder evidences the subjects' difficulties in interpreting and recognizing the vocal health/illness process.

In regard to the work environment, the positive assessments prevailed (relaxed, calm, cooperative and encouraging), albeit the fact of being "wearing" (Figure 1).

The statistical analysis of the comparisons regarding gender, vocal warm up and cool down, in relation to voice changes during or after performance did not have a significant difference at the 5% level; which means there was no significant association. It should be noted that the small size of the sample may not have favored the analyses and that future studies should be conducted with bigger samples.

Several work condition aspects endanger the vocal health of party band singers and predispose them to dysphonia, as evidenced in other studies involving singers [28].

However, on the other hand, band singers can count on favorable aspects such as mutual support and social interaction – positively assessed – that may be factors of protection against the occupational stress to which this category is exposed.

FINAL REMARKS

Party band singers perform a wearing job under precarious conditions of infrastructure, support, feeding and facilities that generate difficulties and suffering. However, they have social support from the band members, and perceive their work as challenging and providing of learning and experience, as a source of pleasure, accomplishment and satisfaction.

The subjects have inadequate habits, behaviors and not enough care for their voices, and experience conditions that may put them at vocal risk. Consequently, they feel discomfort, disadvantages and notice vocal changes deriving from their workload.

Party band singers need educational actions in health and Speech-Language Pathology interventions that will focus on aspects of voice production, work and professional voice use, the determining and intervening factors of the vocal health/illness process, of vocal well-being and health, vocal care (mainly eating and vocal warm up and cool down programs); and that should be extended to the entire party band team in a perspective of bringing about changes and promotion of workers' health.

This study contributed to knowing the work reality of party band singers in the relationships with professional voice use and vocal health and may subsidize future Speech-Language Pathology interventions with this category of professional voice users.

RESUMO

Objetivo: caracterizar as condições de trabalho e de uso profissional da voz de cantores de banda de baile. **Métodos:** são sujeitos 24 cantores de banda de baile (13 homens e 11 mulheres) das seis bandas de baile da cidade de Piracicaba (SP). O levantamento de dados foi feito por meio de observação *in loco*, questionário e entrevista. Os dados do questionário receberam tratamento estatístico: Teste de Qui-quadrado e Teste Exato de Fisher. As respostas das entrevistas foram transcritas para Análise de Conteúdo. **Resultados:** cantores de bandas de baile vivenciam dificuldades e precariedades nas condições de infraestrutura, suporte, apoio, acomodação e alimentação nos locais dos eventos, que conferem risco à saúde vocal. A maioria percebe mudanças na voz durante ou após o baile. Os hábitos, comportamentos e cuidados com a voz, bem como o aquecimento vocal, são realizados de madeira inadequada e insuficiente. Apesar disto, evidenciam-se vários aspectos positivos no trabalho, como o apoio social e ambiente descontraído, tranquilo, cooperativo e motivador, além da percepção positiva do trabalho como fonte de aprendizado, experiência, prazer, satisfação e realização. As condições de trabalho se mostram desfavoráveis ao uso profissional da voz e à promoção da saúde. A análise estatística dos dados do questionário não mostrou associação significante ao nível de significância de 0,05. **Conclusão:** a pesquisa contribuiu para o conhecimento da realidade de trabalho dos cantores de bandas de baile nas relações com o uso profissional da voz e saúde vocal e pode subsidiar futuras ações de intervenção e de assessoria fonoaudiológica junto à categoria, na perspectiva da promoção da saúde do trabalhador.

DESCRITORES: Fonoaudiologia; Voz; Música; Saúde do Trabalhador; Promoção da Saúde

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