

A Survey on Vocal Hygiene Practices among Female Primary School Teachers in Sri Lanka

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Introduction

- Teachers have the highest demand on their voice among other professional voice users.
- Vocal hygiene is an indirect approach that identifies the risk factors of Voice Disorders and prevents the risk to get Voice Disorders.
- Vocal Hygiene practices used by primary school teachers can be effectively used to maintain the demand of the profession, social life and psychological state.

Objectives

- To survey the vocal hygiene practices among female primary school teachers
- To describe the current level of vocal hygiene practices among female primary school teachers.
- To describe factors affecting vocal hygiene practices among female primary school teachers.

Materials and Methods

Data Set: Used Quantitative descriptive cross-sectional study on female primary school teachers aged between 30-55 years in Minuwangoda Educational Zone from 31st of December 2018 to 14th of July 2019 .

Sampling Techniques: Simple random sampling and purposive sampling methods

Study Instrument: Self administered questionnaire

Data Analysis: Used excel and SPSS version 22. Frequency analysis was used to analyze the vocal hygiene practices of participants and the factors that affect vocal hygiene practices.

Results

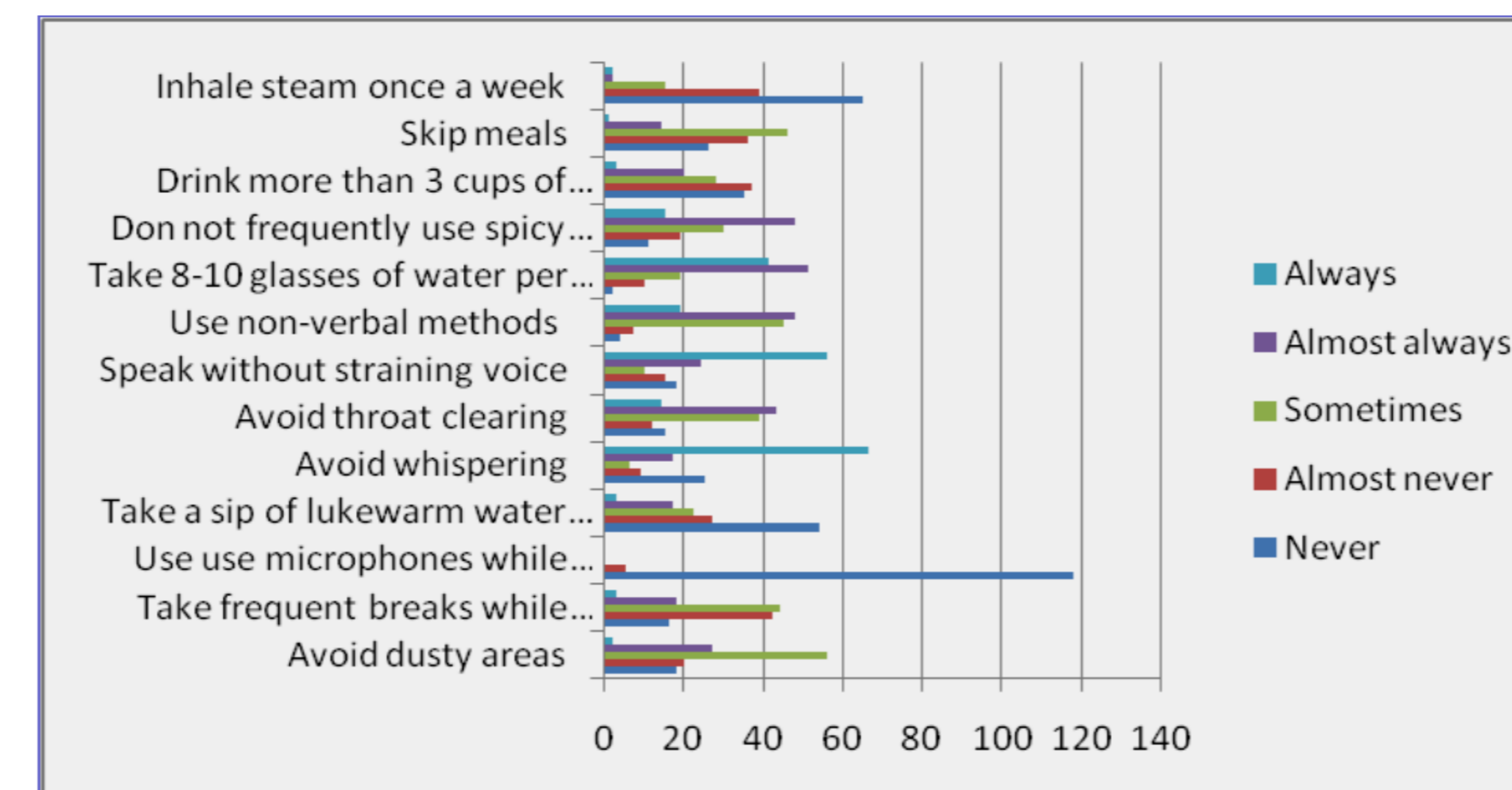


Figure 01— Vocal hygiene practices

- Majority of the participants always avoid whispering and straining their voice while talking (53.7% and 45.5% respectively).
- Interestingly, majority of participants never use microphones while teaching (95.9%), never take a sip of lukewarm water while teaching (43.9%) and never inhale steam once a week (52.8).

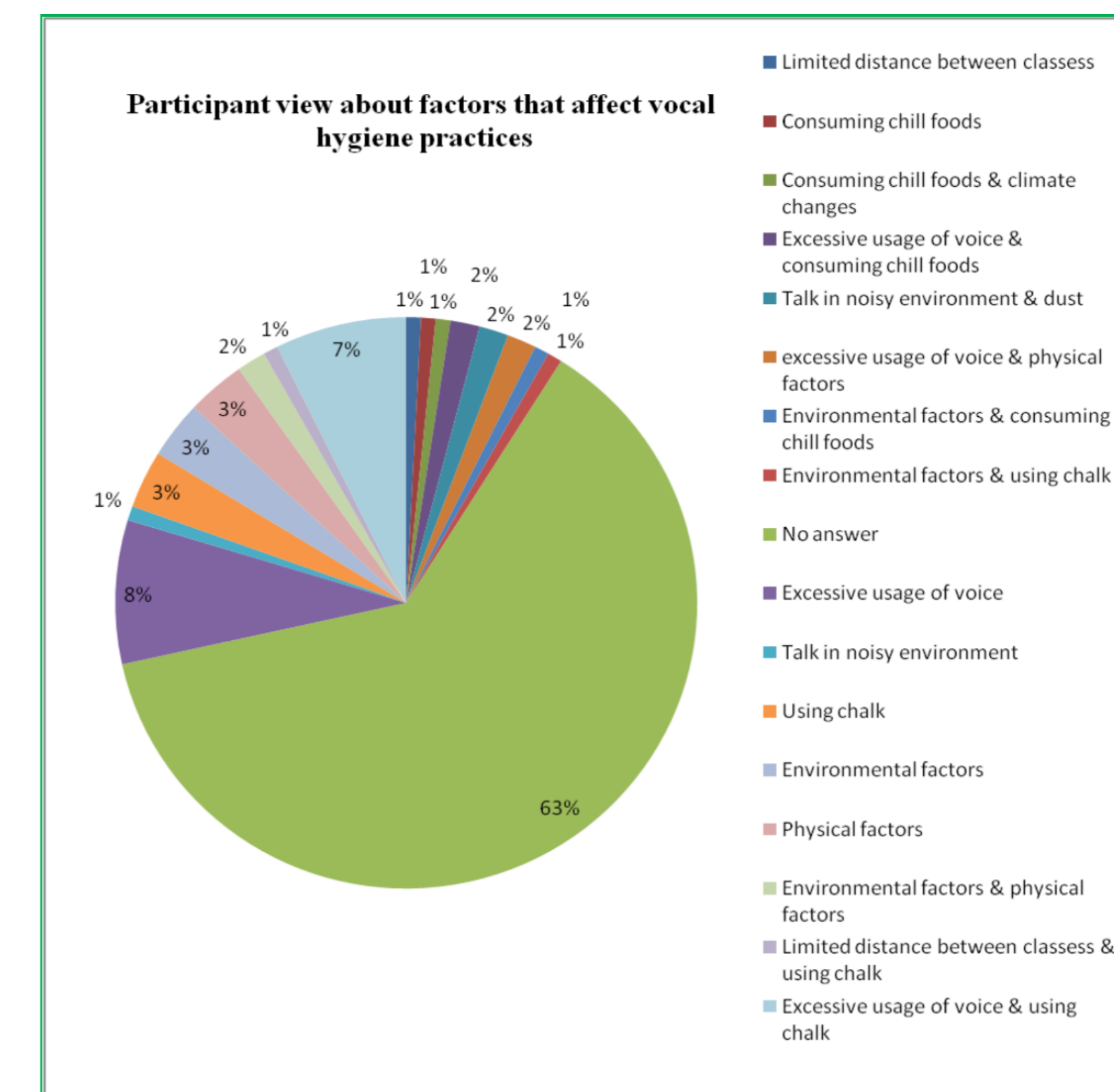


Figure 02—Factors that affect vocal hygiene practices (Open-ended question)

A majority of participants (62.6%) did not provide answers as 8.1% of the participants said that excessive voice usage is the cause affecting vocal hygiene practices.

Table 01 – Factors that affect vocal hygiene factors

Factor	Yes		No		No idea	
	N:	%	N:	%	N:	%
Cough and/or common cold	117	95.1	6	4.9	-	-
Vocal exercises like warm up exercises	101	82.1	6	4.9	16	13.0
Stress and/or depression	84	68.3	29	23.6	10	8.1
Unhealthy dietary patterns	83	67.5	24	19.5	16	13.0
Speaking against background noise	118	95.9	4	3.3	1	0.8
Irregular sleep patterns	47	38.2	40	32.5	36	29.3

From the total, majority of participants think that cough and/or common cold (95.1%), stress and/or depression (68.3%), vocal exercises like warm-up exercises (82.1%), irregular sleep patterns (38.2%), speaking against background noise (95.9%) and unhealthy dietary patterns (67.5%) may affect their ability to sustain vocal hygiene.

Conclusion

- The participants have more vocal abusive habits as they whisper while talking, do not avoid dusty areas, do not take frequent breaks while teaching, do not use microphones while teaching, do not take a sip of water while teaching, do not inhale steam once a week and skip meals.
- Although the majority of participants were aware about the factors that might affect vocal hygiene practices, a very few number of participants were used to practice vocal hygiene habits respectively.

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