

Performance Related Musculoskeletal Disorders in Bassoon Players

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Declaration

I, Paula Brusky, hereby declare that this submission is my own work. It contains no material previously published or written by another person except for properly acknowledged research. This thesis contains no material that has been previously submitted for the award of a degree.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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Abstract

Performance related musculoskeletal disorders (PRMDs) are a frequent reality for practicing musicians. Many aspects of the bassoon make bassoon players particularly susceptible to PRMDs. This thesis explored the prevalence of PRMDs among bassoon players and assessed the frequency, types, and locations of PRMDs. Also identified were treatments used for PRMDs, contributing factors to PRMD development, and the perceptions of the bassoon community regarding PRMDs.

The *International Bassoonist Questionnaire* was distributed via the World Wide Web ($n = 166$, 58% male, 42% female). Eighty-six percent of bassoon players reported PRMDs. Pain was the most common PRMD symptom reported (78%). Females reported PRMDs (96%) more frequently than males (78%). Younger bassoon players reported more PRMDs.

Most bassoon players (88%) were attempting to treat their PRMDs. The most common self-administered treatments were rest (60%) and reducing playing time (53%). Bassoonists attributed the cause of PRMDs to “long hours of practice” and “sudden increase in playing time.”

Bassoon players felt strongly that the medical profession did not know how to treat a bassoon related injury. They believed that a knowledgeable teacher was the best resource against the onset of PRMDs even though technical aspects of playing were not identified as significant contributors to PRMDs. The bassoon playing population needs more information about PRMDs in order to develop treatment and prevention strategies.

Table of Contents

Declaration.....	i
Acknowledgments.....	ii
Abstract.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Appendices.....	ix
List of Figures.....	x
List of Tables.....	xii
1 Background to the Study.....	1
1.1 The Bassoon – Introduction to a Menace.....	2
1.2 Research Questions.....	6
1.3 Abbreviations.....	7
1.4 Definitions.....	8
1.5 Structure of the Thesis.....	9
2 Literature Review.....	10
2.1 Historical Development of Performing Arts Medicine.....	11
2.2 Types of Injuries Sustained by Musicians.....	14
2.3 Influential Factors to PRMD Development.....	19
2.4 Orchestral Musician Studies.....	23
2.5 Bassoon Specific Literature.....	25
2.6 Conclusion.....	32
3 Methodology.....	34
3.1 Using the Internet to Distribute a Survey.....	34
3.2 Ethics.....	36

3.3	Establishing the Web Site.....	36
3.4	Creating the <i>International Bassoonist Questionnaire</i>	39
3.4.1	Piloting the Questionnaire	46
3.5	Recruiting Participants	48
3.6	Collecting the Data.....	50
3.7	Handling the Data	50
3.8	Analyzing the Data.....	53
3.9	Conclusion	55
4	Results – PRMD Frequency, Severity, Location.....	56
4.1	Demographics of Sample	56
4.1.1	Gender.....	57
4.1.2	Age	57
4.1.3	Playing Experience.....	59
4.2	Injury and PRMD Information	62
4.2.1	Severity of PRMDs.....	65
4.2.2	Frequency of PRMDs	66
4.3	PRMD Symptoms	70
4.3.1	PRMD – Pain	71
4.3.1.1	Pain and Gender	73
4.3.1.2	Pain and Age	74
4.3.2	PRMD – Tingling.....	75
4.3.3	PRMD – Numbness.....	77
4.3.4	PRMD – Loss of Dexterity	78
4.3.5	PRMD – Weakness.....	80

4.3.6	PRMD – Loss of Flexibility.....	81
4.4	Injury and PRMD Locations.....	83
4.4.1	Body Regions.....	83
4.4.2	Extent of Body Compromise.....	86
4.4.3	Specific Locations.....	88
4.5	Conclusion.....	97
5	Results – Treatments, Contributing Factors, Perceptions.....	100
5.1	Treatments Used.....	100
5.1.1	Experimenting with Treatments.....	103
5.1.2	Professionals Consulted.....	104
5.2	Contributing Factors to PRMD Development.....	109
5.2.1	Contributing Factor Categories.....	112
5.2.2	Impact of Gender on Contributing Factors.....	122
5.2.3	Impact of Age on Contributing Factors.....	126
5.3	Perceptions of PRMDs.....	130
5.4	Conclusion.....	137
6	Discussion and Conclusion.....	140
6.1	Discussion on Injury and PRMD Symptoms.....	140
6.2	Detailed Future Studies.....	143
6.3	Gender Inequity.....	145
6.4	Age Considerations.....	147
6.5	PRMD Individuality.....	148
6.6	Treatment Shortcomings.....	149
6.7	New Perspectives.....	152

6.8 Conclusion	154
7 References	156

List of Appendices

APPENDIX A: Evolution Of The Bassoon	169
APPENDIX B: Ethics Approval Letter	178
APPENDIX C: Pages From Website.....	180
APPENDIX D: Paper Survey For Ethics Approval	184
APPENDIX E: <i>International Bassoonist Questionnaire</i>	194
APPENDIX F: Flyer To Recruit Participants	220
APPENDIX G: Journal Article - <i>The Double Reed</i>	221
APPENDIX H: Email To Recruit Participants	222
APPENDIX I: Codebook Sample	223
APPENDIX J: Specific Locations Comprising Body Regions.....	228

List of Figures

Figure 1: Angle of bassoon while playing	3
Figure 2: Excerpt from flute EMG survey identifying PRMD body locations.....	44
Figure 3: Head and neck region in <i>IBQ</i>	45
Figure 4: Back, chest, and shoulders region in <i>IBQ</i>	45
Figure 5: Age distribution of sample in years.....	58
Figure 6: Mean age and range differences between genders	59
Figure 7: Percentage of bassoonists that reported each PRMD symptom.....	64
Figure 8: Percentage of each gender that reported PRMDs in each body region	68
Figure 9: Mean age of players without and with PRMDs for each body region	69
Figure 10: Percentage of bassoonists that reported pain	72
Figure 11: Mean and range of pain severity experienced by gender.....	74
Figure 12: Percentage of bassoonists that reported tingling	76
Figure 13: Percentage of bassoonists that reported numbness.....	77
Figure 14: Percentage of bassoonists that reported loss of dexterity	79
Figure 15: Percentage of bassoonists that reported weakness	80
Figure 16: Percentage of bassoonists that reported loss of flexibility.....	82
Figure 17: Percentage of bassoonists that reported PRMDs in each body region	84
Figure 18: Percentage of each gender that reported PRMDs in multiple body regions...	85
Figure 19: <i>IBQ</i> head and neck region.....	89
Figure 20: <i>IBQ</i> back, chest, and shoulders region.....	91
Figure 21: <i>IBQ</i> legs, hips, and feet region	96
Figure 22: Means for “time” contributing factors.....	113
Figure 23: Contribution percentages for “time” factors	114

Figure 24: Means for “physicality” contributing factors..... 116

Figure 25: Contribution percentages for “physicality” factors 117

Figure 26: Means for “life” contributing factors..... 118

Figure 27: Contribution percentages for “life” factors 120

Figure 28: Means for “technical” contributing factors..... 121

Figure 29: Contribution percentages for “technical” factors 122

List of Tables

Table 1: Percentage of bassoonists that reported multiple PRMD symptoms.....	65
Table 2: Mean severity for each PRMD symptom.....	66
Table 3: Mean age by the number of PRMD symptoms reported	70
Table 4: Percentage of bassoonists that reported PRMDs in multiple body regions	84
Table 5: Percentage of bassoonists for each “number of body locations” category	87
Table 6: Mean ages for the “number of body locations” categories	87
Table 7: Percentage of bassoonists that reported head and neck locations	89
Table 8: Percentage of bassoonists that reported back, chest, and shoulder locations.....	91
Table 9: Percentage of bassoonists that reported right arm locations	92
Table 10: Percentage of bassoonists that reported left arm locations	92
Table 11: Percentage of bassoonists that reported right hand locations.....	94
Table 12: Percentage of bassoonists that reported left hand locations.....	94
Table 13: Percentage of bassoonists that reported legs, hips, and feet locations.....	96
Table 14: Percentage of bassoonists that tried common treatments.....	101
Table 15: Percentage of bassoonists that tried multiple common treatments.....	104
Table 16: Percentage of bassoonists that consulted different types of professionals.....	105
Table 17: Percentage of bassoonists that consulted multiple professionals	108
Table 18: Factors believed to contribute to the development of PRMDs.....	110
Table 19: Gender differences for contributing factors	123
Table 20: Age group differences for contributing factors	127
Table 21: Bassoon players level of agreement to perception statements	131