

Audiological characteristics, attitudes and habits of Brazilian young adults and noise

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The objective of this study was to examine behaviors and attitudes of Brazilian teenagers towards noise and determine their audiological characteristics. Participants were 245 young men and women between 14 and 18 years old who attended private school in Brazil. Behaviors and attitudes were measured using the validated Brazilian Portuguese version of the 'Youth Attitude to Noise Scale (YANS)' The hearing of a sub-sample of 24 participants was evaluated by pure-tone audiometry and distortion-product otoacoustic emissions. The most common source of exposure reported by participants was music played through personal media players. Forty-two percent of the participants indicated listening to personal mediaplayers daily, 29 % reported listening several days a week, and 21 % used them periodically. Temporary tinnitus was reported by 69 % of the participants after attending disco clubs, music concerts, and listening to music through headphones. Female participants had a statistically significant more positive attitude towards noise than males. Only four teenagers (1.6 %) reported hearing protector use. Among the 24 participants who underwent hearing tests, 3 young women had abnormal results: one (4 %) had a middle ear problem while two (8 %) had bilateral audiometric notches at 6 kHz. Only three participants (12 %) had DPOAE responses bilaterally at all frequencies; the remaining participants had absent responses at one or more frequencies. Comparative studies between countries can elucidate differences in cultural background, socio-economic status, and educational efforts which can impact attitudes and behaviors towards risk and aid in the development of effective hearing conservation initiatives.

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