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assessments completed by an experienced voice-specialized speech-language pathologist to validate the self-reported healthy vocal status of the participants during recruitment. A concern of the study is the relatively small sample size in both the Pittsburgh and Hong Kong research sites, in part due to attrition. Due to the small sample size and descriptive analyses being performed only, these findings cannot be generalized to the larger population of student teachers. Also, due to logistical constraints, there was no eight-week follow-up data obtained at the Hong Kong site.

In light of the small sample size, these findings offer

techniques in some capacity, empowering them to gain control over their own voice health. The significant findings from studies combining indirect and direct treatment highlight the importance of both informing teachers of appropriate vocal care, and teaching them how to incorporate these practices in the workplace.

The inclusion of primarily female participants in these studies reflect the status quo in the current teaching profession with substantially more female teachers employed in elementary schools (OCT, Professionally Speaking, 2007; National Center for Education Statistics, 2006); therefore, many of these findings are generalizable to the greater population.

Recommendations

Follow-up studies need to be conducted in order to determine the long-term impact of the implementation of preventive vocal hygiene education with teachers. Ideally, research could be conducted in school districts globally where Employee Occupational Health and Safety Voice Care programs for teachers currently exist (e.g. “Voice Care for Teachers Program”, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, State of Victoria, Australia). This research could potentially reveal the optimal treatment protocols for effective preventive vocal hygiene training for teachers.

Clinical Implications

In collaboration with Speech-Language Pathologists and Employee Occupational Health and Safety boards, the professional development of teachers in Voice Care Programs should be considered by administrators in education. As a part of their professional preparation, student teachers would ideally be required to participate in primary prevention vocal hygiene training within faculty of education programs.

References

Bermudez de Alvear, R.M. Bron, F.J., & Martinez-Arquero, A.G., (2011)

