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Performance anxiety experiences and coping techniques of Turkish music students and their teachers

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Abstract

This study investigated the music performance anxiety experiences of musicians in Turkey ($N = 270$), including their physical and cognitive symptoms of anxiety, their methods of coping with performance stress, and their perceived need for related resources. Analysis of the data revealed statistically significant differences in gender, with female music students reporting more frequent performance anxiety symptoms than male students. Reported physical and cognitive symptoms varied across age groups. The anxiety management solutions mentioned most frequently among students included increasing practice and self-motivation; other solutions included engaging in informal performances, practicing meditation or breathing exercises, or relying on medication or alcohol. Almost a quarter (23.5%) of students surveyed indicated they do not know how to manage their anxiety or have not found a workable solution. When asked what additional resources were needed, a third of music students and half of the music teachers surveyed indicated a desire for greater psychological support in the music schools. Others expressed interest in new courses on performance psychology, working with an expert in the field, participating in more required performance events, and having wider access to books and printed resources.

Keywords

Performance anxiety, stage fright, stress, Turkey, Turkish music students

How do Turkish musicians perceive music performance anxiety? What symptoms do they experience, if any, and how do they cope with these challenges? What resources do students desire as part of their music education programs? Few answers are found in the current literature. While the research on music performance anxiety is generally robust, the perspectives of Turkish musicians

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warrant greater attention. This article describes the performance anxiety experiences of musicians in three cities in Turkey. A study of these musicians ($N = 270$) investigated their prior physical and cognitive symptoms of anxiety, their methods of managing performance stress, and their perceived need for additional resources. The anxiety management solutions utilized by these musicians and their desire for greater psychological support are worthy of further investigation.

Music performance anxiety

Performance anxiety affects musicians of all ages, all over the world. This phenomenon, classified as a form of social anxiety in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5th edition (*DSM-5*), includes nervousness about social situations involving real or imagined public scrutiny (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The apprehension associated with a musical performance can result in unwanted physical, psychological, and/or behavioral responses among musicians of all ages and levels of ability. Salmon's (1990) frequently cited definition of music performance anxiety is "the experience of persisting, distressful apprehension about and/or actual impairment of, performance skills in a public context, to a degree unwarranted given the individual's musical aptitude, training, and level of preparation" (p. 3). This succinct definition is widely accepted in the literature, in part because it infers a distinction between music performance anxiety and the nervousness that may be triggered by insufficient preparation. It does not, however, account for the varied ages of the musicians or the fact that musical aptitude may vary widely. Kenny (2011) offers an alternative definition:

Music performance anxiety is the experience of marked and persistent anxious apprehension related to musical performance that has arisen through underlying biological and/or psychological vulnerabilities and/or specific anxiety-conditioning experiences. It is manifested through combinations of affective, cognitive, somatic and behavioral symptoms. It may occur in a range of performance settings, but is usually more severe in settings involving high ego investment, evaluative threat (audience), and fear of failure. It may be focal (i.e. focused only on music performance), or occur comorbidly with other anxiety disorders, in particular social phobia. It affects musicians across the lifespan and is at least partially independent of years of training, practice, and level of musical accomplishment. It may or may not impair the quality of the music performance. (p. 61)

We apply Kenny's definition in the context of this study because it does not limit performance anxiety to age, experience, or level of musical accomplishment.

The research on music performance anxiety is abundant. Most studies are necessarily limited to the analysis of reported symptoms and experiences. Many utilize general anxiety inventories such as Spielberger's State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger, 1983), even though these were not designed specifically for performers. Music performance anxiety inventories include the Performance Anxiety Inventory (Nagel et al., 1989), the Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventory (Kenny et al., 2004), and the Music Performance Anxiety Inventory for Adolescents (Osborne & Kenny, 2005). The majority of anxiety management approaches involve short-term phenomenological techniques including cognitive-behavioral and psychodynamic approaches (Juncos & Markman, 2016; Kendrick et al., 1982; McGinnis & Milling, 2005; Nagel, 2010; Nagel et al., 1989; Ostwald, 1987; Steptoe & Fidler, 1987) and mind-body approaches (Chang et al., 2003; Esplen & Hodnett, 1999; Khalsa et al., 2009). Fortunately for music educators, many recent studies have focused specifically on the experiences of children and adolescent musicians (Fehm & Schmidt, 2006; Kenny & Osborne, 2006; Ryan, 2004, 2005; Ryan & Andrews, 2009).

The literature on performance anxiety among Turkish musicians has expanded in recent years. Literature reviews have been provided by Baydağ and Başoğlu (2018), Çirakoğlu (2013), Alptekin

(2012), and Çimen (2001). The most common inventories used are the Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventory adapted to Turkish by Tokinan (2013) and Yurdabakan and Aydın (2017), and the Performance Anxiety Scale for Music Students developed by Çırakoğlu and Coşkun Şentürk (2013). Akel and Düger (2007) studied the psychosocial risk factors of musicians in Turkey and concluded that university music students exhibited high levels of physical exertion, risk of musculoskeletal injuries, and psychosocial stress compared to non-musicians. A study by Gürşen Otacioğlu (2016) found a negative correlation between music performance anxiety and levels of academic success in Turkish university music students. Coşkun-Şentürk and Çırakoğlu (2018) found that gender, coping strategies, and guilt/shame orientation were predictors of performance anxiety in university-level Turkish music students. Specifically, musicians who were female, who exhibited helpless and submissive coping strategies, and/or who demonstrated a strong shame orientation were more likely to experience music performance anxiety. Other studies suggesting that women experience music performance anxiety more frequently than men include Aydın and İşgörür (2018), Baydağ and Alpagut (2016), Çırakoğlu and Coşkun Şentürk (2013), Güdek and Çiçek (2017), Güven (2017), and Yöndem (2007). Turkish studies have, in general, focused on university-level students and on the experiences of anxiety rather than coping strategies.

Music education in Turkey

Şahin and Duman (2008) offer three classifications of music education in modern Turkey: music education in primary and secondary schools, music education in colleges dedicated to training music teachers, and music education in colleges dedicated to training performing artists. Uçan (1997) classified music programs in Turkey as general, amateur, or professional depending on the objectives of the program. Professional music education programs are offered at the secondary and tertiary levels, and are designed for musicians who wish to become music performers or educators. This research project focused on students enrolled in these professional education programs.

Turkish students may pursue professional music programs in fine arts high schools, conservatories, undergraduate music education departments, or undergraduate faculties of fine arts. Fine arts high schools are secondary institutions that provide vocational music education to students accepted through a talent examination. These programs provide students with the basic knowledge and skills required to pass an aptitude test in order to enter an undergraduate program in music education. Conservatories offer programs in music, performing arts, and musicology at secondary and post-graduate levels, and attract highly qualified artists (Gök, 2018). These institutions seek to preserve, sustain, and disseminate the existing culture and arts in Turkey (Yener & Apaydınlı, 2016). At the college level, undergraduate music education departments train students to teach music at the primary and secondary levels. Faculties of fine arts departments educate future teachers, academic administrators, or researchers in private or public schools or universities. This study was conducted at a variety of universities, music conservatories, and performing arts high schools in order to survey a diverse group of musicians.

Current study

This study explored the self-reported performance anxiety experiences and coping strategies of Turkish musicians. The authors explored the following research questions: How do Turkish music students and their teachers perceive music performance anxiety? What symptoms do these musicians experience? How do these musicians cope with the challenges of music performance anxiety? What resources do students desire as part of their education programs? What are the differences in the experience of music anxiety symptoms and coping techniques between Turkish

music students and their teachers? Surveys were conducted at seven locations, including universities, music conservatories, and performing arts high schools in three geographical locations in the Republic of Turkey. The researchers were limited by the number of institutions they could visit within a 2-week period. Schools were chosen according to their academic calendars in order to avoid exam week and to increase the likelihood of student participation. Participating schools also reflected the support of the faculty and administration, and interest in the research topic.

Method

This descriptive study, a cross-sectional mixed-methods design (Cohen et al., 2018; Creswell, 2014; Zheng, 2015), used a questionnaire and rating scale to collect data. At each venue, the participants assembled in a music classroom or performance hall to attend an arts and education outreach program facilitated by the authors. The questionnaire was distributed and collected before the beginning of the program; participation in the study was both anonymous and voluntary. After completing the survey, participants attended a presentation on performance anxiety management for musicians. Students and teachers had the opportunity to ask questions and interact with the presenters following the program. Because the presentation included information about music performance anxiety, including coping strategies, all questionnaires were collected before the start of the lecture so as not to influence survey responses.

Participants

The study group consisted of 270 participants. Accessible case sampling was used. Surveys were conducted at two universities (Gazi University, Ankara; Ankara University of Music and Fine Arts), two music conservatories (Hacettepe Conservatory, Ankara; Dicle Conservatory, Diyarbakır), two performing arts high schools (Ankara Anatolian High School; Diyarbakır Anatolian High School), and at a music festival held at Akdeniz University in Antalya. The three geographic locations were chosen to represent broadly the country's music programs: Ankara is the capital city in the central north, Diyarbakır is in the southeastern part of the country, and Antalya is on the southwestern coast. Table 1 illustrates the frequency and percentage distribution of survey results from participating schools and organizations.

The demographic characteristics of the participants are shown in Table 2. Although the project was developed with students in mind, several music teachers chose to complete the questionnaire as well. We opted to include this information from the instructors in order to compare the experiences of teachers and students. The participant ages, therefore, varied more than expected.

Of the 270 participants, 62% were women and 38% were men. Although most participants were studying Western art music on modern instruments, 19.3% of them were specializing in traditional Turkish music performed on traditional instruments. These instruments included plucked stringed instruments (oud, bağlama, tanbur), zithers (qanun), bowed stringed instruments (classical kemençe), and end-blown flutes (ney, kaval).

Data collection instrument

An original two-part questionnaire was used to collect information about the participants. The questionnaire was intended not as an inventory to measure performance anxiety, but as a survey of the diverse performance experiences and stress management techniques of Turkish musicians. It was designed in accordance with best practices in performance psychology for musicians (viz., Clark & Williamon, 2011; Cornett, 2019; Green & Gallwey, 1986; Greene, 2002;

Table 1. Frequency and percentage values for participating organizations.

Institution	<i>n</i>	%
Diyarbakır Anatolian High School	54	20.0
Dicle Conservatory	45	16.7
Ankara Anatolian High School	66	24.4
Antalya Piano Festival	18	6.7
Hacettepe Conservatory	21	7.8
Ankara University of Music and Fine Arts	13	4.8
Gazi University	53	19.6
Total	270	100.0

Table 2. Participant gender, age, instrument, and years of musical experience.

Variable	Category	<i>n</i>	%	Cumulative percentage
Participant	Teacher	35	13.0	
	Student	230	85.2	
Total		265	98.1	
Missing data		5	1.9	
Total		270	100.0	
Sex	Female	167	61.9	61.9
	Male	103	38.1	100.0
Total		270	100.0	
Age	8–13	11	4.1	4.1
	14–17	107	39.6	43.9
	18–22	70	25.9	69.9
	23–27	27	10.0	79.9
	28–32	25	9.3	89.2
	33+	29	10.7	100.0
Instrument	Strings	74	27.4	28.1
	Woodwind	27	10.0	38.4
	Brass	4	1.5	39.9
	Guitar	22	8.1	48.3
	Piano	79	29.3	78.3
	Percussion	5	1.9	80.2
	Turkish traditional instrument(s)	52	19.3	100.0
Years of musical experience	1–6	152	56.3	57.4
	7–12	71	26.3	84.2
	13–18	19	7.0	91.3
	19–24	10	3.7	95.1
	25–30	2	0.7	95.8
	31–36	6	2.2	98.1
	37–42	3	1.1	99.2
	43–48	2	0.7	100.0
Prior experience with performance anxiety	Yes	221	81.9	85.7
	No	37	13.7	100.0

Hays, 2002; Hoffman & Hanrahan, 2012; Kageyama, n.d.; Moore, 2011; Nordin-Bates, 2012), incorporating the most frequently cited physical and cognitive performance anxiety symptoms found in the literature.

The first part of the questionnaire included questions related to demographic information such as age, gender, instrument, and years of musical experience. This portion offered participants the opportunity to respond to open-ended questions about their prior experiences with performance anxiety, methods of coping with performance stress, and what resources they would like to help them perform with greater confidence. The second part of the questionnaire featured a list of 25 common performance anxiety symptoms. Participants ranked the frequency of each experience using the following Likert-type rating scale options: 1 = *never*, 2 = *rarely*, 3 = *sometimes*, 4 = *frequently*, 5 = *often*. They were also given the opportunity to write in additional experiences. This questionnaire was administered in Turkish; an equivalent English translation is found in Appendix A.

Analysis of the data

Once questionnaires were collected and coded, the data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0). Both descriptive and statistical methods were used. For demographic data, frequency and percentage distribution tables were operationalized for evaluation. For the Likert-type scale of anxiety experiences, non-parametric tests were utilized as the data observed were not normally distributed. Responses were analyzed using the Mann–Whitney U test for the comparison of two independent groups, and the Kruskal–Wallis H test for the comparison of more than two groups. Results indicating meaningful differences are reported.

Findings

Performance anxiety experiences

The survey results indicated that 81.9% of the participants stated they had experienced music performance anxiety in the past. The questionnaire invited participants to rank the general frequency of their music performance anxiety symptoms using a Likert-type scale. The survey featured 14 common physical symptoms and 11 cognitive symptoms. The cognitive portion of the survey included both psychological and emotional (affective) symptoms. These symptoms and descriptive statistics on the normality of these experiences are presented in Table 3.

Survey results indicated that four out of five participants reported prior experiences with performance anxiety (see Table 2). Interestingly, of the 37 respondents (13.7%) who answered “no” to the question, “Have you ever experienced music performance anxiety before?” 31 (83.78%) proceeded to rank specific performance anxiety symptoms in the second half of the survey. Reasons for this could include feelings of disidentification, confusion, or shame about the phrase “performance anxiety” (“performans kaygısı” in Turkish), or a more general disconnect between certain physical or cognitive experiences and the general concept of performance anxiety. Table 3 indicates that the most frequent performance anxiety symptom reported was trembling or shaking hands.

In Table 3, because the results revealed some unmarked items in the dataset, the variable of participants may vary across items. The standard deviation value of the items varies between 1.22013 and 1.49897. The skewness value is between 1.367 and 0.223 while the kurtosis value is between 627 and -0.078 . Considering the sample size ($N = 270$) and the skewness coefficient between $+1$ and -1 , it is assumed that item score distributions do not deviate excessively from the norm (Büyükoztürk, 2005).

Table 3. Reported performance anxiety experiences.

Item		<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>df</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis
Physical symptoms						
P1	Cold hands or cold feet	265	2.7208	1.31330	0.326	-0.943
P2	Trembling or shaking hands	268	3.1978	1.32184	-0.153	-1.095
P3	Dry mouth	266	2.4850	1.37969	0.505	-1.010
P4	Fluttering stomach	265	2.6830	1.39177	0.267	-1.177
P5	Upset stomach or nausea	267	2.2322	1.27380	0.755	-0.500
P6	Pale face	266	2.3083	1.31855	0.740	-0.558
P7	Dizziness or lightheadedness	266	1.9436	1.23495	1.150	0.188
P8	Tension headache	266	2.0752	1.30961	0.927	-0.420
P9	Chest pain or pressure	267	2.0000	1.22013	1.013	-0.078
P10	Shallow breathing or hyperventilation	266	2.5188	1.34642	0.376	-1.089
P11	Visual sensitivity to lights	264	1.8636	1.28325	1.367	0.627
P12	Pounding or racing heartbeat	262	3.0153	1.45420	-0.095	-1.338
P13	Sweaty hands or excessive perspiration	267	3.0974	1.40818	0.029	-1.321
P14	Increased bathroom visits	264	2.6439	1.44155	0.365	-1.205
Cognitive symptoms						
C15	Negative self-talk or self-doubt	267	2.9363	1.43783	0.097	-1.324
C16	Fear of criticism or judgment	268	3.1231	1.39412	0.149	-1.230
C17	Inability to concentrate	267	3.0487	1.30983	0.081	-1.063
C18	Bad mood or short temper	267	2.7004	1.43274	0.276	-1.214
C19	Restlessness	267	1.3941	1.39413	0.052	-1.226
C20	Insomnia or sleep disturbances	264	1.4734	1.47346	0.267	-1.343
C21	Feelings of apprehension or dread	266	1.3465	1.34657	-0.223	-1.134
C22	Memory problems or forgetting	267	1.3892	1.38923	0.190	-1.210
C23	Depression or sadness	266	1.4510	1.45104	0.432	-1.194
C24	Imagining the worst	265	1.4812	1.48127	0.031	-1.418
C25	Procrastinating	235	1.4989	1.49897	0.454	-1.211

To determine whether the survey results differed significantly between teachers and students, we applied the Mann–Whitney *U* test. Table 4 shows only those results featuring significant differences among the participants. According to the data, students reported experiencing five symptoms more frequently than the teachers: two physical symptoms (dizziness or lightheadedness, tension headache) and three cognitive symptoms (inability to concentrate, bad mood or short temper, and imagining the worst).

Differences according to the reported gender of all participants were examined using the Mann–Whitney *U* test. Female respondents reported higher performance anxiety symptoms than male respondents. Table 5 illustrates the statistically significant differences between the two genders. There was a significant difference in responses to the six physical symptoms and six cognitive symptoms illustrated in Table 5. The mean rank of women is significantly higher than the mean rank of men. These results are mirrored in the current research, although the reason for differences between the genders is not entirely understood.

Differences in questionnaire responses according to participant age are illustrated in Table 6. Statistical differences were analyzed using the Kruskal–Wallis *H* test and the Mann–Whitney *U* test over the binary combinations.

Table 4. Reported performance anxiety experiences of teachers and students.

Item	Participant	<i>n</i>	Mean rank	Sum of ranks	<i>U</i> test	Asymp. Sig. (two-tailed)
Physical symptoms						
P7 Dizziness or lightheadedness	Student	226	134.73	30,449.00	3,112.000	.027*
	Teacher	35	106.91	3,742.00		
P8 Tension headache	Student	226	135.38	30,595.00	2,966.000	.011*
	Teacher	35	102.74	3,596.00		
Cognitive symptoms						
C17 Inability to concentrate	Student	227	135.55	30,769.50	3,053.500	.024*
	Teacher	35	105.24	3,683.50		
C18 Bad mood or short temper	Student	227	135.32	30,717.50	3,105.500	.033*
	Teacher	35	106.73	3,735.50		
C24 Imagining the worst	Student	227	135.97	30,865.50	2,957.500	.013*
	Teacher	35	102.50	3,587.50		

p* < .05.Table 5.** Reported performance anxiety experiences of women and men.

Item	Sex	<i>n</i>	Mean rank	Sum of ranks	<i>U</i> test	Asymp. Sig. (two-tailed)
Physical symptoms						
P1 Cold hands or cold feet	Female	143	125.43	17,936.00	4,229.000	.000*
	Male	83	92.95	7,715.00		
P2 Trembling or shaking hands	Female	145	126.11	18,286.00	4,479.000	.001*
	Male	84	95.82	8,049.00		
P4 Fluttering stomach	Female	143	124.66	17,701.50	4,237.500	.000*
	Male	83	93.05	7,723.50		
P5 Upset stomach or nausea	Female	142	124.21	17,762.00	4,546.000	.001*
	Male	83	96.62	8,116.00		
P6 Pale face	Female	143	121.02	17,306.50	4,858.500	.019*
	Male	84	100.54	8,344.50		
P12 Pounding or racing heartbeat	Female	142	118.51	16,828.00	4,827.000	.041*
	Male	81	100.59	8,148.00		
Cognitive symptoms						
C15 Negative self-talk or self-doubt	Female	143	122.21	17,476.00	4,832.000	0.007*
	Male	84	100.02	8,402.00		
C16 Fear of criticism or judgment	Female	144	123.36	17,763.50	4,772.500	0.007*
	Male	84	99.32	8,342.50		
C19 Restlessness	Female	143	123.46	17,655.00	4,653.000	0.004*
	Male	84	97.89	8,223.00		
C21 Feelings of apprehension	Female	144	126.20	18,173.00	4,075.000	0.000*
	Male	82	91.20	7,478.00		
C22 Memory problems	Female	144	124.52	17,930.50	4,461.500	0.001*
	Male	83	95.75	7,947.50		
C24 Imagining the worst	Female	144	120.68	17,378.50	5,013.500	0.038*
	Male	83	102.40	8,499.50		

**p* < .05.

Table 6. Reported performance anxiety experiences according to age.

Item	Age	<i>n</i>	Mean rank	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Sig. Dif.	
P8	Tension headache	8–13	10	93.30	11.446	5	.043*	(2–3)**
		14–17	104	123.05				(2–5)
		18–22	66	103.85				(4–5)
		23–27	23	124.65				
		28–32	19	82.13				
		33+	3	137.67				
	Total	225						
C19	Restlessness	8–13	10	96.55	11.505	5	0.042*	(1–4)
		14–17	104	110.57				(2–4)
		18–22	68	112.93				(3–4)
		23–27	22	154.00				(4–5)
		28–32	19	94.00				
		33+	3	111.17				
	Total	226						
C25	Procrastinating	8–13	10	69.85	13.653	5	0.018*	(1–4)
		14–17	102	108.60				(1–3)
		18–22	68	112.34				(2–4)
		23–27	23	150.80				(3–4)
		28–32	19	112.82				
		33+	23	132.67				
	Total	245						

*Significant difference according to *H* test.

**Significant difference according to *U* test.

We found significant differences ($p < .05$) in age groups in 3 of the 25 questionnaire items: tension headache, restlessness, and procrastinating. Specifically, students in the 14 to 17 age group experienced headaches more than students in the 18 to 22 and 28 to 32 age group; those between the ages of 23 and 27 experienced these symptoms more than those in the 28 to 32 age group. Musicians in the 23 to 27 age group (primarily graduate music students) also scored higher on the cognitive symptoms of restlessness and procrastination. Longitudinal studies are needed to determine the most frequent physical and cognitive symptoms according to age group, and how symptoms and experiences may change as musicians age.

Performance anxiety coping techniques

Musicians cope with their anxiety in diverse ways. We were interested to learn how participants would respond to the open-ended survey question, “If you answered yes [to the question about prior experiences with music performance anxiety], what steps have you taken to manage your anxiety?” The questionnaire did not offer examples of coping techniques. Participant responses, coded and separated according to their status as student or teacher, are shown in Table 7.

These responses provide valuable insight into the mindset and performance preparation of these music students and their instructors. Significantly, the most frequent answers among students (23.5%) were variations of statements such as “I don’t know” or “I have not yet found a solution.”

Table 7. Reported coping techniques for music performance anxiety.

Method	Student		Teacher	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Self-motivation	37	20.2	3	10.7
Practice harder; ensure sufficient preparation	41	22.4	7	25.0
Informal performances (for family, in cafés, etc.)	23	12.6	1	3.6
Learning from past experiences	4	2.2	–	–
Meditation or breathing exercises	22	12.0	10	35.7
Support from others	5	2.7	–	–
Medication or alcohol	7	3.8	10	10.7
Herbal tea	1	0.5	1	3.6
Don't know or unable to overcome	43	23.5	3	10.7
Total	183	100.0	28	100.0
Missing value	47	20.4	7	20.0
Grand total	230	100.0	35	100.0

The most common anxiety management solutions among students were to practice more or practice harder (22.4%), or to motivate or “psych” themselves up for the performance event (20.2%). Several students reported participating in informal performances to prepare for an event (12.6%), or practicing breathing or meditation exercises (12.0%). Others indicated they used medication or alcohol to cope, sought support from other people, tried to learn from their past experiences, or drank herbal tea as a supplement. The music teachers who responded to the survey indicated they engaged in breathing or meditation exercises (35.7%), or made sure they were sufficiently prepared for the performance event (25.0%). Unlike the students, none of the teachers surveyed offered that they sought help or support from others.

Resources for managing performance stress

Participants were asked, “What resources would you like to help you perform with greater confidence?” Responses to this open-ended question are summarized in Table 8. A significant response from both students (33.8%) and teachers (52.2%) was the desire for greater psychological support. Other respondents expressed interest in working with an expert in the field. Students and instructors also suggested expanding the available course offerings by adding new courses on performance anxiety management, meditation or yoga, or recital performances. Other participants requested more print resources, such as books on performance anxiety management, to help them cope with the mental challenges of music performance.

Because open-ended questionnaire responses were coded and categorized, the data tables in this article do not adequately articulate the emotions implied in some of the written statements. For example, 33.8% of the students surveyed requested psychological support, but the ways in which students expressed this in writing is beyond the scope of this article. One 13-year-old student wrote, “Sometimes I am afraid of my teacher. I wish there could be a school counselor and a specific course where we can share this situation with our friends.” A PhD candidate in music education wrote, “This situation affects my whole life. I have even considered leaving this profession in order not to experience this fear again.” Even in translation, it is possible to sense these students’ feelings of frustration, and the strong desire for professional help.

Table 8. Requested resources for performance anxiety management.

Resource requested	Student		Teacher	
	n	%	n	%
Workshops or seminars	12	9.2	2	8.7
Opportunities to work with an expert in the field	27	20.8	4	17.4
Books	17	13.1	1	4.3
Better practice environment	4	3.1	–	–
Better instrument	1	0.8	–	–
New academic courses addressing performance anxiety management	4	3.1	1	4.3
More time to practice	1	0.8	–	–
Concert performances should be required in the curriculum	4	3.1	2	8.7
Psychological support	44	33.8	12	52.2
Meditation or yoga courses added to the curriculum	4	3.1	1	4.3
Better family or social support	5	3.8	–	–
I don't know	7	5.4	–	–
Total	130	100.0	23	100.0
Missing value	100	43.5	12	34.3
Grand total	230	100.0	35	100.0

Conclusions and recommendations

The high rates of reported performance anxiety (81.9%) among these musicians are supported in other research studies. A majority (81.8%) of Turkish orchestral musicians, for example, reported the experience of performance anxiety in an earlier study (Topoğlu et al., 2018). The higher incidents of performance anxiety among women are also mirrored in the current research suggesting that female musicians experience, or at least report, higher rates of performance anxiety than male musicians in Turkey (Aydın & İşgörür, 2018; Baydağ & Alpagut, 2016; Çırakoğlu & Coşkun Şentürk, 2013; Güdek & Çiçek, 2017; Güven, 2017). The reasons for this difference are not yet fully understood. Although student musicians experienced some symptoms more frequently than their teachers, the current research does not adequately compare the anxiety experiences of pre-professional and professional musicians. Longitudinal studies are needed to study the levels of anxiety experienced by musicians over the course of their careers (Kenny, 2011).

Several of the musicians surveyed shared that they did not know how to cope with their performance anxiety. A significant number of participants (52.2% of teachers and 33.8% of students) expressed the need for greater psychological support. This viewpoint is reflected in the advocacy of mental health specialists such as Nagel (2009), who stated,

I have long recommended and supported the establishment of psychological and physical interdisciplinary programs and courses in the curriculum that are equal in importance to private lessons, music theory, music history, and academic courses. These courses would include study in the psychology of stage fright. (p. 16)

Since Yöndem (2012) found that Turkish university music students place great importance on the negative perceptions and comments of their instructors, school administrators might investigate options for educating faculty and staff and/or implementing or expanding psychological support services in the schools. They might consider hiring professional counselors who are trained to

work with performing musicians. Since several students (20.8%) expressed the desire to work with an expert in the field, institutions might consider inviting guest lecturers, artists-in-residence, or other experts in performance psychology or stress management.

Students and instructors suggested expanding departmental course offerings, including new courses on stress management, yoga, or meditation. Faculty and administrators might consider these options as they assess and revise their music curricula. Both students and faculty offered that recital experiences should be mandatory. This implies that public performance is not currently a required component of some music programs in Turkey. Not only is it difficult to teach and practice performance anxiety management skills without sufficient opportunities to perform, but exposure has long been considered a key element in treating anxiety (Albano et al., 2001; Barrios & O'Dell, 1998). Instructors are encouraged to facilitate more formal or informal recital opportunities to help students develop their performance skills. School librarians should take into account that students requested more print resources such as books on performance anxiety management. This might also suggest a need for more Turkish language books on topics related to performance preparation and psychology. Music performance anxiety remains a topic of great interest among student and professional musicians, and exemplary whole-student education addresses both the physical and the psychological challenges of performing music.

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APPENDIX A: Music Performance Anxiety Questionnaire

[English translation of the original questionnaire]

Dear participant,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information about your performance experiences. The answers you give will contribute to research about learning to manage music performance anxiety. Thank you for your participation.

A) Personal Inquiry

1. What is your gender?
2. How old are you?
3. Where do you study or work?
4. How many years have you been playing your instrument?
5. Which instruments do you play?
6. Have you ever experienced music performance anxiety before?
7. If you answered yes, what steps have you taken to manage your anxiety?
8. What resources would you like to help you perform with greater confidence?

B) Survey

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Often
Physical symptoms					
Cold hands or cold feet		2	3	4	5
Trembling or shaking hands		2	3	4	5
Dry mouth		2	3	4	5
Fluttering stomach		2	3	4	5
Upset stomach or nausea		2	3	4	5
Pale face		2	3	4	5
Dizziness or lightheadedness		2	3	4	5
Tension headache		2	3	4	5
Chest pain or pressure		2	3	4	5
Shallow breathing or hyperventilation		2	3	4	5
Visual sensitivity to lights		2	3	4	5
Pounding or racing heartbeat		2	3	4	5
Sweaty hands or excessive perspiration		2	3	4	5
Increased bathroom visits		2	3	4	5
Cognitive symptoms					
Negative self-talk or self-doubt		2	3	4	5
Fear of criticism or judgment		2	3	4	5
Inability to concentrate		2	3	4	5
Bad mood or short temper		2	3	4	5
Restlessness		2	3	4	5
Insomnia or sleep disturbances		2	3	4	5
Feelings of apprehension or dread		2	3	4	5
Memory problems or forgetting		2	3	4	5
Depression or sadness		2	3	4	5
Imagining the worst		2	3	4	5
Procrastinating		2	3	4	5
Other (please specify)		2	3	4	5