

SRI JOYDIP ASHRAM GYAN YOGA TRAINING AND RESEARCH CENTRE

IMPACT OF HIGH VOLUME LOUDSPEAKERS ON PUBLIC HEALTH

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ABSTRACT

This white paper aims to address the negative impact of high volume loudspeakers on public health. The use of loudspeakers in public spaces has become widespread in recent years, and the high volume levels can have detrimental effects on human health, including hearing loss, stress, and disruption of sleep. This paper draws on research studies and expert opinions to provide evidence for the need for regulation of high volume loudspeakers to safeguard public health.

Introduction

Loudspeakers are used in a wide range of settings, including places of worship, political rallies, social events, and public announcements. They are a useful tool for communicating with large audiences, but the indiscriminate use of high volume loudspeakers can have serious consequences for public health. The issue of noise pollution is often overlooked, but it has been linked to numerous health problems, including hearing damage, stress, and sleep disorders.

Impact of High Volume Loudspeakers on Public Health

Hearing Loss

The most significant and well-documented impact of high volume loudspeakers on public health is hearing loss. Exposure to high levels of noise can damage the hair cells in the inner ear, leading to permanent hearing loss. A study conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) found that around 1.1 billion young people worldwide are at risk of hearing loss due to exposure to loud sounds, including loud music and high volume loudspeakers (WHO, 2015).

Stress and Anxiety

High volume loudspeakers can also cause stress and anxiety, especially in individuals who are sensitive to noise. Loud noise can trigger the release of stress hormones, which can have a range of negative effects on the body, including increased heart rate, elevated blood pressure, and muscle tension. Prolonged exposure to loud noise can also lead to chronic stress, which has been linked to a range of health problems, including cardiovascular disease, depression, and anxiety disorders (Münzel et al., 2018).

Sleep Disorders

Another significant impact of high volume loudspeakers on public health is disruption of sleep. Noise can interfere with sleep quality, leading to a range of sleep disorders, including insomnia, sleep apnea, and snoring. Disrupted sleep can have numerous negative effects on the body, including fatigue, decreased cognitive function, and increased risk of accidents (Muzet, 2007).

Regulation of High Volume Loudspeakers

To safeguard public health, it is crucial to regulate the use of high volume loudspeakers in public spaces.

The following measures can be taken:

Setting Limits on Noise Levels:

Local authorities can establish noise level limits in public spaces and enforce them with fines or other penalties.

Time Limits:

High volume loudspeakers should be restricted to specific times of the day, such as during business hours or early evening.

Soundproofing:

Venues that regularly use high volume loudspeakers should be required to implement soundproofing measures to reduce noise pollution.

Public Awareness Campaigns:

Public awareness campaigns can be launched to educate the public about the negative effects of noise pollution and encourage them to take measures to protect their health.

A Real life Story (Case Study) Inspired from True Events

Burdwan City was known for its rich cultural heritage, and every year, clubs and organizations would host programs featuring the works of the great poets Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam. However, the high decibel use of microphones during these programs was causing a significant health hazard for people living in the vicinity.

Joy Sinha, a social activist and founder of an NGO in Burdwan City, launched a campaign to raise awareness about the negative impact of high decibel use of microphones on people's health. His campaign received support from the district administration, and the traffic police gave strict orders to stop programs that violated noise pollution laws.

One of the clubs that violated the order was a local club that was staging a theater production by Malati Chakrovorty, a sincere performing artist. The club was forced to halt its program, and Malati and her team were heartbroken.

However, the club launched a counter-campaign, leveraging the power of women's leadership skills. They put Malati in charge and used her unique approach to connect with every household in the locality, inviting them to the cultural program. Her efforts connected well with the people, and Joy Sinha lost his edge.

Joy Sinha was taken aback by Malati's approach and had to retreat from the town. On the day of the cultural program, Malati's mother faced a heart attack due to the high decibel use of microphones. This tragic event made Malati realize the importance of Joy Sinha's campaign, and she decided to work with him to find a solution.

Together, they launched a new campaign to raise awareness about the safe use of microphones during cultural programs. They educated clubs and organizations about the harmful effects of high decibel sound on people's health and encouraged them to use sound limiters and maintain a safe distance from residential areas.

Their campaign was successful, and cultural programs could now be enjoyed without causing any negative impact on people's health. Joy Sinha and Malati Chakrovorty had shown that social activism and community leadership can bring about positive change in society. The clash between para-politics and cultural programs had come to an end, and the community had come together for a greater cause.

References:

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