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Evaluation of Solfege Working Methods of Music Students During the Epidemic Period

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Ear training and solfege lesson is a lesson in which music students should study regularly in order to be the basis of musical knowledge. Especially during the pandemic process, it is extremely necessary for first-year students to adapt to this system in order to be successful in future grades. The aim of the study is to determine the working methods of 1st grade students who started distance learning from school and ear training and solfege during the epidemic period. The study group consists of 18 students of KU GSTF musicology first year. The research is a descriptive field study supported by a qualitative method and the compositions written by the students on the subject were used as data collection techniques. The articles examined through document analysis were transformed into frequency and percentage tables by descriptive analysis. As a result, it has been revealed that students are insufficient to provide self-study discipline and to produce their own methods and solutions during distance education.

Keywords. Ear training, solfege, musical hearing.

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There are lessons with repetition and stages in music education, which are placed in periods with specific weight ratios. Among these courses is "Musical Hearing-Reading-Writing" or "Ear Training and Solfege" as it is called in some programs, which is one of the basic courses that host many skills of students throughout their entire musical life. This content, in which the skills are taught gradually during the hearing education and the lack of one skill affects the next, is also indispensable for the musical life after being a student. "MIOY-ear training and solfege lesson is aimed at musical literacy and hearing; It constitutes the necessary infrastructure for other field courses by including basic music, form knowledge and the first information about polyphony" (Özgür, 1996, p. 198).

According to Albuz (1996, p. 193) "Musical Hearing-Reading-Writing lesson is a prerequisite for all practical lessons and most of the theoretical (harmony, counterpoint, musical styles, etc.) lessons. In this integrity, it is important for students to develop a working discipline and the ways they follow in the course, working methods, getting to know themselves as well as their skill level. For this reason, it is necessary to follow the skill development of this course and to direct the students. Skills in music education are based on the integrity of many affective, cognitive and motor skills. One of the basic skills in this education is ear training and solfege reading. Ear training, which gradually becomes more difficult due to the musical development of the students, requires the students to work in a systematic and conscious manner as well as being talented. In this education, which is carried out under the supervision of teachers under normal conditions, the level progress of the students can be controlled, while this situation becomes difficult in the lessons conducted by distance education during the pandemic period. This study is important in terms of guiding the students correctly by determining the working systems, methods and the places they have difficulties during the study of the students who have started the ear training and solfege lessons with distance education. This study is also important in that it is one of the first studies examining the working methods of music students during the pandemic period. The aim of this study is to determine the study preferences and methods of the undergraduate students within the scope of ear training and solfege lessons during the pandemic period during the pandemic period and to determine the difficulties experienced by the students.

Method

Research Model

The research is a qualitative field research. In this context, a case study was chosen from qualitative designs. Case studies can be classified as descriptive, interpretive or evaluation according to their purposes (Merriam, 1998. As cited in: Subaşı Okumuş, 2017, p. 420). In addition, Bassey

divides the case studies into three theory and theory testing, 2) storytelling and drawing, 3) evaluative case studies” (1999. As cited in: Subaşı Okumuş, 2017, p. 420). In this study, descriptive and evaluative case studies were used.

In addition, purposeful sampling, one of the non-probabilistic sampling methods, was used in the study. Purposeful sampling is "an improbable technique in which the researcher selects the appropriate items for sampling according to the aims of the researcher, and it is the selection of the units of the universe suitable for the problem as the subject of observation" (Sencer, 1989. Cited in: Sığrı, 2018, p. 127). Since the research aims to determine the study systems of all students in a single course and is specific to that class, purposeful sampling was used. The ethics committee report was not applied for the use of document analysis in the study, however, from the stage of writing the student essays used as document analysis, a list of signatures declaring their consent for the use of the essays written by the research group within the scope of the research within the ethical rules was created.

Study Group

The study group of the research consists of 18 students of Musicology, 11 males and 7 females, who started education in the Faculty of Fine Arts and Design of Kastamonu University in the 2020-2021 academic year.

Data Collection Tools

Document analysis, one of the techniques used in case studies, was used as a data collection technique in the study. As a data collection tool, students were asked to write a composition in which they describe their working methods and the parts/situations they had difficulties during their studies, during the ear training and solfege course. The compositions were accepted by mail within a week and the analysis phase started. Descriptive analysis was conducted to determine the working methods of the students in ear training and solfege I and the parts they had difficulties. Before descriptive analysis, common expressions in the compositions were grouped and frequency analysis was made to determine the methods used by students in their studies. The titles are as follows.

Statements about the ways the students followed during the study

- Receiving sound from mobile apps
- Listening to the voice of the teacher with lesson repetition
- Friend help and group work

- Getting help from the instrument while studying solfege
- Playing and singing the sequence of the corresponding tone
- Re-reading previous solfeges
- Doing bona before solfeggio
- Reading and combining dimensions one by one
- Reading by thinking about the interval relationships between notes
- Regular work every day
- Making use of different sources

Results

Table 1.

Frequency Table of Benefit From Mobile Applications

Getting sound from mobile applications	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	10	55,6
No	8	44,4
Total	18	100,0

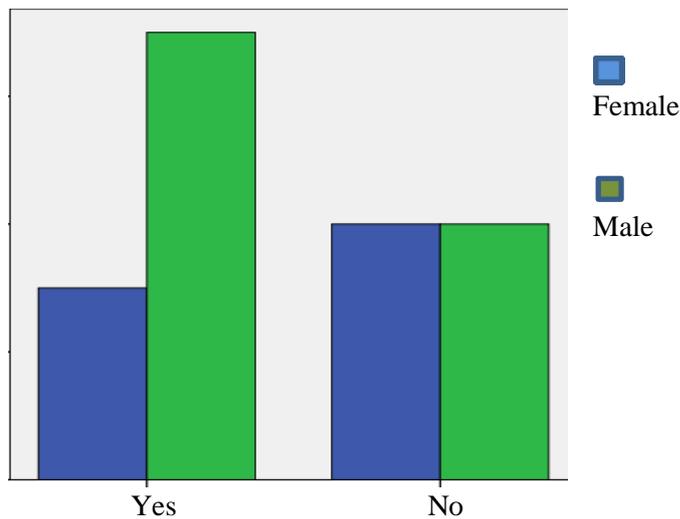


Figure 1. Bar graph of benefit from mobile applications by gender.

Table 1 shows the answers of the students regarding the use of mobile applications during their study. It is seen that 55.6% of the students have benefited from mobile applications while working.

44.4% of them stated that they do not use mobile applications. When we look at the answers given by gender in Figure 1, it is seen that 3 of the female students and 7 of the male students used mobile applications in their studies, and that male students work with mobile applications more than female students.

Table 2.

Frequencies for Listening to Teachers' Voice With Lesson Repetition

Listening to teacher's voice with lesson repetition	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	5	27,8
No	13	72,2
Total	18	100,0

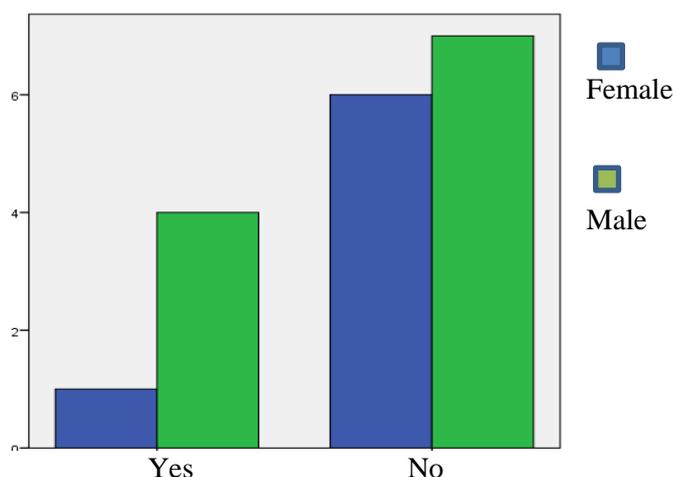


Figure 2. Bar Graph ff Listening to Teachers' Voice with Lesson Repetition According to Gender.

Table 2 shows that the students' situations of listening to solfege from the voice of the teacher while watching the repetition of the distance education lesson. Accordingly, it is seen that 27.8% of the students watch the repetition of the lesson to listen to the voice of the teacher. It was determined that 72.2% of them did not use this method in their solfege studies. When we look at the answers given by gender in Figure 2, it is seen that 1 of the female students and 7 of the male students preferred this method in their studies, and that male students studied more with repetition than female students. When we look at the total answers, it is seen that the number of students who do not choose to study with repetition corresponds to 72.2% of the students who answered "no" and the majority of the class size did not choose this method.

Table 3.

Frequency of Getting Help From Friends in Studies-Group Work

Getting help from friends and group work	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	9	50,0
No	9	50,0
Total	18	100,0

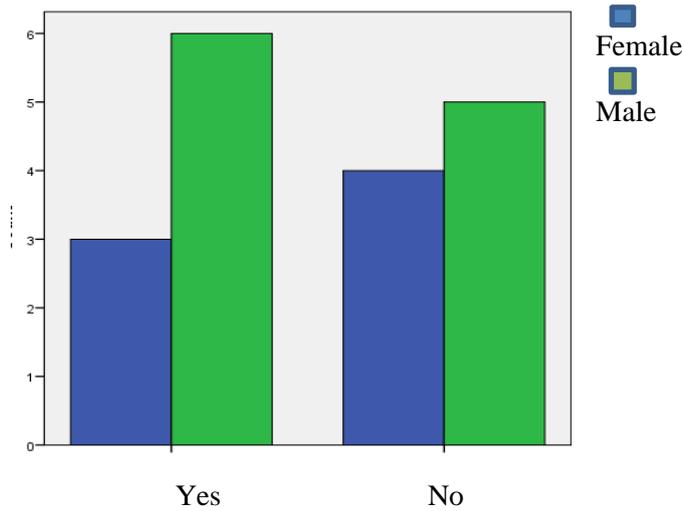


Figure 3. Bar Graph of Getting Help From Friends in Studies by Gender-Group Work.

Table 3 shows the situation of students getting help from their friends and doing group work during the study. According to this, it is seen that 50% of the students get help from friends or tend to group work while studying, 50% of them do not use this method in solfege studies. When we look at the answers given by gender in Figure 3, it is seen that 3 of the female students and 6 of the male students preferred this method in their studies, and that male students preferred friend assistance and group work more than female students. In addition, it is observed that 5 students among male students and 4 students among female students worked alone.

Table 4.

Frequency Table Regarding The Utilization of The Instrument

Getting help from the instrument while working solfege	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	10	55,6
No	8	44,4
Total	18	100,0

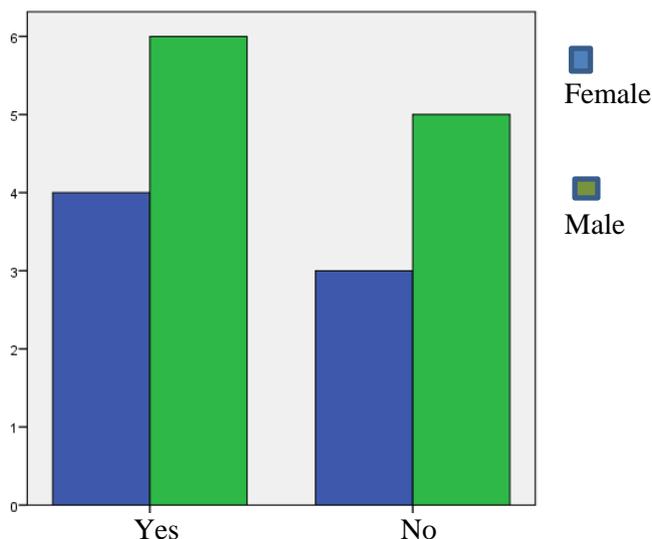


Figure 4. Bar Graph Regarding Utilization of The instrument According to Gender.

Table 4 shows the students' help-sound receiving status from the instrument during their study. Accordingly, it is seen that 55.6% of the students got a sound from any instrument while studying, and 44.4% did not use this method. When we look at the answers given by gender in Figure 4, it is seen that 4 of the female students and 6 of the male students prefer this method in their studies and that male students tend to use the instrument more than female students. In addition, it is seen that 5 students among male students and 3 students among female students worked without sound from any instrument.

Table 5.

Frequency Table for Playing or Saying the Sequence of the Related Tone in Solfege Studies

Playing and singing the Sequence of the Related Tone	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	3	16,7
No	15	83,3
Total	18	100,0

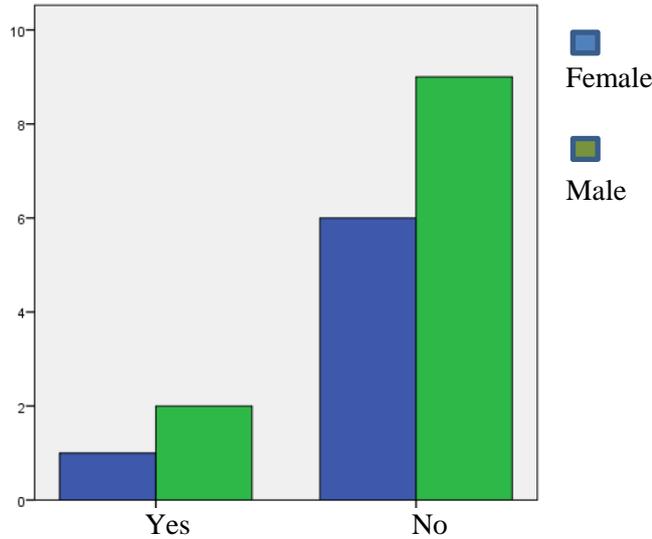


Figure 5. Bar Graph of Playing or Saying the Sequence of the Related Tone in Solfeggio Studies by Gender.

Table 5 shows the students' situations of playing and singing the sequence of the relevant tone during the study. According to this, it is seen that 16.7% of the students played and sang serials in the relevant tonality during the study, and 83.3% did not use this method. When we look at the answers given by gender in Figure 5, it is seen that 1 of the female students and only 2 of the male students preferred this method in their studies. When we look at the total answers and the "no" answers according to gender, it is understood that most of the students did not do series work before reading solfege.

Table 6.

Frequency Table Showing Previous Solfeggio Repetition Situations

Re-reading Previous Solfege	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	2	11,1
No	16	88,9
Total	18	100,0

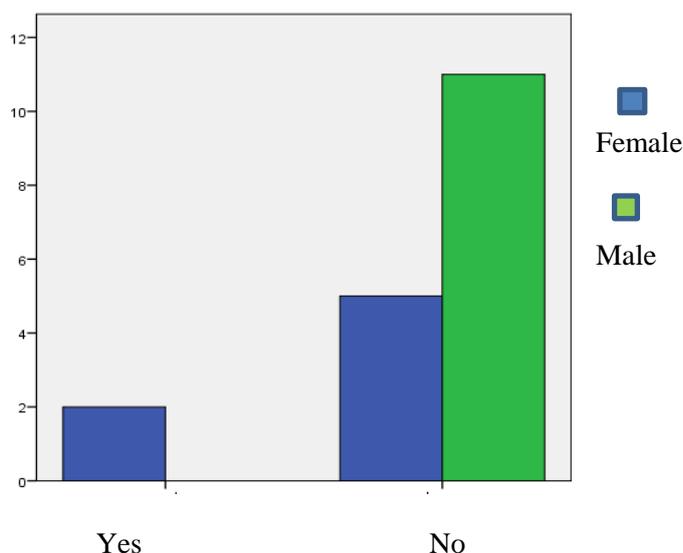


Figure 6. Bar Graph Showing Repetition of Previous Solfege by Gender.

Table 6 shows the students' repetition of the solfeges of previous lessons during the study. According to this, it is seen that 11.1% of the students repeat the previous solfeges during the study, and 88.9% of them do not use this method. When we look at the answers given by gender in Figure 6, it is seen that the students who used this method and answered "yes" are only female students. When we look at the total answers and "no" answers according to gender, it is seen that most of the students do not repeat the solfeges studied before reading solfege, and the male students never use this method.

Table 7.

Frequency Table Showing Relevant Bona Before Reading Solfege

Making Bona Before Solfege	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	3	16,7
No	15	83,3
Total	18	100,0

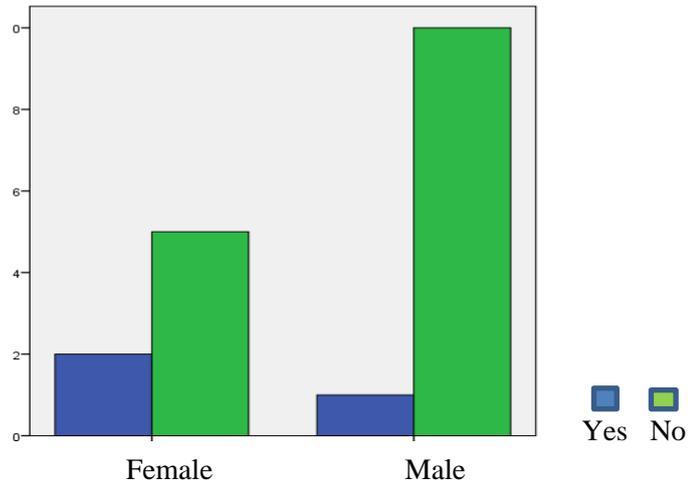


Figure 7. Bar Graph Showing Relevant Solfege Bona Before Reading Solfege According to Gender.

Table 7 shows the situation of students to bore while working. According to this, it is seen that 16.7% of the students did it before reading solfege while studying, 83.3% of them did not use this method. When we look at the answers given by gender in Figure 7, it is seen that there are 2 female and 5 male students among the students who used this method and answered "yes". When we look at the "no" answers, it is seen that most of the students did not do the bona before reading solfege and that the bona habit of both groups was not established yet.

Table 8.

Frequency Table Showing Relevant Solfege Playing Situations Before Reading Solfege

Playing Before Reading Solfege	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	6	33,3
No	12	66,7
Total	18	100,0

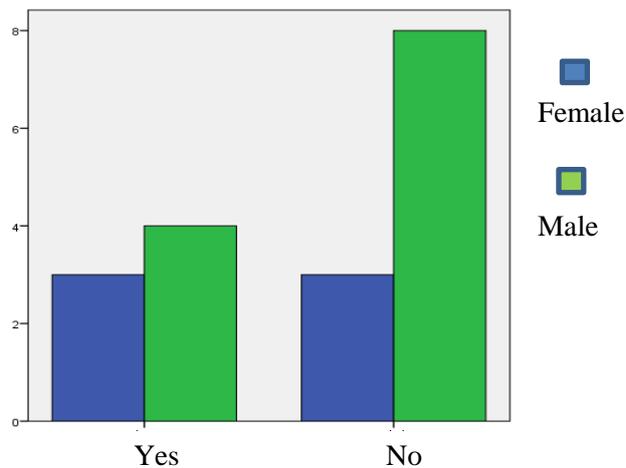


Figure 8. Bar Graph Showing Relevant Solfege Playing Situations Before Reading Solfege by Gender.

Table 8 shows the students' stealing situations before reading solfege during the study. According to this, it is seen that 33.3% of the students played solfege before reading solfege and 66.7% of them did not use this method. When we look at the answers given by gender in Figure 8, the students who used this method and answered "yes" are equal, being 3 girls and 3 boys. When we look at the "no" answers, it is seen that most of the students do not prefer to play before reading solfege.

Table 9.

Frequency Table Showing the Measures One by One and Their Combination Status

Reading and Combining Dimensions One by One	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	4	22,2
No	14	77,8
Total	18	100,0

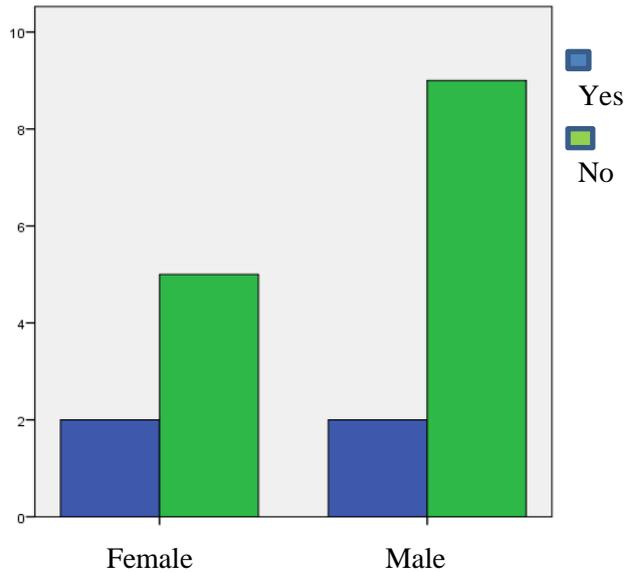


Figure 9. Bar Graph Showing the Situations of Reading and Combining Measures One by One Before Reading Solfege According to Gender.

Table 9 shows the students' combining status by reading measure by measure without reading the whole solfege during the study. According to this, it is seen that 22.7% of the students first read solfege in parts and then combined it while 77.8% did not use this method. When we look at the answers given by gender in Figure 9, there are 2 female and 5 male students who use this method and answer "yes". When we look at the "No" answers, it is seen that most of the students deal with solfege as a whole.

Table 10.

Frequency Table For Using The Interval Relationship Between Notes

Reading Considering the Interval Calculation Between Notes	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	4	22,2
No	14	77,8
Total	18	100,0

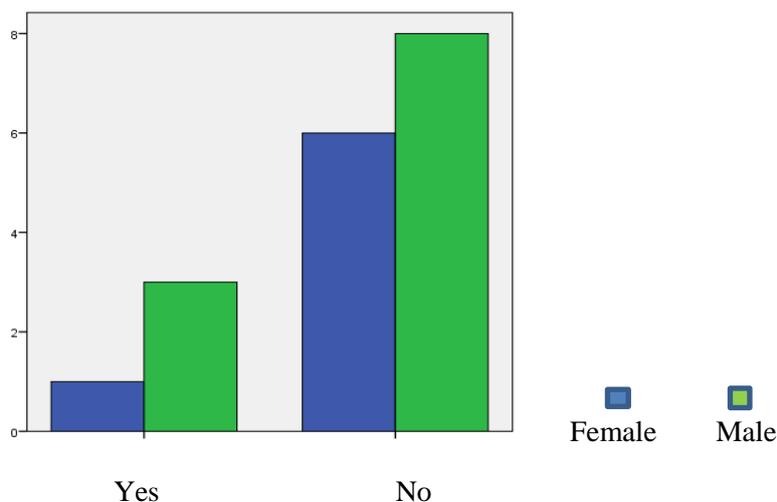


Figure 10. Bar Graph Showing The Usage of Range Relationships Between Notes According to Gender.

Table 10 shows the students' state of thinking about the spatial relationships between the notes during the study. According to this, it is seen that 22.2% of the students used the interval relations between the notes in solfege reading study, while 77.8% did not use this method. When we look at the answers given by gender in Figure 10, there are 3 female and 8 male students who used this method and answered "yes". When we look at the "No" answers, it is seen that most of the students do not prefer to use intervals in reading solfege.

Table 11.

Frequency Table for Regular Daily Working Situations

Working Every Day	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	8	44,4
No	10	55,6
Total	18	100,0

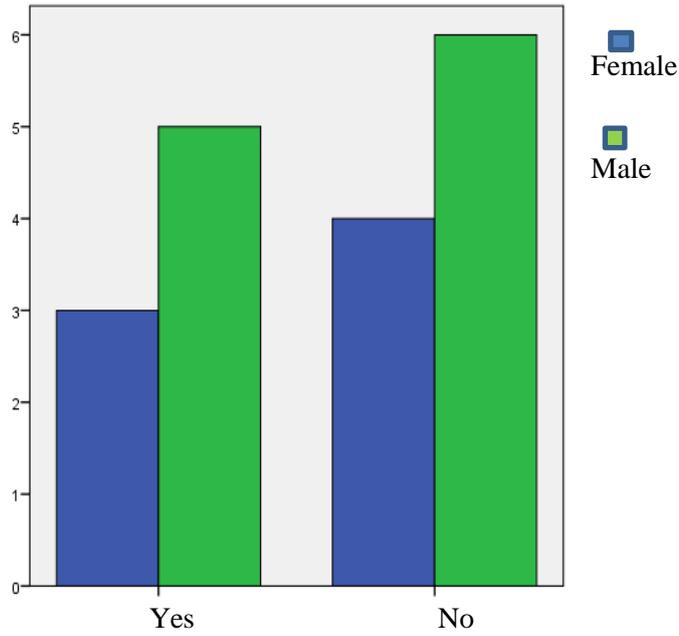


Figure 11. Regular daily working situations of students every day.

According to table 11 it is seen that 44.4% of the students do the solfege reading study systematically and in a planned way every day, while 55.6% do not use this method. When we look at the answers given by gender in Figure 11, it is understood that male students both use and use this method are more common than female students.

Table 12.

Frequency Table For Using Different Sources in Studies

Making use of different sources	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	1	5,6
No	17	94,4
Total	18	100,0

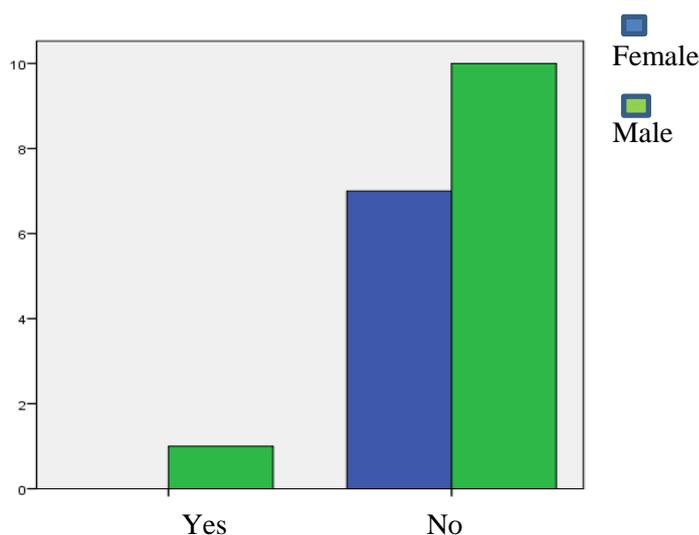


Figure 12. Bar Graph Showing the Utilization of Different Resources According to Gender.

In Table 12, it is seen that students read more solfege in their studies by using different sources. Accordingly, it is seen that 5.4% of the students benefit from different sources, 94.4% of them do not use this method. When we look at the answers given by gender in Figure 12, it is seen that no female student used this method.

Among the expressions regarding the situations that the students had difficulties during their studies; “Difficulty in reading with a different key, failure to preserve the melodic integrity, difficulty in transitions between thin and thick sounds, inability to stay in tone, difficulty in altered voices, inability to hear interval, difficulty in rhythm and time are as follows:

S.1. "I have trouble reading the F key and finding the place of notes, I also spare time for him and I have difficulty reading A minor for now".

S.2. "I have to play or listen to the melody before I can read it. Otherwise, I cannot read solfege, I have difficulties especially in melody ups and downs".

S.3. "I have difficulties in high-pitched and low-pitched notes, I get help from my friends in places where I have difficulty".

S.4. "I actually have a lot of difficulty in solfege studies, and sometimes I even withdraw myself. Since my voice is alto, I have trouble getting down and transitions to the treble. I think I will be better when face-to-face training begins".

S.5. "I have a problem with tone while working, teacher, I also have difficulties in ups and downs between voices".

S.6. "I am very excited when I am reading solfege, I even stutter, sometimes I am confused about the notes I know, I turn up your voice and listen again when I have difficulty".

S.7. "Not being able to use my voice well on a topic I have difficulty, I also read notes as much as I can, but I have difficulty in my solfeges. Another issue is that I tried to understand the subject of interval as best I could, but I have a lot of mistakes in some interval sensations."

S.8. "Sometimes it gets a changing sign in C major and returns to normal again. I have a hard time with those kinds of voices".

S.9. "I make a mistake in switching to more close sounds, and then I work with sounds from the piano".

S.10. "I have a hard time reading the eighth notes and rhythm patterns".

S. 11. "The most difficult thing is when I read the intervals and solfege when it gets sharp or flat.

Although the students do not have their own solution suggestions for the expressions that they have the most difficulties in their compositions, it is seen that the common solution mostly stated in situations where they have difficulties is "face-to-face education and working with a teacher".

Discussion and Conclusion

Ear training and solfege lessons are one of the lessons in which students develop many basic musical skills with the guidance of teachers. However, in addition to teacher support, guidance and the student's ability, it is important that students recognize their own abilities, develop appropriate study methods and regularly apply this system from the first grade to the next period. In the study, students preferred the most preferred ways of repeating the information they learned during the lesson and working situations:

- Working with friends-group
- Picking up sound from the instrument.

When we look at the situation of using the study methods determined in the students' own expressions among all students, the methods that are more necessary for the study but not preferred in the class are:

- Reading-playing the sequence of the tone necessary to gain a sense of tone and adapt to the relevant tonality.
- Repeating the previous solfeges.
- Before analyzing the melodic structure, especially for students who have rhythm-beat-time problems, “bona”,
- Reading a wide variety in one tone. "making use of different sources" creating melodic and rhythmic diversity that allows opportunity,
- " Reading and combining the measurements one by one", which is thought to provide convenience in terms of going from piece to whole,
- "Interval knowledge repetition, interval relation, which is one of the most important points of hearing education and has a direct effect on solfege reading skill thinking”.

Recommendations

This study was conducted with the aim of collecting information about the study habits of music students who have just started university during the pandemic period. As a result it is seen that students are insufficient to provide self-study discipline and to produce their own methods and solutions during distance education. The fact that the students did not or could not produce a solution despite the problems they stated especially in tune ups and downs, voices with changing signals,

range, and tone sense-ability to enter into tone also suggests that they do not have a holistic point of view regarding their working system and order.

Considering that the intensity of the skills and the lessons are in close relation with each other in music education, it is thought that conducting such researches in relation to the other lessons in the current period will be important in terms of controlling and organizing the general academic success of the student and individually recognizing the students and recommending a suitable study method for them. In addition, it is thought that similar studies can be carried out cross-sectionally at every stage of the distance education process, and the change and development of students can be determined in detail.

About Author

Author: Elçin Ergin Talaka is a working at Kastamonu University Faculty of Fine Arts and Design, Department of Musicology as a lecturer. She completed undergraduate education in Gazi University, Faculty of Education, Department of Music Education. Then completed master's degree at Gazi University, Institute of Educational Sciences. She completed his doctorate education at Abant Izzet Baysal University, Institute of Educational Sciences, on classical guitar and music education in the department of music education.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

Funding

No funding was received.

Ethical Standards

The research was conducted within the framework of the Declaration of Helsinki; Participants are voluntary, informed consent has been obtained. Ethics committee approval was not obtained for the study. Signed consent forms were filled in to examine the compositions written by the participants within the scope of the study.

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