

ABSTRACT

This master's thesis deals with the demanding responsibilities of studying at a conservatoire and coping with them. The aim of the thesis is to research how students experience their studies, the stress and also how they cope with the stress itself. Conservatoire students are a very specific group of pupils. From an early age they publicly perform, they are being judged, compared and they develop a very unique individual relationship with their teachers. All these circumstances can lead to difficult situations in their life. The theoretical part of the thesis is therefore divided into 4 main chapters. In the first chapter there is a brief description of studying at a conservatoire with a focus on its technicalities. The second chapter examines stress amongst musicians, what causes it, how it emerges, and I also mention stress among young musicians and how it differs from stress experienced by professional musicians in this chapter. The next part brings the reader closer to specific challenging situations in the lives of conservatoire students and the last chapter describes coping strategies that can be used in the lives of musicians. The practical part of the thesis is carried out in the form of semi-structured interviews with conservatoire students from several schools in the Czech Republic. The aim of this part was to find out what kind of challenging situations students experience, what helps them to confront them, what are their strategies for successful coping mechanisms, and subsequently what role the Principal study teacher and the whole school plays in this process. The results of this research show that students experience specific challenging situations and - in most cases - do not know how to handle them; their coping strategies are rather insufficient. Young musicians perceive that the school environment is not safe enough for them to deal with these challenging situations. Sadly, the schools do not offer help to their students whatsoever.

However, in some of the cases, the Principal study teachers try to be available to help the students.

KEYWORDS

Stress, music performance anxiety, coping strategies, conservatory students, challenging situations