

Materials and Methods

The study enrolled a total of 110 students of Public Health at the Faculty of Health Science, Warsaw Medical University (the return rate was 91.8%). The study group comprised the first-year students of the first-cycle programme (n=52) and the second-year students of the second-cycle programme (n=49). A standardised PROKOS questionnaire was used in the study. Diagnostic items made up five sub-scales that measured the following skills: assertive skills (A), cooperative skills (K), sociable skills (T), community-focused skills (S), and social resourcefulness (Z). The study was voluntary and anonymous and was conducted using a PAPI method. Raw results were referred to the population norms and were expressed as sten scores (1-10). For the comparative analysis, the significance level was established at $\alpha < 0.05$.

Results

The study participants had a very low level of social competence (sten 1). In addition, similar results in particular sub-scales were observed, regardless of the cycle of degree programme (U test, $p > 0.05$), with the lowest results obtained for the K and Z sub-scales (sten 1). Slightly better outcomes were produced in the case of the A and T sub-scales (sten 3). However, a relatively best level of competence was found for the S sub-scale (sten 4), which, in relation to the population norms, produced scores below average.

Conclusions

Owing to the fact that the level of social competence was very low in both groups, courses that would enhance and develop soft skills and social competence need to be added to the curricula.

Key messages:

- Starting from the academic year 2017/2018, a module comprising the 'Development of Social Skills' course will be added to the curriculum for the Public Health at Warsaw Medical University.
- Students will improve their communication skills, cooperation within a team, time- and self-management skills in stressful situations, networking, and intercultural competences.

Assessment of level of social skills among Public Health students of Warsaw Medical University

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Background

Social competence, i.e. ability to manage themselves in social situations, is highly appreciated by employers and constitutes an important part of professional development of Public Health students.

Aim

The study aimed to measure and compare the level of social skills among Public Health students.