

MENTAL HEALTH OF POLISH STUDENTS AND THE OCCURRENCE OF RESPIRATORY TRACT INFECTIONS

S. Baran¹, I. Teul², E. Dzieciolowska-Baran², A. Gawlikowska-Sroka²

¹Mieszko I College of Education and Administration in Poznan, Poland;

²Department of General and Clinical Anatomy, Pomeranian Medical University, Szczecin, Poland

A significant association between psychological health and the increased rate of a number of symptoms and diseases is widely acknowledged. The respiratory tract infections are the most common group of disorders in the student population. The aim of the paper was to examine the association between the psychological status and the occurrence of respiratory tract infections. The study comprised 500 Polish students between 19 and 21 years of age. Two psychological scales were utilized: the D. Goldberg GHQ-12 scale to examine the general psychological status and the CES-D scale to evaluate the symptoms of depression. In addition a pro-health questionnaire in the examined group of students was performed. An increased stress level was stated in 51% of students and the symptoms of depression in 22%. An association between distress and the occurrence of respiratory tract infections was stated based on statistical analyses. The highest stress level and related high distress index were observed in students suffering from lower respiratory tract infections (7.1 scale value). This group evaluated their health status as poor based on the pro-health questionnaire. In the same group of students a lack of sleep (5.4), lack of regular eating habits (4.2) and lack of physical activity (3.9) was also observed. The performed study showed that Polish student population is exposed to increased stress level increasing the occurrence of respiratory tract infections.