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FACTORIAL STRUCTURE OF THE GENERAL HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE (GHQ-30)
AMONG PSYCHIATRIC AND SOMATIC PATIENTS

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Background: The Goldberg's 30-item General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-30) is used as a screening instrument for psychological distress in the general population. GHQ-30 has been widely used as a unitary measure, but several underlying factors have been identified in previous studies based on factor analyses.

Aim: To analyze the internal consistency and the factor structure of the Polish version of GHQ-30 in the group of somatic and psychiatric patients' subpopulations. Differences in factor structure among those two groups might have important implications for how the test is used in those populations.

Methods: A total of 1473 patients (807 psychiatric and 666 somatic) were included into the study. A total score was calculated with Likert method. The principal factor analysis with orthogonal varimax normalized rotation was used for the factor extraction.

Results: The GHQ-30 was found to have high internal consistency. The factorial analysis conducted for the whole group, as well as for psychiatric and somatic patients separately, showed that two factors labeled as followed can be abstracted from the global scale: "depression and anxiety" and "interpersonal functioning and general coping". These factors jointly account for 54,2% - 62,3% of the variance.

Conclusions: Results showed that GHQ-30 may be used both as a unitary measure using full-scale scores and allows to get more detailed information about individual's intra- and interpersonal functioning.