



SATISFACTION OF STUDENTS FROM THE ORGANIZATION AND QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN THE FACULTY OF PUBLIC HEALTH-SOFIA

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Abstract

Healthcare management is not only science and practice, but also a separate, independent profession. Nowadays there are opportunities for autonomous professional career and development in the field of healthcare management. It is becoming necessary for the health management function to become from “just passing through” activity to a more specific activity of certain type of professionals, who have to fully devote themselves to the complex, unconventional and unusual management of the health care organization. Bulgaria has established conditions for university education of healthcare managers – in the Faculties of Public Health.

The purpose of this article is to examine and analyze the opinion of master students in the Faculty of Public Health at Medical University-Sofia in terms of the satisfaction with their education, organization and learning process quality. The respondents were 189 master students in Public Health and Healthcare Management during the period 01.06.-30.06.2015 The analysis includes their degree of satisfaction with the education, as the results show that 93,2% of the students have a positive assessment, while over 75% of the respondents believe that their training in healthcare management is adequate to the “EU average”. The analysis also included the respondents’ proposals for improvement of their education.

Keywords: satisfaction, education, organization, quality, healthcare management

INTRODUCTION

Health management has broadly penetrated the managerial practice of the developed European countries and in recent decades it was outlined and established as individual autonomous function and professional career. In Bulgaria implementation and regulation of professional health management were delayed and hindered because of the effective regulations.



Pending issue in this area is the mechanism of selection and creation of managerial teams in our healthcare institutions. The competitive principle has been regulated for taking up some managerial titles, yet we didn't manage to overcome the formal bureaucratic way of running the competitions. Additionally, there is no mandatory requirement for holding the educational degree of health management master being a prerequisite for participation in these competitions.

These weaknesses are somewhat coped with the introduction of academic studies in the health management area held by the faculties for public health.

The objective of this article is to research and analyse master students' opinion of the major "Public health and health management" in the Faculty of Public Health, Medical University – Sofia concerning their satisfaction from the studies, organization and quality of learning process.

In order to achieve the defined objective we performed the following tasks:

1. Research of the satisfaction degree of the master students from their studies in the Faculty of Public Health.
2. Research of students' awareness in the following aspects:
 - What would be the subjects they will learn during their studies in the master's programme of Health management;
 - The educational objectives of each subject;
 - The criteria according to which they will be assessed in the end of the semester.
3. Establishing respondents' opinion concerning the applicability in their practice of the acquired knowledge and skills during their studies in the Faculty of Public Health.
4. Analysis of the suggestions of the inquired master students for improving their studies in Public health and health management.

METHODOLOGY

In order to accumulate the information we used individual anonymous inquiry card. We inquired 189 master students in public health and health management in the period of 01.06.-30.06.2015 in the Faculty of Public Health – Sofia. To this end we used numerous descriptive and analytical statistical methods. The quantitative analyses were performed with the statistical package of applied programmes - SPSS 17.0. In view of the tabular and graphic processing and presentation we used the products of MICROSOFT OFFICE.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Among the inquired students 53(28%) were men and 136 (72%) women, and 83 (43,9%) were from the capital city, while the other 106 (56,1%) were from the towns. The majority (37%) of the respondents were aged 31 to 40, followed by those (28%) in the age group to 30 years, and the third ranking were the inquired students aged 41 to 50 years (27%).

We researched the opinion of master students in "Public health and health management" in the Faculty of Public Health, Medical University – Sofia concerning their satisfaction from studies, organization and quality of the learning process.

Their assessment of the satisfaction degree from their studies in the Faculty of public health according to the ranking from minus 5 /-5/ to plus 5 /+5/ is presented at figure 1.

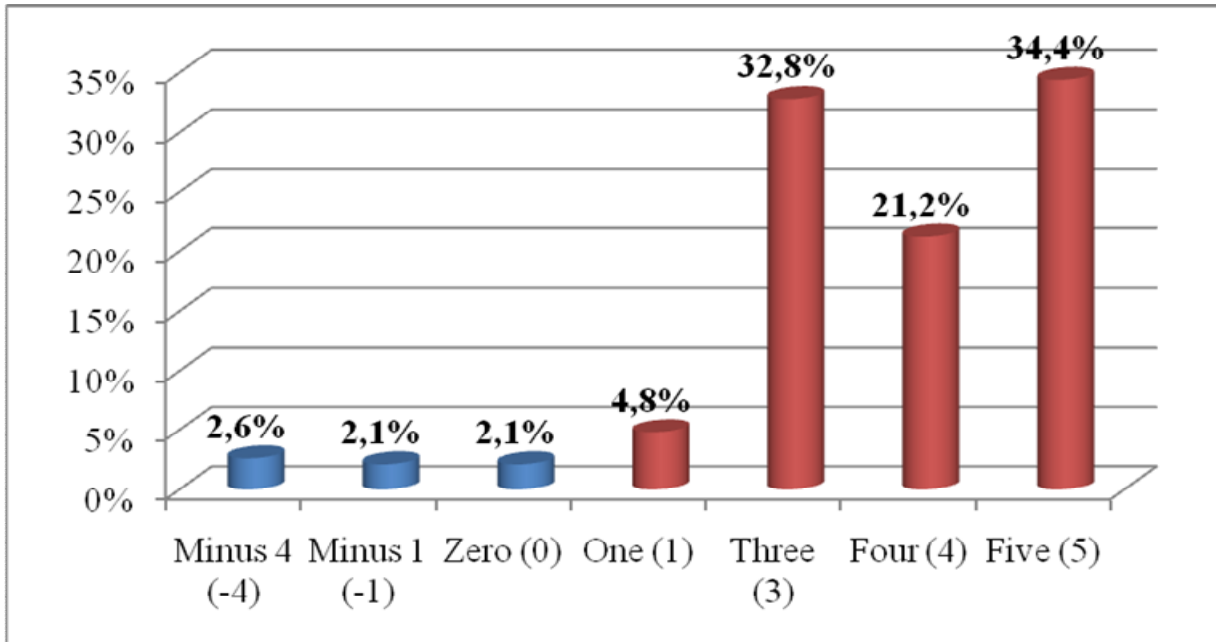


Figure 1: Assessment of students in view of their satisfaction degree from their studies in the Faculty of Public Health

Based on the presented data we could conclude that almost one-third (34,4%) of the inquired gave the highest score for their satisfaction degree from the studies in the Faculty of Public Health. Positive grade (over 1) was assigned by 93,2% of the students. The prevailing number of the inquired (66,1%) ranked their preparation level in the Faculty of Public Health in the Medical University – Sofia first compared to the students from the other Faculties of Public Health in Bulgaria. (Figure 2.)

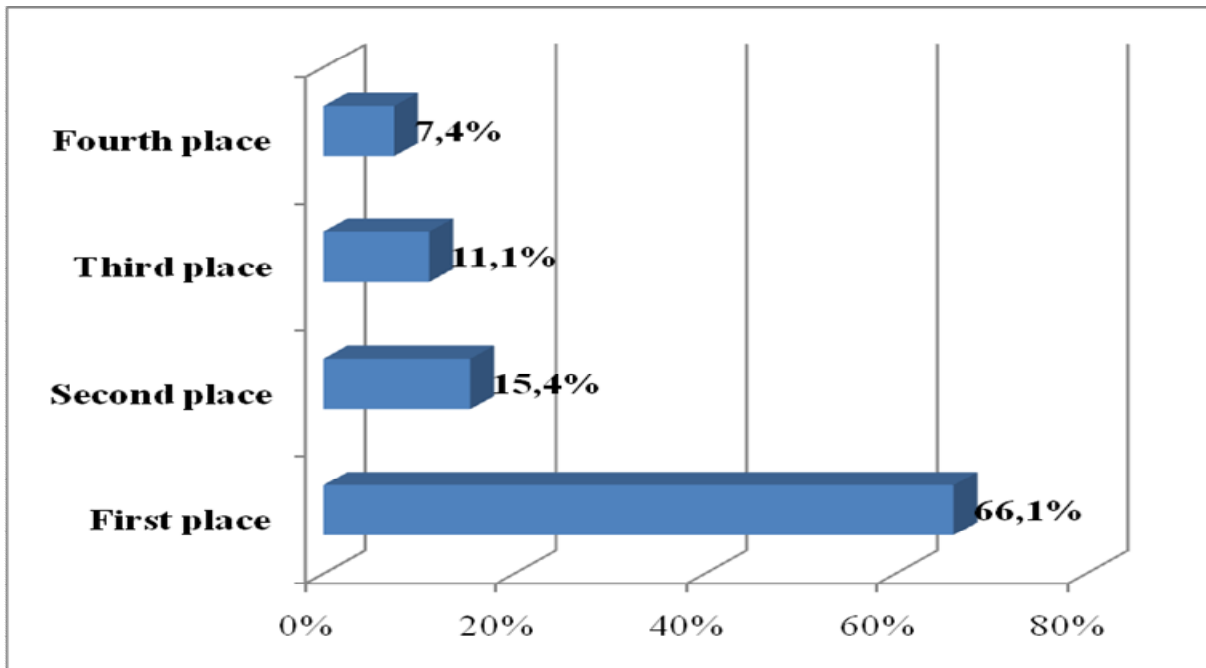


Figure 2: Ranking of the Faculty of Public Health to the Medical University – Sofia in view of the preparation level based on students' opinion

Over 75% of the inquired students were of the opinion that their health management preparation is adequate to the “EU average” and those of the opposite opinion were 9,5% among them. (Figure 3.)

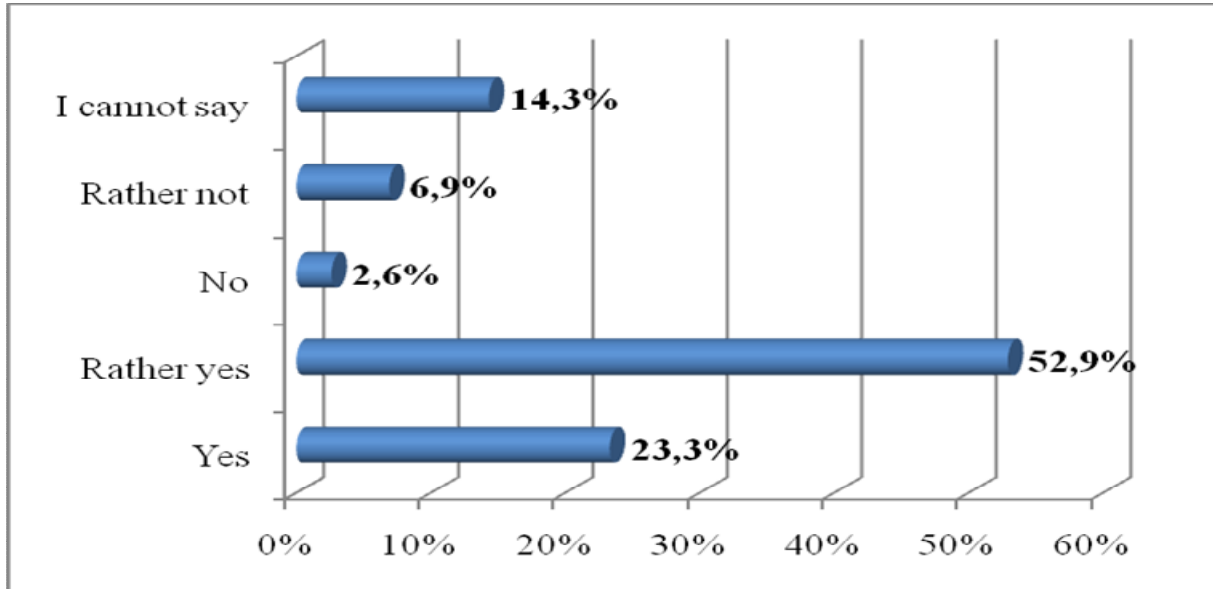


Figure 3: Do you believe that your studies are adequate to the EU average?

In order to clarify students’ notion concerning the studied subjects during their studies in the master’s programme of Health management, the educational objectives of each subject and the criteria according to which they would be assessed in the end of the semester we asked the following three questions in our research.

According to the results, the majority of the inquired students (84,1%) are aware to various degrees of the subjects to be studied during their tuition in the master’s programme for Health management. (Figure 4.)

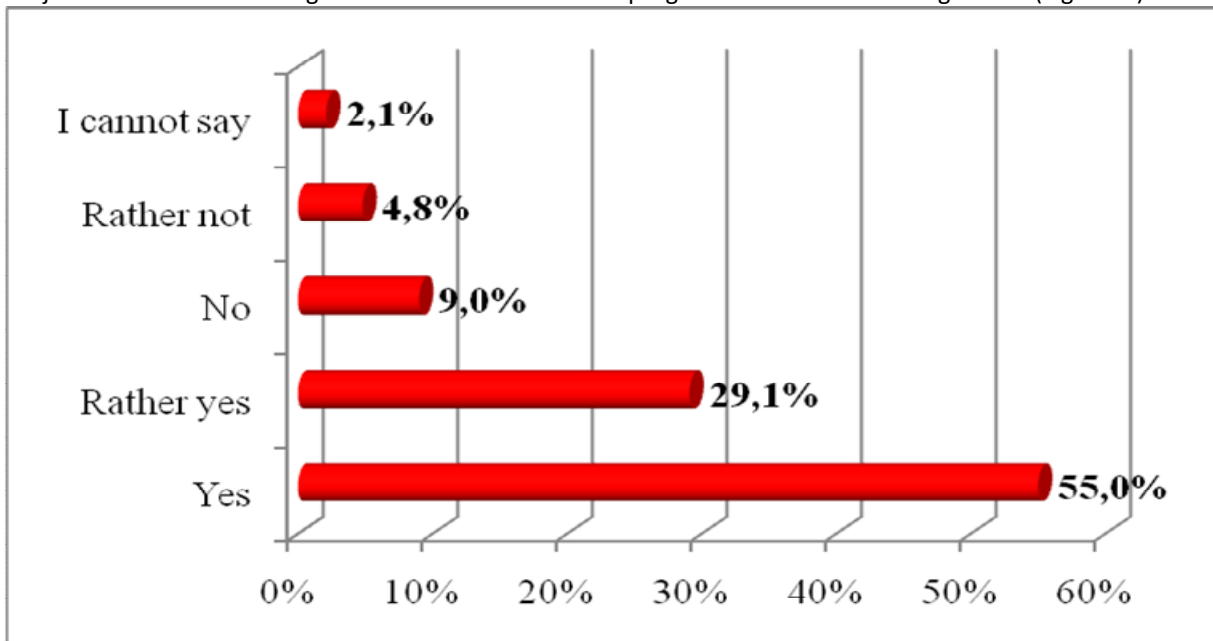


Figure 4: Do you have clear idea of the subjects you will study during your tuition in the master’s programme for Health management?

Once they were asked whether they are aware of the educational objectives of new subject at the time they start studying it, what would they actually study and when they would be tutored, the majority of the inquired students (77,8%) gave positive answer /or rather positive/ this question, but the share of those that gave negative answer /no and rather no/ was not negligible - 17,5%. (Figure 5.)

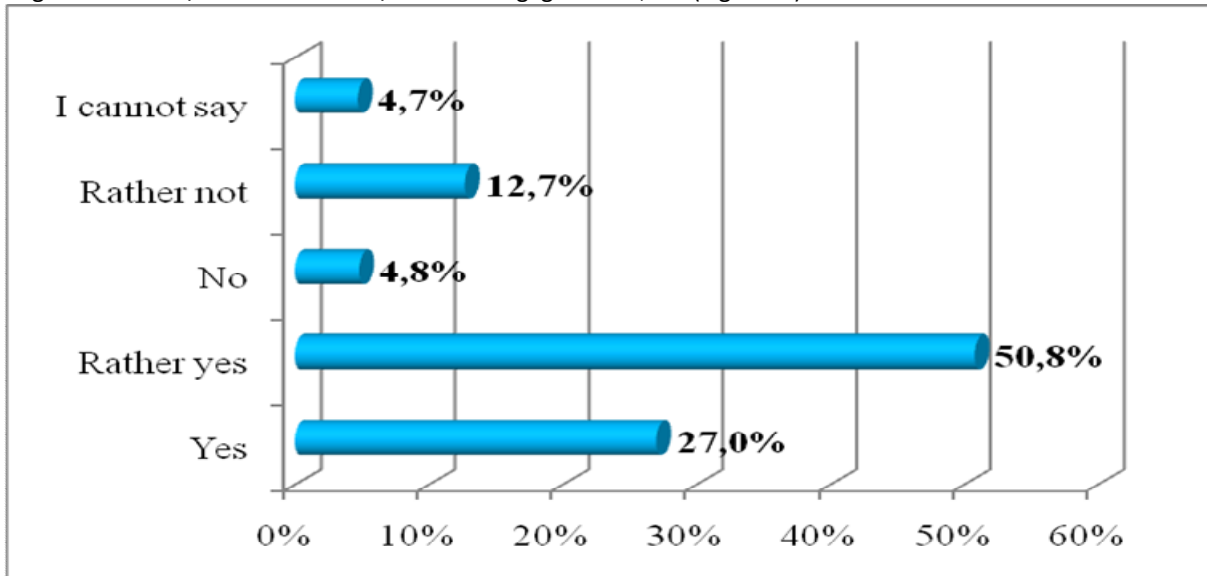


Figure 5: At the time of starting new subject, are you aware of its educational objectives, what you would actually study and when it would be tutored?

Those aware of the criteria according to which they would be assessed in the end of the semester are 82,5% /156/ of the students, and the other 17,5% /33/ were not aware of that. (Figure 6.)

The majority of the inquired students (75,3%) were of the opinion that the lectures being tutored supplement and clarify the subject and provide additional guidelines for preparation, and 9 people (4,8%) were of the opinion that lectures do not supplement academic literature, just reiterate it. The opinion that they supplement and clarify the academic literature but do not help from practical point of view was shared by 14 students (7,4%), and 27 (14,3%) could not say. (Table 1.)

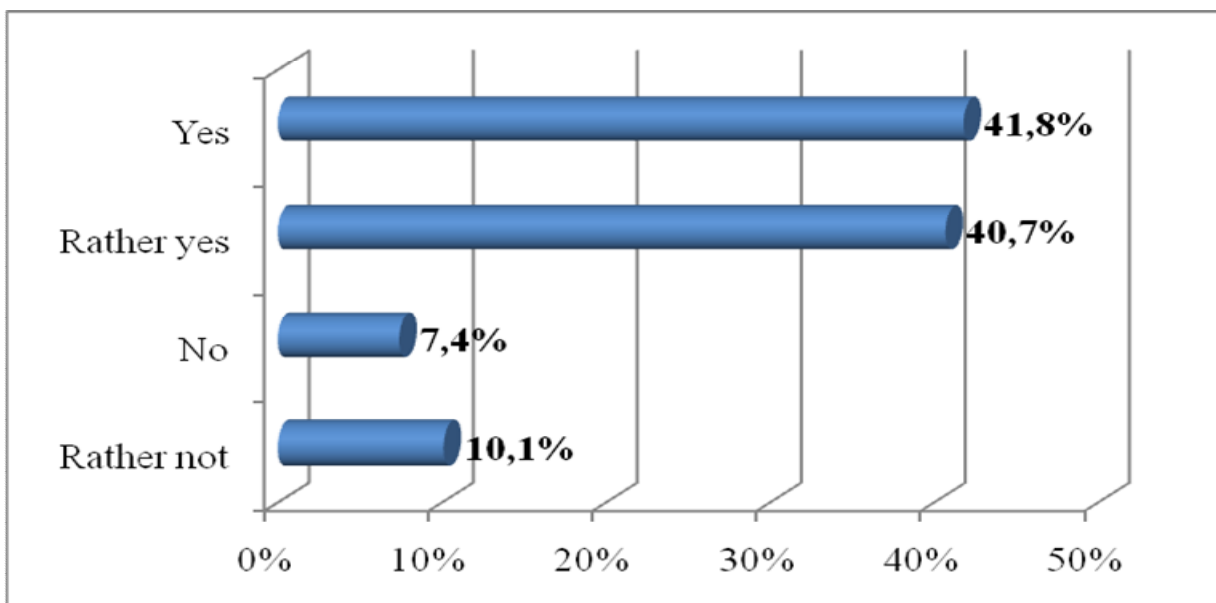


Figure 6: Are you aware of the criteria according to which you will be assessed in the end of the semester

Table 1: Students' opinion on the lectures they visit

Answers	Number	Relative share in %
They complement and clarify the academic literature and provide additional guidelines for the preparation	139	73,5
They do not complement the academic literature, just reiterate it	9	4,8
They complement and clarify the academic literature but are not helpful from academic point of view	14	7,4
The differences between the various lecturers are so huge that it is impossible to answer	27	14,3
Total	189	100,0

Concerning the seminars visited by the students, the majority of them (43,9%) are of the opinion that thanks to considering practice cases they help in creating real notion of their future profession, followed by those (28,6%) according to whom seminars are coordinated with the lectures but they create fully theoretical knowledge. Only 10 (5,3%) of the students are of the opinion that seminars have no connection to lectures whatsoever thus creating additional confusion and 42 (22,2%) – cannot say (Table 2.).

Table 2. Students' opinion on the seminars they visit

Answers	Number	Relative share in %
They have no relation to lectures whatsoever thus creating additional confusion	10	5,3
They are coordinated with the lectures but create fully theoretical knowledge	54	28,6
They review practice cases thus creating real notion of their future profession	83	43,9
The differences between the various lecturers are so huge that it is impossible to answer	42	22,2
Total	189	100,0

The next question from the inquiry establishes students' opinion on the degree to which their health management studies in the Faculty of Public Health Medical University-Sofia is sufficient to get realization as good health managers. (Figure 7.)

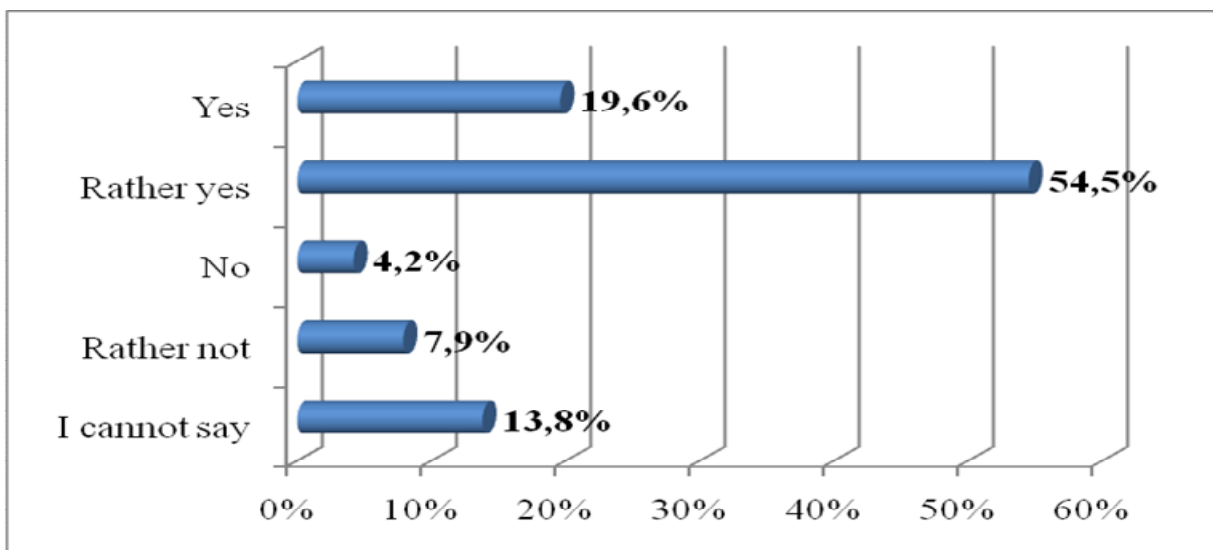


Figure 7: Students' opinion on the degree to which their health management studies in the Faculty of Public Health to the Medical University – Sofia is sufficient so that they get realization as a good health manager

According to the results, the majority of the inquired students 74,1% /140/ are of the opinion that the health management studies in the Faculty of Public Health – Sofia is sufficient so that they could achieve realization as good health managers, and the opposite opinion is shared by 12,1% /23/, while 13,8% /26/ cannot say.

Table 3: Dependency between motivation for professional realization and students' opinion on that the study degree is sufficient to achieve realization as good health managers

			Are you motivated for professional realization in the managerial area of the healthcare system				Total
			I am fully motivated	I am sufficiently motivated	I am not motivated	I cannot say	
Do you think that your health management studies in the Faculty of Public Health Medical university – Sofia are sufficient to achieve realization as a good health manager?	Yes	Num	28	9	0	0	37
		%	14,8%	4,8%	0,0%	0,0%	19,6%
	Rather yes	Num	48	51	4	0	103
		%	25,4%	27,0%	2,1%	0,0%	54,5%
	No	Num	3	5	0	0	8
		%	1,6%	2,6%	0,0%	0,0%	4,2%
	Rather no	Num	3	9	1	2	15
		%	1,6%	4,8%	0,5%	1,1%	7,9%
	I cannot say	Num	5	18	1	2	26
		%	2,6%	9,5%	0,5%	1,1%	13,8%
	Total	Num	87	92	6	4	189
		%	46,0%	48,7%	3,2%	2,1%	100,0%

We searched for correlative dependency between the motivation for professional realization in the managerial area of the healthcare system and students' opinion to the degree to which their health management studies in the Faculty of Public Health Medical University – Sofia are sufficient to achieve realization as good health managers. The χ^2 Pearson test showed that there is statistically significant relation between the two studied indicators - $\chi^2 = 29,319$, $p < 0,001$. This shows that the students who are motivated towards professional realization in the managerial area of the healthcare system are of the opinion that their health management studies in the Faculty of Public Health Medical University-Sofia are sufficient to achieve realization as good health managers. The data are presented in Table 3.

In order to establish whether the knowledge and skills acquired during the studies in the Faculty of Public Health are applicable in practice, we asked the next question of the inquiry. The results presented in figure 8 show that around one-third (34,9%) of the inquired were of the opinion that knowledge and skills acquired during their studies in the Faculty of Public health are fully applicable in their practice, and more than half (57,7%) of them believe they are somewhat applicable. (Figure 8.)

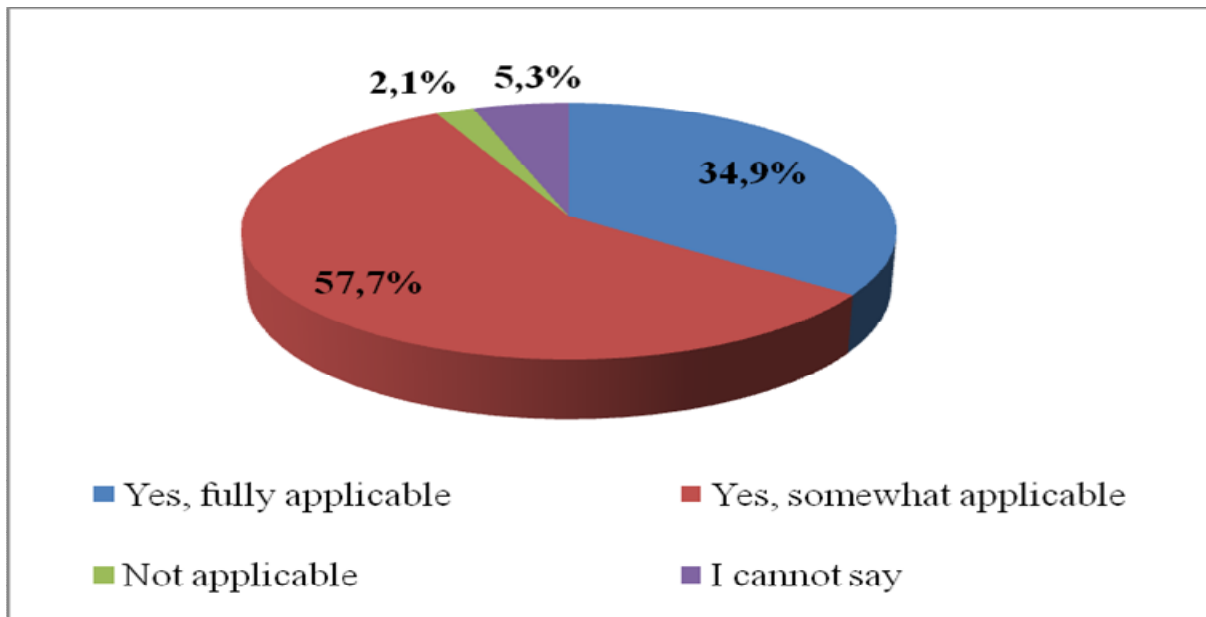


Figure 8: Students' opinion concerning the applicability in practice of the knowledge and skills acquired during their studies in the Faculty of Public Health

In order to establish what it takes to achieve better studies of students in the master's programme for health management we asked question in the inquiry and the results are presented in table 4. The basic suggestion that is outstanding among the others for improving studies is the need for students to discuss cases of real practice (77,2%).

Table 4: Suggestions for improving master students' studies in Public health and health management

Suggestions	Number	Relative share in %
Discussion on cases from real practice	146	77,2
Personal contact with the lecturer	31	16,4
Making up groups for teamwork of students from the course when solving the assigned tasks	34	18
Project participation during studies	21	11,1

*The amount of per cent exceeds 100%, since the inquired gave more than one answer

CONCLUSION

Based on the presented results we could make the following conclusions:

1. Positive assessment (above 1) on their satisfaction degree from their studies in the Faculty of Public Health provided 93,2% of the students and the majority of the inquired (66,1%) ranked their preparation level in the Faculty of Public Health in the Medical University – Sofia first compared to the students from the other Faculties of Public Health in Bulgaria.
2. The majority of the inquired students (75,3%) were of the opinion that the lectures being tutored supplement and clarify the subject and provide additional guidelines for preparation, and 43,9% were of the opinion seminars they visit review practice cases thus creating real notion of their future profession.
3. The majority of the inquired students 74,1% are of the opinion that the health management studies in the Faculty of Public Health – Sofia is sufficient so that they could achieve realization as good health managers, and 92,6% are of the opinion that knowledge and skills acquired during their studies in the Faculty of Public Health are fully applicable in their practice to various degrees.



4. Almost all inquired students (97,4%) gave positive assessment of the lecturing level in the Faculty for Public Health, and in order to improve their studies, the students pointed the need of discussing cases from real practice (77,2%).

The Faculty of Public Health achieves its main mission – creating the new generation of health managers in Bulgaria that are necessary for the successful organizational change of the national healthcare system and its effective management.

At the same time, the Faculty of Public Health should create new type of intellectual product: educational system for people that would like to turn into entrepreneurs and investors in healthcare

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