

A Survey of Worry Domains in Student of Zabol Universities in 2003

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Abstract

Background and purpose: Worry, as a cognitive domain to anxiety, defined as a central feature of some clinical disorders. Worry plays an important role in psychopathology. Among general population, higher education students are experiencing worry in several domains, which can influence on their educational performance and social activities.

Methods: In this study worry domains of Zabol public university students have been examined. 362 students in seven faculty of 2003 academic year were randomly selected. All the students filled worry domains questionnaire.

Results: The result revealed that the hierarchy of student's worry domains could be placed under the following domains in descending order: 1 – future goals (82.3%). 2-job (75.5%) 3- uncertainty (51%). 4- financial conditon (66%) 5- relationship (56.6%).

Conclusion: According to the present findings Zabol public university student's main worry domain is aimless future and work. The implication to this study can be used in counseling centers and in future planning for student's mental health.

Key word: ANXIETY, WORRY, UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Introduction

The time we live in, is called “the age of anxiety”. The problems and complexities of life, stream of information, and the speed of their changes ill-attention to religious educations, disregard of family and national values traditions, drawing of human in technology of current century, have created increasing anxiety for societies(1). According to statistics of world health organization about 400 million people in the world have problems with anxiety(2). In the fourth edition Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental

Disorders (DSM^{2V}), it is mentioned that anxiety is composed of two parts or domains:

1. “Worry” or cognitive anxiety, that in its cognitive perspective overcomes physical perspectives.

2. “Emotionality” or physical anxiety, that mostly focuses on emotional perspective and physical signs, such as sweating, face flushing tachycardia, etc (3).

Worry is the most prevalent sign of psychological spread extension of anxiety (4). A little worry is considered as a domain of preparedness process, but much worry is a factor that threatens human's psychological health (5).

According to Morris and Liebert, worry is an independent variable, and is distinguishable from anxiety. Worry depends on a series of cognitive

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factors of anxiety experience, such as negative expectations, self cognitive belongings, available opportunity, and possible problematic consequences (6). Liebert's findings indicated that anxiety affects a person's performance in cognitive and rational assignments (subjective activities).

Sarason believed that worry is a kind of mental occupation that is characterized by self-underestimating and doubting of self-abilities, and often results in negative cognitive assessment lack of concentration, unfavorable physiologic reactions, and educational failure (7). Students are one of the social groups which are more vulnerable than other social groups because of the type of their activity, the role they play, others' expectations from them, and the responsibilities that they are committed to (3).

In Maleky et al study in Hamedan University of Medical Sciences, 33.4% of student had anxiety (2). Paying attention to psychological health is important, because entering university causes significant changes in student's personal, family, and social life. Being in such a situation often is associated with pressure and worry, and affects their performance and efficiency. Students' unfamiliarity with university environment, separation from family, lack of interest to course, problems in dealing with other roommates and classmates are factors that can cause psychological problem and performance failure (8).

Student's problems not only decrease the students' attention, time, and participation in class, but also affect their personality development (9).

Given all these fact, worry has important role in one's physical and psychological health, and recognition of this phenomenon can influence counseling and even educational programs.

Methods

In this survey all students of medical faculty and students of research and Technology University who studied in the 7 faculties formed the study population. In each faculty two cohort of student

were randomly selected and all students of the selected cohort were participated in the study. These students were all Iranian and hadn't experienced any events such as death or divorce of relatives, financial breakdown. They also lacked any psychiatric condition diagnosed by a physician in the previous six months and did not use any psychiatric drugs. The 25-item questionnaire gathers data on individual demographic characteristic and information on five worry domains including relationships, future goals, uncertainty, financial problem and job. A 5-point Likert scale (no worry, little worry, much worry, very much worry) was used to assess the amount worry based on a 0-4 score range, so the extent of the total worry grades was between 0-100, and its domain between 0-200 also, the scores of worry were divided in three groups including: less worry (0-33), moderate worry (33.1-66) and severe worry (66.1-100). The validity and reliability of tool were approved in national and international studies. The students filled the demographic data which also included data on inclusion criteria those met the required criteria then filled the second part that measures the worry of the students. Each questionnaire took 15-20 minutes to complete and the forms were completed by students 8-12 o'clock in the morning or 2-6 o'clock in the afternoon.

Data analysis was done with SPSS.

The comparison of the grades of worry domains was done by paired T test, and their linear relationship, with Pearson co-efficient.

Results

Of all students, 53.1% were female, 46.9% were male. Mean age was 21.1 ± 1.9 years (range, 18-30 years). Most of the students (89.8%) were single. Of all students, 70% studied for a BS degree, and more than half of them (55.7%) were living in dormitories.

Of all study subjects, (52.5%) had moderate, and 19.3% had severe worry. The commonest worries were for future goals (34.8%), job (23.8%), financial issues (19.3%) and relationship (18.2%).

Comparing the five domains of worry shows that

the most sever worry were for future goals (11.2±5.5), followed by worry for job (10.4±4.7). The least worry was for relationship (8.2±5.3). The results of paired T test to compare the worry rate in 5 domains showed that, only the mean of worry in relationship and uncertainty domains did not have significant differences, (p

relationship between financial domain score and relationship domain (r=0.51).

Meanwhile, there were no significant relationships between the factors such as age, sex, marriage status , educational section, spouse’s or parents’ job , and home status.

Table 1. Frequency , mean , and standard deviation of students according to the rate of worry in different domains

Mean ± sd	Total		Much		Middle		Little		Rate of Worry Domain
	P	N	P	N	P	N	P	N	
8.2±5.3	100	362	18.2	66	38.4	139	43.4	157	Relationship
8.5±5.2	100	362	19.3	70	41.7	151	39.0	141	Uncertainty
11.2±5	100	362	34.8	126	47.5	172	17.7	64	Future goals
10.4±4.7	100	362	23.8	86	51.7	187	24.6	89	Job
9.1±5	100	362	19.3	70	46.7	169	34.0	123	Finanacial
47.0±21.2	100	362	19.3	70	52.2	189	28.5	103	total

Table 2. Relationship between the different domains of worry with each other and the whole worry in students

Domin	RELATIONS HIP	Incertainty	Future goals	Job	Fainancial	Total
Relationship	-	-	-	-	-	-
Incertainty	r=0.78 p<0.0001	-	-	-	-	-
Future goals	r=0.64 p<0.0001	r=0.71 p<0.0001	-	-	-	-
Job	r=0.66 p<0.0001	r=0.67 p<0.0001	r=0.68 p<0.0001	-	-	-
Finanacial	r=0.51 p<0.0001	r=0.61 p<0.0001	r=0.59 p<0.0001	r=0.51 p<0.0001	-	-
total	r=0.86 p<0.0001	r=0.89 p<0.0001	r=0.89 p<0.0001	r=0.83 p<0.0001	r=0.76 p<0.0001	-

= 0.078) ,but there were significant differences between other domains (P<0.05).

Investigating the relationships between worries in different domains indicated that there were significant direct linear relationships between rate of worries in each domain with other domains (P<0.01); increase of in one domain increases all other domains. There was

Discussion

Our results showed that, the future goals (mean=11.2±5) ranked first among the 5 domains of worry. Talis reported that the worry of students for this domain (4.6 ±3.2) was fourth among the 5(9).

Nazer et al reported that 63.5% of the students

in rafsanjan stated uncertain future as one of their problems(10) , Also Koshan in Sabzvar University reported that 37.4% of student were pessimist about their future(11). Comparing these results with ours demonstrated that the rate of worry in this domain was obviously more common among our student with higher severity. Because of the socio-economical features of the province, the clear and predictable future goals can't be imagined.

Job domain with a mean of 10.4 ± 4.7 ranked the second. In study by Talis job (6.9 ± 3.6) ranked as the first domain of worries(9).

One reason is that the future perspective of the job is one of the objectives of each student.

Financial domain was the second in rank , While in Talis's study it was the third . Koshan reported that in Sabzevar University 59.1% of students stated financial problem as the first worry domain(11). So, difference in financial status, and lack of insurance for jobless people and weak social supports are the causes of these differences.

The uncertainty domain (8.5 ± 5.2) was the fourth. In Talis's study the grade of uncertainty domain was reported the second (5), and in Nazer's research, 67.2% of Rafsanjan University students stated lack of self – confidence as one of their problems(10).

Different financial, social , and developmental structures can be the main reasons of uncertainty, so that in developing countries the risk of financial and social instability is more than developed countries.

Relationship domain was the fifth of all domains (8.2 ± 5.3).

In Talis study the rank was the same (9). The low scores for this domain in comparison with other domains may be explained by social and family ties in Iran which is a product of Iranian-Islamic cultural.

The positive correlation between worry domains may be interpreted as a reflection of deficiencies in problem solving process. The mind of a worried person only jumps from one problem to another which make the anxiety worse.

Given the fact that worry is a known domain of stress, students worries should be carefully

addressed and dealt with.

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