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OPEN PEER REVIEW

Fear and Empathy with COVID-19 Patients Among Medical Students

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About this report

This open peer review (OPR) report shows the public comments made on this article during peer review, by the reviewers, the associate editor and the editor-in-chief, for every revision round, together with the authors' replies. Comments appear only with the consent of the people who wrote them. Reviewers who chose to sign their report are named; the others are shown as "Referee". Comments are edited for language only, and confidential remarks to the editors are not included.

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1 Original submission

2 comments · 9 Oct 2022 – 15 Oct 2022

Mohammad Hasan Keshavarzi Reviewer

MINOR REVISION 9 Oct 2022

Title
• The subject selected is fantastic, but the title is not clear. Revise it.

abstract
background
• The aim of the study should be shortened and revised.

method
• The method section should be shortened.
• " assess the participants' compassion and empathy toward COVID-19 patients." This sentence should be corrected. You mentioned that you measure fear and empathy. What do you mean by "compassion"?

Finding
• “107 medical students from Shiraz medical school participated in this study”. This sentence is redundant. You mentioned the number in the method section.

Result
• “Because this study translates to 37 implementing proper social support for this population merits further investigation of fear. ...” This sentence is not needed in this section. Please delete it.

Introduction
• “Data were collected from participants using questionnaires”. It is not a good sentence.
• The introduction is not coherent.

Method
• In the method section, add participant and setting as a title.
Discussion
• “The studies about students' support systems during pandemics showed that support systems 264 such as strategies for promoting students' emotional well-being and personal development 265 are essential. (48-51) 266 Another study about necessary competencies essential for medical students to challenge the 267 COVID 19 pandemic showed that the ability to adapt to the pandemic situation is one of 268 the essential competencies that should be included in the curriculum to empower the 269 students(4). ” These references in the discussion are not appropriate.

Conclusion
• This part should be clear and sum up what you have presented in your study without sounding redundant. Please revise it.

Leila - BazrafKan Reviewer

MINOR REVISION 15 Oct 2022

Please specify in the results whether empathy among students was acceptable or not.
- How were the questionnaire data analyzed? Please explain the analysis of the questionnaire.
The fact that men are more or less afraid of women is perhaps less important than saying that students' fear was normal or more than normal or much less than normal.
Discuss the articles in line with the study results and say what the research has added to the existing

literature.
- It would be good if the author could explain the practical implication of this study. Moreover, the conclusion should answer the research aim.

2

Revision 1

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

Dear Editors and reviewers,

We appreciate the time that respectable reviewers spent reading our manuscript and use these suggestions to improve the quality of our study. We have implemented your comments and suggestions and wish to submit a revised version of the manuscript for further consideration in the journal. Some parts of the article were changed or corrected. The changed parts are written as Highlighted in the main text.

Kind regards,

Reviewer 1:

Title
• The subject selected is fantastic, but the title is not clear. Revise it.

Thank you for raising this point, we revised it.

Abstract
background
• the aim of the study should be shortened and revised.

Thank you for this comment. It was shortened.

Method
• The method section should be shortened.

Thank you. It was done.

• " assess the participants' compassion and empathy toward COVID-19 patients." This sentence should be corrected. You mentioned that you measure fear and empathy. What do you mean by "compassion "?

Thank you for your attention. The word empathy is the synonym of compassion, so we wrote only empathy.

Finding
• "107 medical students from Shiraz medical school participated in this study". This sentence is redundant. You mentioned number in the method.

Thank you for your valuable comment. We omitted.

Result

• *“Because this study translates to 37 implementing proper social support for this population merits further investigation of fear….”. This sentence is not needed in this section. Please delete.*

Thank you. It was done.

Introduction

• *“Data were collected from participants using questionnaires” . it Is not a good sentence.*

Thank you very much, you are right, we revised it.

• *The introduction is not coherent.*

Thank you for this comments. We rephrased and revised most of the sentences.

Method

• *In method add participant and setting as title.*

Thank you for raising this point, we added.

Discussion

• *“The studies about students' support systems during pandemics showed that support systems 264 such as strategies for promoting students' emotional well-being and personal development 265 are essential. (48-51) 266 Another study about necessary competencies essential for medical students to challenge the 267 COVID 19 pandemic showed that the ability to adapt to the pandemic situation is one of 268 the essential competencies that should be included in the curriculum to empower the 269 students(4). “. These references in discussion isn’t appropriate.*

Thank you for your attention, we omitted all of them.

Conclusion

• *This part should be clear and sum up what you have presented in your study without sounding redundant. Please revise it.*

Thank you. We corrected and revised.

Reviewer 3:

Please specify in the results whether empathy among students was acceptable or not.

Thank you for this comment. It was explained at the bottom of table 3.

- How are the results of the questionnaire data analyzed? Please explain the analysis of the questionnaire.

Thank you for raising this point. We explained it in the statistical analysis section and even in the results section.

The fact that men are more or less afraid of women is perhaps less important than saying that students' fear was normal or more than normal or much less than normal.

Thank you for your valuable comment. It was shown in table 4, by looking at the column of mean and SD, you can figure out that the fear among men was a little higher than women.

Discuss the articles in line with the study results and say what the research has added to the existing literature.

Thank you very much for your consideration. It was explained in the last part of the discussion which is highlighted now.

- It would be good if the author could explain the practical implication of this study. Moreover, the conclusion should answer research the aim.

Thank you for your comment. The aim of the study was to investigate the students' empathy and fear towards COVID-19, and we examined the factors affecting them and the relationship between them, and as a result, we have reached our goal of identifying these factors will help in the readiness for the next pandemic.

Associate Editor 1:

Please revise your manuscript based on the reviewers' comments.

Thank you very much. We revised the manuscript based on the reviewers' comments.

Associate Editor 2:

1. *In the results of abstract please remove "107 medical students from Shiraz medical school participated in this study. We assessed empathy toward COVID-19 patients and their fear of this disease."*

   Thank you. We removed this sentences.

2. The sample size calculation must be based on the main aim of the study (estimating a mean) so power and effect size doesn't make sense.

Thank you, you are completely right. We revised it and it was added the mean instead of power.

3. How about the exclusion criteria?

Thank you for your attention. We added the exclusion in the method section.

4. Report the different kinds of validity of the tools.
Thank you for this comment. It was reported in the method section.

5. Described method of sampling is not a systematic random sampling.

By consulting with a statistician, we used this sample size formula to estimate the average of a specific feature in our statistical population. This sampling method is based on simple random sampling.

6. Appropriate descriptive statistics are median and IQR.
You are right, but by consulting with a statistician, our data collection did not have any outlier data to use median and IQR.

7. Also include history of COVID in Table 4.

Thank you for this comment. It was done in table 1.

8. How about the correlation between Fear and Empathy?
Thank you for your attention. It was described in the last paragraph of the result section.

2 Revision 1

1 comment · 3 Dec 2022

Leila - BazrafKan Reviewer

ACCEPT 3 Dec 2022

The manuscript looks much better now after the correction and is ready for publication.

3

Revision 2

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

Dear Editors and reviewers,

We are grateful for the respectable reviewers' input, which we will use to make our study better. After taking into account your comments and recommendations, we would like to submit a revised version of the work for the journal's consideration. The article has been updated in several places. The main text highlights the portions that have been modified.

Kind regards,

Reviewer 1:

The manuscript looks much better now after the correction, and ready for publication.

Many thanks.

Reviewer 2:

the manuscript is ready for publication

our thanks and appreciation.

Associate Editor 1:
Accept

Thank you very much

Associate Editor 2:
1.In the results of abstract please remove "We assessed empathy toward COVID-19 patients and their fear of this disease."

Thank you. We corrected and revised.

2. In the sample size calculation, the margin of error is not clear.

Thank you very much for your attention, it has been revised.

3. Report the different kinds of validity of the tools.

Thank you for this comment. It was reported in the method section.

4. Please describe the sampling procedure.

Thank you. It was describe in the method section.

5. Appropriate descriptive statistics are median and IQR.

Thank you for this comment. It was done.

6. Also include history of COVID in Table 4.

Thank you for this comment. It was reported.

7. How about the correlation between Fear and Empathy?

Thank you for your attention. It was described in the last paragraph of the result section.

3 Revision 2

1 comment · 26 Dec 2022

Editor-in-Chief

MINOR REVISION 26 Dec 2022

Minor Revision

4

Revision 3

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

Dear Associate Editor,

We appreciate your time and the thoughtful comments, which we will use to improve our study. The sections that have been changed are highlighted in the main text.

Respectfully yours,

1. *In the sample size calculation, the margin of error is not clear.*

The margin of error was 5%, thank you for pointing this out. We agree with this comment and change our description.

2. Report the different kinds of validity of the tools.

Thank you for this comment. It was reported in the method section (Participants and setting).

3. Appropriate descriptive statistics in Table 4 are median and IQR.

Thank you for comment. It was done.

4. How about the correlation between Fear and Empathy?

Thank you. We wrote in the last paragraph of results section.

4 Revision 3

0 comments

No public comments in this round.

5

Revision 4

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

Dear Associate Editor,

We appreciate your time and the thoughtful comments, which we will use to improve our study. The sections that have been changed are highlighted in the main text.

Respectfully yours,

1.In the sample size calculation, set the margin of error equal to 0.22.

Thank you for your comment. It was done.

2. Report the different kinds of validity of the tools (CVI and CVR).

Thank you for your comment. CVI and CVR were added.

3. In Table 4 remove mean± SD and report descriptive statistics as median (IQR).

Thank you for your comment. It was done.

5 Revision 4

0 comments

No public comments in this round.