

Original Article

The Relationship between worry about University Reopening and Negative Behavioral Reactions in Students**Dr. Hamid Yaghubi ^{*1}, Dr. Behrooz Dolatshahi², Hanieh Rahim Jamarouni ³,
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Abstract

This The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between worry about university reopening and negative behavioral reactions in students in the current Covid-19 pandemic. The study is based on cross-sectional survey research method and the data collection tool is a researcher-made questionnaire (total Chronbach's alpha: 0.84). . To ensure the content validity of the questionnaire, a number of psychologists and experts in the field of student counseling examined the content of the questionnaire. The study population included all students in the country, from which 1865 people were selected by convenience sampling. Survey findings show that 56% of students at different levels of education agree with the reopening of universities and 44% disagree. The results of univariate chi-square test show a significant difference between these two frequencies ($X^2 = 10.54$, $P = 0.001$). Also, the results of two-variable chi-square test indicate the relationship between students' worries about their health with the reopening of universities and dealing with violators of health protocols ($X^2 = 60.61$, $P = 0.001$). There was no relationship between the probability of dealing with violators of health protocols and the level of education ($X^2 = 5.04$, $P = 0.53$). It is suggested that special policies be considered in order to prevent any behavioral disturbances caused by students' disagreement about the level of compliance with health protocols in the university environment.

Keywords

Reopening of universities, Students, Covid-19, worry.

Introduction

From the beginning of the COVID-19 epidemic to December 29, 2021, more than five million four hundred and eleven thousand people have lost their lives [1]. During the pandemic and the spread of various waves of Covid disease, the surest way to minimize the spread of the virus and prevent its consequences has been quarantine and adherence to health protocols [2]. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in many universities moving abruptly from face-to-face to online instruction. In this regard, the nature of education changed to virtual and universities were closed. The need to adapt to the features of e-learning and digital learning has raised students' worries. Worry is an important component of anxiety and reduces mental, social and academic performance. Worry between different groups of people indicates latent psychological threats. One of these groups can be considered students who are exposed to a lot of worries due to the type of activity, responsibilities and the many expectations that come from their social role [3]. Limiting access to digital resources, increasing the cost of Internet connection, changing daily routine, disturbed sleep patterns, experiencing symptoms of mental disorders such as panic disorder, anxiety, depression and stress in various studies as the main sources of students' worries

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are mentioned in this period [4,5]. As shown in previous studies, in this period the prevalence rates of mild to severe symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress ranged from 46.92% to 82.4%, 26.6% to 96.82%, and 28.5% to 70.1%, respectively. The risk factors concerning mental health problems included the factors related to COVID-19 related symptoms, COVID-19 related perceptions, fear of COVID-19 infection, fear of getting assaulted or humiliated on the way to the hospital or home, financial problems, academic dissatisfaction and higher exposure to COVID-19 social and mass media [6].

Quarantine is an unpleasant experience with a nature of lack of potential amplifying resources. Therefore, it is normal for emotional reactions such as sadness, anger and anxiety to occur. Various studies indicate an increase in violence and aggressive reactions of individuals and also an increase in mental health problems during the pandemic [5, 7-9]. During the COVID-19 outbreak people have encountered an invisible and dark enemy and an experience of impotence. Due to the feelings of frustration and agitation, aggression arises with possible transgenerational transmission of trauma and violence [10].

Pandemic era with its inevitable consequences such as separation of students from friends, change in the nature of education (from face-to-face to virtual), uncertain status of the disease, financial difficulties, etc. - can have adverse effects on this segment of society if Lack of awareness and use of healthy emotion regulation strategies may provoke dysfunctional behavioral reactions. Therefore, in view of the increasing worries of students in the Corona pandemic in parallel with the increase in mental health problems, in order to prevent any action to change the nature of the teaching method again (this time from virtual to face-to-face), student worries should be examined to avoid any unfortunate consequences in this regard. To this end, the present study examines the relationship between worry about university reopening and negative behavioral reactions in students.

Our research question is whether students have worries about the reopening of universities?
And what will be their possible behavior after the reopening?

Method

The present study is based on cross-sectional survey research method. The statistical population of the study included all students in the whole country in the academic year 1401-1400. A sample of 1865 people was selected from this community. 4 people were eliminated due to defects in completing the questionnaire and the final sample is 1861 people, of which 723 female students (39% of the sample) and 1138 male students (61% of the sample) are available by sampling method and online were chosen. 76% of the research sample (1417 people) were undergraduate students, 19% (350 people) were master students, 3% (60 people) were doctoral students and 2% (35 people) were associate students. Most students (92%) were single. 42% of the research sample (782 people) first year students, 25% (457 people) second year, 18% (339 people) third year, 10% (190 people) fourth year, 4% (74 people) fifth year and 1% (12 people) were sixth year students and older.

- Instruments

researcher-made questionnaire: In order to collect information, a questionnaire was prepared with a survey of relevant experts in this field. This questionnaire includes demographic information such as gender, marital status, educational level and year of university, as well as various areas of concern, including fear of getting covid-19 and the possibility of adverse behavioral reactions if others do not follow health protocols. To ensure the content validity of the questionnaire, a number of psychologists and experts in the field of student counseling examined the content of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was also given to a number of students referring to the Student Counseling Center on a trial basis. Thus, some of the items were removed and the rest were modified and the final questionnaire was developed. The reliability of the

questionnaire was calculated with the total Cronbach's alpha equal to 0.84.

- Procedure

Due to the covid-19 constraints in this study, it was decided to administer the questionnaires online. First, the items of the questionnaires were prepared on the site of the porcelain test site and its link was prepared for submission. In the next step, by referring to virtual social networks to participate and collaborate in the research, the call was made and then, the link to the implementation of the questionnaires along with the implementation instructions was provided to the volunteer students.

Results

Table 1 shows the results of the univariate chi-square test to compare the frequency of attitudes toward reopening universities. As can be seen in the table, the X^2 value of 10/54 is significant at the significance level of 0.001. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the pros and cons of reopening universities.

Table 1. Univariate chi-square test to compare the frequency of attitudes toward reopening universities

Attitudes towards the reopening of universities	frequency	X^2 value	df	The significance level
Agree to reopen	1000	10/54	1	0/001
Opposite reopening	861			

Table 2 shows the results of a two-variable chi-square test on the relationship between health concerns and the reopening of universities and the likelihood of behavioral reactions to people who do not follow health protocols.

The results of the table show that the X^2 value of 60/61 is significant at the significance level of 0.001. Therefore, there is a relationship between the likelihood of a behavioral reaction and health concerns. The intensity of this relationship was calculated to 0.18 Kramer correlation coefficient.

Table 2. Bivariate chi-square test to examine the relationship between worries of reopening universities and the likelihood of a behavioral response

Contingency table of worry and behavioral response	frequency of health concerns		X^2 value	df	The significance level	Kramer coefficient
	Yes	No				
Probability of collision	456	349	60/61	2	0/001	0/18
Definitive collision	265	210				
No collision	314	252				

Table 3 shows the results of a two-variable chi-square test on the relationship between the probability of a reaction with people who do not follow health protocols and the level of education.

The results of the table show that the value of chi-square (5.04) is not significant (significance level= 0.54). Therefore, there is no relationship between the probability of a behavioral reaction and the level of education.

Table 3. Bivariate chi-square test to examine the relationship between behavioral response probability and education level

Contingency table of education and behavioral response		Frequency of behavioral reaction			X ² value	Df	The significance level
		Likely"	Yes	No			
Level of Education	Associate Degree	16	10	9	5/04	6	0/54
	Undergraduate	627	349	432			
	Master's degree	141	100	107			
	PhD	21	17	22			

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between worry about university reopening and negative behavioral reactions in students. Our research question was whether students have worries about the reopening of universities and what will be their possible behavior after the reopening? The results of our study were in line with the results of previous research.

The results of the present study indicate a challenging duality in relation to the reopening of universities. The results of the research show that although more than half of the students (56%) want the reopening of universities, the same number (56%) reported that they are worried about their physical health with the reopening of universities. Corona anxiety means anxiety caused by the corona virus, which is often due to the unknown nature of the disease [11]. Anxiety and worry are the unfortunate consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic in the field of mental health that have been addressed in various studies. In a 2020 study in China, the most important reasons for anxiety among students were concerns about the impact of the Covid-19 virus on their future education, future employment status, and declining social relationships [12].

The high level of students' worry about physical health in parallel with the reopening of universities, as one of the findings of this survey, highlights the need to adopt programs to prevent the adverse consequences of reopening universities. Establishment of special staffs in this regard in universities based on the lived experiences of students can help in the purposeful and correct direction of services and provide preventive intervention protocols and detailed educational programs to maximize the benefit of Capacities of the university to provide students with satisfaction with the reopening of universities.

On the other hand, as various studies show, students' psychological problems have increased under the influence of pandemics. Problems such as anxiety and depression as the most basic emotional disorders have the largest share [3,4]. Fear of getting infected by the COVID-19 has been found as a significant predictor of depression, anxiety, and stress in a couple of studies, whereas relatives or friends being infected with the COVID-19 had also increased the level of anxiety. Safa et al [13] reported that students severely tensed of being contacted with the COVID-19 infected individuals were at 3.5- and 2.75-times higher risk of being anxious and depressed, respectively, than the students who had no or minimal contract. Similarly, contact with the confirmed COVID-19 cases was reported to be at 4- and 3.17-times higher risk of getting stressed and anxious, respectively [6].

Overall, Mental health sufferings were also increased when students reported experiencing the COVID-19 related symptoms [5]. Increased mental health problems and lack of healthy coping

strategies and effective communication methods will cause behavioral disorders. The pandemic period and its inevitable consequences such as separation of students from friends, loss of freedom, uncertain state of illness, financial difficulties, etc. can have adverse effects on this segment of society. Consistent with various studies that indicate an increase in stress and violence following traumatic events [7-9], the results of the above study also show the possibility of increasing negative behavioral reactions among students.

39% of students said that non-compliance with health protocols by others on campus would make them angry, 48% said they would probably "warn the offender" and 43% mentioned the possibility of a collision. According to the results of the two-variable chi-square test, these behavioral reactions of students are related to their concerns about their health ($X^2 = 60.61$, $P = 0.001$). Although the results of two-variable chi-square test show a weak relationship between physical health concerns in parallel with the reopening of universities and the possibility of negative behavioral reactions ($V = 0.18$, $P = 0.001$), but necessary Such a relationship should be considered in order to avoid any situation that may increase problems in the field of universities. Also, there was no relationship between education level and the probability of behavioral reactions ($X^2 = 5.04$, $P = 0.54$). The above finding may indicate that increasing the level of education in turn does not guarantee the ability of individuals in interpersonal relationships and it is necessary for student centers to increase awareness and consider preventive programs to empower students in the field of life skills including effective communication, anger management, emotion regulation, assertive communication.

The results of this study, while providing and expanding awareness in the field of issues related to the reopening of universities and students' attitudes to this issue, highlight the need to pay attention to preventive support programs and guidance for professionals and educational planners in prioritizing the necessary specialized programs in Clarifies this context.

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