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Worry and Problem Solving Skills in University Students

Usha Barahmand

*Department of Psychology, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Ardabil, Iran
Telephone: +98 411 477 9644, Cell: +98 914 451 9649, Fax: +98 451 551 6402,
E-mail: usha@barahmand.com*

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ABSTRACT The purpose of the present study was to determine the predominant worries of college students and their problem solving abilities. A stratified random sample of 200 students responded to worry, worry and anxiety and problem solving questionnaires. Findings revealed that issues related to the future, job, education and marriage were the major issues of concern among the youth. Men and women differed in their problem solving orientation and style. Men reported greater positive beliefs about worry while women reported greater negative problem orientation and a careless/impulsive style. Furthermore, in men, rational problem solving was associated with worry regarding marriage, while in women, it was associated with worry regarding education. Worry seems to be exerting its impact in the form of difficulties in concentrating, fatigue and sleep problems. Overall, despite holding a pessimistic attitude, students appear to be engaging in problem analysis and goal specification. Regression analysis revealed that generation of alternative solutions and decision making account for a significant proportion of the variance in total worry in men, while in women, negative problem orientation and avoidant style predict total worry.