



The Social And Emotional Effects Of Covid-19 Pandemic Among Hashemite University's Students

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Abstract

The study aims to identify the social and emotional effects of the Covid-19 pandemic among Hashemite University's students. The sample consists of (250) male and female students from the faculty of Educational Sciences. The researchers developed a scale of social and emotional effects depending on theoretical literature and previous studies. Appropriate statistical methods are used throughout this study, most notably arithmetic averages, standard deviations, and Multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA). Results of the study indicate that the overall level and the arithmetic averages of the extent to which Hashemite University's students experienced social and emotional effects in the Covid-19 pandemic are of a high degree. According to the variables of gender and the academic year, the study also shows that there are no differences in the estimates made by the study population regarding experiencing social and emotional factors. The study concludes that it is crucial to provide psychological, emotional, and social support to students who studied online in order to achieve proper psychological adjustment and compatibility. It is also necessary to consider the educational and counseling aspects while dealing with students.

Keywords: Social Effects, Emotional Effects, COVID-19, University Students.

Introduction

The temporary closure of universities during the Covid-19 pandemic has caused many challenges to university students and their daily routines. As a result, they experienced emotional, social, academic, and psychological effects (Pedrosa, et al, 2020). Many factors may be responsible for causing such effects. Examples of such factors are living away from the family, having personal problems like anxiety, stress, and fear, having an unstable income, gaining poor social support, and lacking

the access to technological resources and the Internet which are needed to take their lessons and attend their lectures on the digital platforms (Cao et al, 2020 Khan et al 2020).

In fact, schools and universities are currently facing some problems regarding the complications and circumstances that students suffer from because of the closure. The problems of students are related to social and professional problems, some different disorders such as anxiety, lack of sleep, and depression. All these problems affect students' psychological

health and their academic achievement negatively. Furthermore, they cause a poor psychological adjustment.

Such problems have called for schools and universities to pay attention to providing e-counseling services for students in an appropriate and useful manner. The studies conducted by (Boutebal, Madani, & Bryant, 2021., Talmus, 2019) showed that students during online learning suffer from loneliness, some symptoms of depression, and some forms of isolation. Rasberry, et al (2020) stated that schools and universities are safe areas to provide counseling services for students exposed to such problems and disorders and that counselors are the ones who are qualified to work with these students and help them improve their mental health.

It was mentioned by (Fegert, Vitiello, Plener, & Clemens, 2020., Savarese, Curcio, D'Elia, Fasano, & Pecoraro, 2020) that there are many problems and concerns showed in that era that need to be followed up, especially for the problems that happened at the beginning of the closure, such as having educational and mental health problems, in addition to the excessive use of social media, chat applications, and video games.

All of the above-mentioned points would affect students emotionally and socially and undermine their mental health negatively. This requires counselors to be aware of the various problems associated with social media, so they can provide more appropriate services. In addition, Son, Hegde, Smith, Wang, & Sasangohar, (2020) stated that social interactions among students decreased significantly due to the lack of engagement, participation, and physical contact between them.

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly affected the lives of individuals all over the world, resulting in various manifestations of isolation and restrictions, such as communication obstacles and changes in the psychological, emotional, and social environment (Savarese, Curcio, D'Elia, Fasano, & Pecoraro, 2020., Pedrosa, et al, 2020). These issues have negatively affected children, teen students, and their families. They also led to weakening the external social support such as the support of families and other support systems and fearing the increase of problems related to students' mental health (Fegert, Vitiello, Plener, & Clemens, 2020). The study of Santibañez & Guarino (2021) indicated that educational sectors will face imminent needs for academic, emotional, and social support for students to offset the losses caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Emotional and social well-being is dramatically impacted when people stayed at home for long periods of time. Social distancing and taking safety precautions related to the Covid-19 pandemic have also weakened social relations. Moreover, the psychological and social impact is related to people's fears of getting infected by the pandemic, and people had to deal with what their friends and family are suffering from because of this pandemic, in addition to the fact that infected people of the Covid-19 virus often die alone (Osofsky, Osofsky & Mamon, 2020., Branje & Morris, 2021., Perez-Arce, et al, 2021). Alghamdi (2021) stated that the impact of social aspects on university students had a greater effect than the educational aspects. The study also clarified that there are no differences between males and females in this regard. Carbajal, Boluarte, Boluarte & Soto (2020) Stated that there are psychological, emotional, and social

consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic that seriously affect mental health.

The results of the Kee's study (2021) that was conducted on post-graduate students and aimed to investigate their perceptions toward the psychological and emotional impact of the Corona pandemic found that students suggested that they need to acquire more knowledge on adaptation strategies, including how to have enough space to work and how to communicate with others to obtain emotional support.

The social and emotional effects appear as a result of many reasons, including pressure resulting from losing a job or laying off employees' services, having lower income, providing distance learning for children, fearing illness, and the possibility of death caused by the pandemic. Stress may also result from the inability of family members to meet and stay with their friends and relatives if they get infected or if they die because of the virus, especially the elderly who live in their homes or infirmaries (Chu, Alam, Larson & Lin, 2020., Campbell, 2020., D'Addario, et al, 2021). Santibañez, & Guarino (2021) stated that the Covid-19 pandemic affected students negatively at the social and emotional levels, due to poor communication and the lack of effective face-to-face participation.

In order to reduce these effects, supportive mental health focuses on the importance of following routine procedures and new appropriate timetables for people's daily routine. This should include the appropriate time for meals, self-care, sitting with the children to get schoolwork done, and doing other activities such as playing or having positive talks (Al -Maskari, Al-Riyami, & Kunjumammed, 2021). New procedures also need virtual ways to solidify friendships and social and family

relationships by using the phone or various social platforms (Osofsky, Osofsky & Mamon, 2020).

There are negative social effects that may cause weakness in the Covid-19 crisis, such as unemployment, violence between both genders, anxiety, depression, or homelessness (González-Sanguino, et al, 2020., Kohls, et al, 2021). There are other problems related to the individuals who live in poor and crowded environments and suffer from lacking access to sewage networks, as well as individuals who have weak skills in reading and writing. Such problems are the spread of illiteracy and having limited access to appropriate healthcare institutions due to low or no income. This constitutes social problems that affect society with weakness, disintegration, and isolation and causes negative psychological and emotional problems to the mental health of individuals (Redondo-Sama, Matulic, Munté--Pascual, & de Vicente, 2020).

Baltà-Salvador, et al, (2021) indicated that most studies that tackled the emotional state of university students during the Covid-19 pandemic only focused on the negative emotional states such as anxiety, stress, and depression. However, there is a scarcity of research conducted with a global perspective on the positive emotional states of university students in order to investigate whether such feelings have decreased during the pandemic or not.

Statement of the problem and the study' questions

The problem of the current study is thought of because of the previously mentioned issues along with what students suffer from in relation to the differences in the social aspects caused by the pandemic. They also suffer from lacking positive communication between their

family members, friends, and students, having poor social cohesion, and facing difficulty in helping important people in their lives, especially sick people, people with special needs, and the elderly. In addition, the entire society faced problems related to loneliness and isolation, and this constituted a gap between people, which, in turn, negatively affected the societal fabric in that era and was reflected in most aspects of life. Moreover, people had concerns related to the uncertain future waiting for them, the dispersion of emotions, and their safety, and this resulted in causing confusion and anxiety. Therefore, this study aims to identify the level of social and emotional effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on university students. More specifically, this study is an attempt to answer the following research questions:

Questions of the study

1. What is the level of social and emotional effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on university students?
2. Are there statistically significant differences among university students due to the variable of gender and the academic level?

Methods

The current study uses a descriptive approach which is mainly to identify the social and emotional effects of Covid-19 pandemic Among Hashemite University's Students.

The study's community and sample

The study community consisted of (994) students studying at the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the Hashemite University from the academic year 2021. Numbers are taken from the statistics issued by the Admission and Registration Unit at the Hashemite University. A simple random sample made up of (268) male and female students were selected. Accordingly, the sample included (27%) of the study population. The questionnaires were distributed online among the members of the study sample. Thus, the retrieved and analyzable questionnaires constituted (25%) of the questionnaires distributed to the study sample members. See Table [1] presented below that illustrates the distribution of the study sample members according to both variables, mainly: gender and the academic year.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Variable	Categories of the Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	59	23.6
	Female	191	76.4
	Total	250	100.0
Academic year	First	95	38.0
	Second	66	26.4
	Third	32	12.8
	Fourth	57	22.8
	Overall	250	100.0

Measurement Instruments

To achieve the objective of the study which focuses on examining the social and emotional effects of the Covid-19 pandemic Among the students studying at the Hashemite University, the study tool was developed by referring to the theoretical literature and previous studies conducted on this subject. Further, the study tool included two aspects. The first aspect is the social effects, and it included (20) items and the second aspect of the study tool tackles the emotional effects, and it included (17) items. The study tool was designed according to the Likert scale consisting of five points: (Totally Agree: 5, Agree: 4, Neutral: 3, Disagree: 2, Totally disagree: 1).

The validity of the tool and its reliability

The following indicators were used to examine the validity of the study tool, which are as follows:

Content validity

To verify the validity of the questionnaire, which is divided into social effects and emotional effects, and its suitability to achieve the objectives of the current study, the tool was presented in its initial form to a group of arbitrators from Jordanian universities who have solid experience and specialized in the field of psychological and educational counseling and measurement. They were asked to express their opinion regarding the questionnaire and the extent to which each paragraph is related to the field under which it falls. They were also asked to give their opinion in terms of the language used and the clarity of paragraphs, and whether adding, modifying, or deleting are

deemed appropriate. This procedure depends on a criterion that is represented by the agreement of the arbitrators that equals (80%) or above to keep a paragraph in its original shape, and paragraphs of less than (80%) of the agreement were deleted or modified. The arbitrators' proposals were taken into consideration and the required modifications were made. Furthermore, the social effects section in its final form included (20) items, while the emotional effects section in its final form included (17) items. Making such modifications is considered a piece of evidence that the questionnaire is valid and increases the level of its results reliability.

Internal Consistency Validity

The homogeneity of the questionnaire was internally verified by using the internal consistency method, which is one of the construct validity methods. The Pearson correlation coefficient was found between each item of the scale and the total score of the scale. The correlation coefficients of the social effects items with the total score of the scale ranged between (0.62-0.83), while the correlation coefficients of the emotional effects items with the total score of the scale ranged between (0.51-0.77). All correlation coefficients were statistically significant at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), which indicates the validity of the internal consistency of the survey tool and increases the reliability of its results.

Validity of the study instrument

To verify the stability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the internal consistency was extracted. Table [2] below illustrates the results.

Table 2. Coefficients of the questionnaire's stability

Scale	The Coefficient of Cronbach's Alpha
Social Effects	0.92
Emotional Effects	0.95

The results shown in Table 2 reveal that the coefficients of the stability of the scale of the social effects amounted to (0.92), while the scale of the emotional effects amounted to (0.95). This highlights the sincerity of the internal consistency of the study tool and increases the reliability of its product.

The procedure

After verifying the validity of the study tool and after having the tool fully developed, the researchers performed the following procedures:

Official approvals were obtained from the concerned and competent authorities to facilitate the researcher's task during the field application of the study.

1. The survey tool was designed online and sent in an electronic link to the members of the study sample (the students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the Hashemite University). Those in charge of the tool's introduction were keen to clarify the importance of the study and objectively answer the questions of the questionnaire. The ones who were responsible for presenting the questionnaire were keen to clarify the importance of the study to the sample members in order to answer the survey objectively.
2. Data was collected and then entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) as a prelude to analyzing it and extracting the results of the study.

3. The statistical connotations of the reality of the social and emotional effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the Hashemite University were interpreted and understood, and the description of the levels was based on the criterion that 'low' means less than 2.33, 'medium' means greater or equal to 2.33, less or equal to 3.66, and 'high' means greater than 3.66.

Data Analysis

To answer the questions, statistical treatments were carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), as follows:

1. The arithmetic means and standard deviations were extracted in order to provide answers to the first question.
2. The test of Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted to answer the second question.
3. To verify the validity of the internal consistency, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used.
4. To verify the stability of the survey tool, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used.
5. To describe the characteristics of the study sample, frequencies and percentages were extracted.

Results

This section includes a detailed presentation of the findings reached in this study based on the questions that aim to reveal the reality of the social and emotional effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the Hashemite University. It also includes a discussion of the results of the study and their interpretation in light of the literature.

Research results

To answer the first question, which states "What is the level of social and emotional effects among students at the Hashemite University?", the arithmetic averages and standard deviations of the level of social and emotional effects were calculated. See Tables [3] and [4] below.

Social effects

Table 3. The total of arithmetic averages and standard deviations of social effects along with the level of each item of the scale

Item	Item Text	Rank	Arithmetic Average	Standard Deviation	Level
17	I cannot help my family members or friends who are infected with the Coronavirus.	1	4.33	0.97	High
19	There are economic challenges that negatively affect my family's situation.	2	4.26	0.95	High
18	Various family problems occur due to closure.	3	4.14	1.05	High
3	I connect with my family during the lockdown.	4	4.06	1.14	High
20	It is difficult for me to organize my daily study times.	5	3.99	1.17	High
4	I communicate with people while maintaining social distancing.	6	3.95	1.18	High
12	It is difficult to balance leisure activities with my family's duties.	7	3.83	1.25	High
15	I find it difficult to participate in humanitarian solidarity activities.	8	3.78	1.25	High
11	The limited space in the house is bothering me during the closure.	9	3.76	1.37	High
1	I find it hard to stay home during the closure.	10	3.71	1.37	High
13	I would rather spend a lot of time	11	3.70	1.27	High

	online than communicate with others.				
16	I see that unemployment among young people is increasing during the closure.	12	3.64	1.30	Medium
6	I refuse to attend social events during the lockdown.	13	3.63	1.28	Medium
10	Family dialogues prevail at home during the closure.	14	3.60	1.34	Medium
2	I find it difficult to communicate and make conversations with my friends during the closure.	15	3.59	1.37	Medium
5	I avoid family and personal visits.	16	3.56	1.30	Medium
14	My family dislikes my social isolation due to the closure.	17	3.53	1.32	Medium
9	I stick to a proper beneficial diet during the lockdown.	18	3.32	1.41	Medium
7	I find it easy to buy what I need in my daily life.	19	3.30	1.41	Medium
8	I exercise at home during the lockdown.	20	3.27	1.40	Medium
-	Total	-	3.74	0.79	High

Note. (low: less than 2.33, medium: greater or equal to 2.33, less or equal to 3.66, high greater than 3.66).

Table 3 shows the arithmetic averages of the social effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the Hashemite University. The overall level is of a high degree with an arithmetic average of (3.74) and a standard deviation of (0.79). As for the level of each item, it ranged between high and medium levels. For example, item (17) which states “I cannot help a family member or a friend who is infected with coronavirus” ranks first with an average

of (4.33) which reflects a high level. Item (8) which includes “I exercise at home during the lockdown” has the last rank with an average of (3.27), and this reflects a medium degree of agreement.

Emotional Effects

Table 4. The total of arithmetic averages and standard deviations of emotional effects along with the level of each item of the scale

Item	Item Text	Rank	Arithmetic Average	Standard Deviation	Level
10	I worry about providing essential .supplies such as food and medicine	1	4.22	1.02	High
6	I feel lazy and bored with my daily routine.	2	4.18	1.13	High
1	I feel uncomfortable and worried because of the development of Coronavirus.	3	4.15	1.12	High
14	I feel that the future looks even scarier than before.	4	4.13	1.12	High
3	I feel less productive.	5	4.11	1.15	High
2	I find it very difficult to focus due to the pressure of homework.	6	4.10	1.10	High
4	I feel anxious because of my financial status.	7	4.08	1.14	High
11	I feel upset because of not being able to do fun activities.	8	4.07	1.15	High
12	I worry about the possibility of the collapse of society and the loss of opportunities.	9	4.06	1.10	High
13	I feel angry and upset.	10	3.97	1.19	High
7	I suffer from sleeping disorders.	11	3.96	1.20	High
5	I find that I am worried about my health and safety.	12	3.95	1.13	High
15	I am concerned about the health and safety of my family members	13	3.94	1.25	High
17	I get angry when someone in my family interrupts me.	14	3.93	1.23	High
16	I feel more afraid during the closure.	15	3.90	1.22	High
8	I feel lonely during the closure.	16	3.83	1.27	High
9	I feel depressed during the closure.	17	3.80	1.20	High
-	Total	-	4.02	0.94	High

Note. (low: less than 2.33, medium: greater or equal to 2.33, less or equal to 3.66, high greater than 3.66).

Table 4 shows the arithmetic averages of the emotional effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the Hashemite University. The overall level is of a high degree with an arithmetic average of (4.02) and a standard deviation of (0.94). Regarding the level of each item, all items are of a high level. For example, item (10) which states “I worry about providing essential supplies such as food and medicine” has the first rank with an average of (4.22). Item (9) which states “I feel depressed” ranked the last with an average of (3.80), and this shows a high degree of agreement.

To answer the second question which states, “Are there statistically significant differences among university students due to the variable of gender and the academic level?”, a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to reveal the differences in the estimates of the study sample regarding the level of social and emotional effects based on the variable of gender and the academic year. Table [5] below illustrates these differences.

Table 5. The results of MANOVA analysis to reveal the differences in the estimates of the study sample members regarding the level of social and emotional effects based on the variable of gender and the academic year.

Source of Difference	Dependent Variable	Sums of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Average of the Squares	Value of F	Statistical Significance
Gender	Social effects	1.818	1	1.818	2.928	.0880
	Emotional effects	1.104	1	1.104	1.249	.2650
Academic Year	Social effects	3.385	3	1.128	1.817	.1450
	Emotional effects	1.158	3	.386	.437	.7270
The Mistake	Social effects	152.102	245	.621		
	Emotional effects	216.672	245	.884		
Total	Social effects	3668.045	250			
	Emotional effects	4260.183	250			
Corrected Total	Social effects	157.668	249			
	Emotional effects	219.137	249			

The data contained in Table 5 indicates that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the estimates of the study sample members regarding the level of social and emotional

effects based on the variable of gender and the academic year.

Discussion

The result of the first question can be explained based on the arithmetic averages of the social effects which were high at the overall level. This is due to the fact that students were affected by the temporary closure of universities during the Covid-19 pandemic. This caused university students to face some changes in the educational system as well as their daily life. As a result, they were affected emotionally, socially, academically, and psychologically, and this unusually changed their life. This was uncommon for students since they are not well prepared for such emergent circumstances. In addition, they are not prepared to face various changes and difficulties such as staying at home for long periods, having difficulty communicating with friends and relatives, and not being able to participate in social and voluntary events.

It was mentioned by (Fegert, Vitiello, Plener & Clemens, 2020., Savarese, Curcio, D'Elia, Fasano & Pecoraro, 2020) that there are many problems and concerns that must be followed up in the Covid-19, especially at the beginning of the closure. These problems include educational problems and mental health problems such as unemployment and the excessive use of social media, chat applications, and games. This, in turn, affects students emotionally and socially and negatively affects their mental health as well. Son, Hegde, Smith, Wang, & Sasangohar, (2020) stated that social interactions among students decreased significantly due to the lack of engagement, participation, and physical contact between them. Alghamdi (2021) also stated that the effect of social aspects on university students had a greater impact than the educational aspects.

Having emotional effects among university students is mainly represented by having a

sense of discomfort with the uncertain future, dispersal of emotions, and individuals' safety, and this is accompanied by obsession, confusion, and anxiety. The results reached by Egan, Pope, Moloney, Hoyne, & Beatty (2021) indicated that most of the students missed effective communication with their friends in schools and educational institutions. Parents have described the negative impact of closing these places on their children's social and emotional well-being and stated that it led to outbursts of anger, anxiety, clinginess, boredom, and lacking motivation. The results of (Carbajal, Boluarte, Boluarte, & Soto, 2020., González-Sanguino, et al, 2020) stated that there are psychological, emotional, and social consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic that seriously affect people's mental health. Furthermore, the results of (Kee's study, 2021) suggested the need for some coping strategies, including finding enough space to work and ways to effectively communicate with others to obtain the needed emotional support. This study was conducted on graduate students to know their perceptions of the psychological and emotional impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. It was argued by (Santibañez, & Guarino, 2021) that the Covid-19 pandemic affected students negatively at the social and emotional levels due to the lack of communication and effective face-to-face participation.

According to the interpretation of the results of the second question, the study shows that there are no statistical differences in the estimates of the study sample regarding the level of social and emotional effects according to the variable of gender and the academic year. This can be explained by the fact that both males and females are exposed to the same conditions imposed by the Covid pandemic, as both genders have the same health, psychological, social, or educational circumstances.

In general, university students have similar circumstances and situations, and they are more aware of the emotional, personal, and social skills that affect their different abilities to adapt to the surrounding environmental situations and conditions. Even at the educational level, students are mostly exposed to the same environmental and educational influences, especially after they started using the same online platforms for distance learning because of the pandemic. This finding goes in line with the findings of Alghamdi (2021) study which indicated that there are no statistical differences between males and females. On the contrary, the results of this study disagree with the results reached by Van der Vegt & Kleinberg (2020) as it showed that there are significant gender differences in topics related to emotions and feelings. That is, women were more concerned about their loved ones and their severe health issues, while men were more concerned about how the economy and society will be affected. The results found in Alsharawy, Spoon, Smith, & Ball, (2021) indicate that, in general, women reported more negative emotional experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic than men. Moreover, the results of (Duarte-Félix, de la Cruz-Ortega, Baños, Morquecho-Sánchez, Delgado-Herrada, & Zamarripa, 2021., Wang, Wang, Liu, Yang, Zheng, & Bai, 2021) found that women have experienced more negative feelings and emotions than men due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Conclusion

University students are the most important group in our society. They are the builders of the future, and many hopes depend on them for the advancement, progress, and flourishing of countries in all cultural, educational, health, and psychological aspects, as well as instilling

morals in our societies. Therefore, the results of the current study assert that there are major social and emotional impacts Among students in the Faculty of Educational Sciences during the Covid-19 pandemic. This calls for a proper intervention from caregivers, families, and universities. It is also preferable to provide psychological, emotional, and social support to students in order to achieve proper psychological adjustment and compatibility. In addition, it is necessary to deal with students considering the educational and counseling aspects. This can be achieved through developing preventive, training, and counseling programs by educational counselors and the ones in charge of the educational process among faculty members. It is also recommended to raise families' awareness to know how to deal with the students during this pandemic, and this can be achieved by conducting seminars and distributing brochures.

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