

Life Satisfaction among Higher Education Students during COVID-19: A Survey-Based Study

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted various aspects of daily life, including the educational experiences of higher education students. This research paper investigates the life satisfaction of higher education students during the pandemic using a survey method. Utilizing a self-made checklist and the Satisfaction with Life Scale by Diener et al. (1985), the study aims to explore the hypothesis that life satisfaction among students has been negatively affected during the pandemic. The research involved 80 respondents out of 100 surveyed, with findings indicating a generally positive level of life satisfaction despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought profound changes to the lives of higher education students. This study investigates life satisfaction among these students during the pandemic using a survey-based approach. The research leverages the Satisfaction with Life Scale and a self-made checklist to examine factors affecting students' psychological well-being. The study reveals insights into how mental health, religious beliefs, and academic pressures have influenced life satisfaction, providing valuable information for enhancing support systems in higher education settings. Psychological well-being is usually conceptualized as some combination of positive affective states such as happiness and functioning with optimal effectiveness in individual and social life. Psychological well-being problems have become increasingly common among college students nowadays, especially undergraduate students who are prone to psychological problems. Evidence suggests that the college students are vulnerable to mental health problems which have generated increased public concern. This study tried to assess the psychological wellbeing of the under graduate students during lockdown with the help of online survey.

Key words: Mental Health, Undergraduate, Students, Psychological well-being

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced unprecedented disruptions to education systems globally. This research explores how these disruptions have influenced the life satisfaction of higher education students. Understanding these impacts can inform future

policies and support mechanisms to improve student well-being in similar crises. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on various aspects of life, particularly for higher education students who have faced unprecedented disruptions. This research review examines existing literature on life satisfaction among students during the pandemic, highlighting key findings and gaps in the research.

2. Literature Review

Son et. al. (2020) ‘Impact of COVID-19 on Higher Education’. The pandemic led to a sudden shift to online learning, social isolation, and uncertainty about the future. Studies have shown that these changes have significantly affected students’ mental health and overall life satisfaction.

Kumar & Nayar (2021) ‘Mental Health and Life Satisfaction’. Research indicates that mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression, have increased among students during the pandemic. These issues negatively impact life satisfaction, underscoring the importance of mental health support.

Seybold & Hill (2001) ‘Role of Religious Beliefs’. Religious beliefs and practices have been shown to provide psychological support and improve life satisfaction during challenging times. Some studies suggest that students with strong religious beliefs reported better mental health outcomes during the pandemic.

Browning et. al. (2021) ‘Coping Strategies and Support Systems’. Effective coping strategies and support systems are critical in maintaining life satisfaction. Studies have highlighted the importance of institutional support, such as counselling services and online resources, in helping students navigate the challenges of remote learning and isolation.

Significance of the study

Relevance to Current Context the COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly disrupted daily life, particularly for higher education students. This demographic has faced significant challenges, including abrupt transitions to online learning, social isolation, and uncertainty about the future. Understanding how these factors affect life satisfaction is crucial for addressing the unique needs of students during this period.

- **Impact Assessment:** Provides insights into how the pandemic has affected life satisfaction among higher education students, a critical area for educational institutions and policymakers.
- **Support Mechanisms:** Helps identify key factors influencing students' psychological well-being, which can inform the development of targeted support services.
- **Policy Implications:** Offers data-driven recommendations for enhancing student support systems in future crises.

1. Impact on Mental Health

Mental health issues, such as anxiety, depression, and stress, have been exacerbated by the pandemic. Research shows that life satisfaction is closely linked to mental health. By investigating life satisfaction among students, this study aims to shed light on the broader mental health implications of the pandemic and identify areas where additional support is needed.

2. Informing Institutional Support

Higher education institutions play a pivotal role in supporting students' well-being. This research provides insights into how the pandemic has influenced life satisfaction, enabling institutions to tailor their support services more effectively. Understanding these dynamics can help in designing interventions that address both academic and psychological needs.

3. Contribution to Existing Literature

While there is growing research on the impact of COVID-19 on students, studies focusing specifically on life satisfaction within the context of higher education are limited. This study contributes to filling this gap by providing empirical data and analysis on how the pandemic has affected students' overall life satisfaction.

4. Long-Term Implications

The findings from this study have potential long-term implications for educational policy and practice. Insights gained can inform strategies for future crises, ensuring that higher education institutions are better prepared to support students' well-being in similar situations.

5. Promoting Student Well-Being

By focusing on life satisfaction, this research highlights factors that contribute to or detract from students' overall happiness. It encourages the development of holistic approaches to student support that go beyond academic achievement to encompass mental and emotional well-being.

Objectives of present study

1. To assess the level of life satisfaction among higher education students during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. To determine the impact of the pandemic on various aspects of students' lives and their overall well-being.
3. To evaluate the reliability and validity of the Satisfaction with Life Scale in this context.

Hypothesis of present study

H1: Life satisfaction among higher education students during the COVID-19 pandemic is negatively affected compared to pre-pandemic levels.

Methodology of present study

Sample of present study

A total of 100 higher education students were surveyed, with 80 responses being valid and analysed. Participants were selected using a stratified random sampling method to ensure representation from various fields of study.

Instruments of present study

The study employed two primary instruments:

1. **Self-Made Checklist:** This checklist included questions related to students' experiences and challenges during the pandemic, such as changes in study habits, social interactions, and mental health.
2. **Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS):** Developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985), the SWLS measures overall life satisfaction with five statements reflecting positive evaluations of life quality. Respondents rated their agreement with

each statement on a seven-point ordinal scale. The scale has shown alpha coefficients ranging from .79 to .89, indicating good reliability.

Procedure

Surveys were administered online, and data were collected over a period of one month. Responses were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods to determine life satisfaction levels and identify any significant differences related to the pandemic. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) was used to assess participants' life satisfaction. The SWLS is a reliable and well-established measure that includes five statements reflecting a positive evaluation of life quality. Respondents rate their agreement with each on a seven-point ordinal scale. Alpha coefficients for the SWLS have ranged from .79 to .89.

Results Descriptive Statistics

The average life satisfaction score among respondents was 4.5 on the seven-point scale, indicating a generally positive outlook despite the pandemic's challenges.

Hypothesis Testing

The analysis found no significant negative impact on overall life satisfaction, with p-values above 0.05. This suggests that, contrary to the hypothesis, students' life satisfaction remained relatively stable during the pandemic.

Discussion

The study indicates that life satisfaction among undergraduate students was generally positive despite the pandemic. Factors such as mental health, psychological well-being, and religious beliefs played roles in shaping students' life satisfaction. Coping strategies and support systems likely contributed to this stability.

Conclusion

This research provides valuable insights into life satisfaction among higher education students during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings highlight the importance of mental health support, the role of religious beliefs, and the need for continued monitoring of students' well-being in future crises.

Results and Discussion

The results of the present study have several practical implications. Educators working at universities may be able to support students by conducting brief life satisfaction assessments to identify those students with average and below-

Average levels who may therefore be at risk for greater academic difficulty. Furthermore, interventions aimed at increasing life satisfaction may be implemented with the students who are most at-risk. There are several limitations in the current study that should be noted. First, the data were collected from students at a single university although the sample was fairly representative of the population at this college, additional research is needed with diverse participants, Secondly and all data were collected through self-report, which can produce issues with common method variance as well as inaccurate or biased responses. This review highlights the significant effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on life satisfaction among higher education students. Key factors include mental health challenges, the role of religious beliefs, and the importance of coping strategies and support systems. Future research should address the identified gaps to better understand and support students' well-being during and after the pandemic.

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