

are vulnerable to suffering from low well-being and developing mental problems caused by various stressors such as the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis. In addition, the spread of the epidemic, quarantine requirements, and the delayed academic year have had significant psychological impacts on students. The purpose of the study was to evaluate anxiety and well-being among college students at the end of the first year of the COVID-19 epidemic.

Methods:

On January 2021, during the third lockdown in Israel, 366 college students responded to an online survey that included demographics, 7-item Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale (GAD-7), and a 14-item Mental Health Continuum-Short Form (MHC-SF) measuring emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

Results:

Findings revealed low self-rated well-being compared to the general population. The mean anxiety level was 8.89. 39% showed moderate to severe anxiety. Negative correlations were found between anxiety and well-being. Women expressed low levels of well-being and higher anxiety compared to men. A regression model showed that students living with parents diagnosed with Covid-19 and having low emotional well-being are at risk of suffering from anxiety ($R^2=0.32$, $F=53$, $p<0.001$).

Conclusions:

The mental health of college students is significantly affected by the pandemic, therefore should be monitored and requires attention:

1. Further investigation of factors influencing mental health and well-being of students.
2. Detecting students with a higher risk of developing mental health problems and providing timely psychological support.
3. Develop initiatives to raise awareness among students and interventions to prevent negative implications of the COVID-19 crisis on mental health.

Key messages:

- Students report low well-being and show high risk of developing anxiety disorder during COVID-19 crisis.
- It is crucial to detect students with a higher risk of developing mental health problems and provide timely psychological support.

Wellbeing and anxiety among students during COVID-19 crisis: results from an initial survey in Israel

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Background:

The COVID-19 crisis that has burdened the world for the past year posed a life threat and caused psychological implications for public well-being. Well-being is an essential element of mental health that affects learning and productivity. Students