

## مدى الوعي الصحي لمكافحة هذا الفيروس وطرق الوقاية منه

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### الملخص

يمر العالم بأزمة صحية خطيرة بسبب تفشي وباء فيروس كورونا المعروف بكوفيد - ١٩، الذي أودى بحياة مئات آلاف الأشخاص وأصاب الملايين وفقاً لإحصاءات هيئة الصحة العالمية.

هدفت الدراسة الحالية الى الكشف عن مدى الوعي الصحي عند طلبة جامعة الكويت حول كيفية محاربة فيروس كورونا وطرق الوقاية منه والحفاظ على صحتهم والتعرف على الإجراءات والشروط الصحية المتبعة من قبلهم للوقاية من الإصابة بهذا الفيروس . لتحقيق هدف الدراسة تم إعداد استبانة وتم توزيعها عشوائياً على عينة شملت (١٢٠) من الطلبة وذلك تبعاً لمتغيرات الدراسة ، (السنة الدراسية ، والكلية، علوم او أداب) . تم استخدام المنهج الوصفي التحليلي و تم استخدام الإجراءات الإحصائية (النسبة المئوية ، المتوسط الحسابي ، الانحراف المعياري ، واختبار ت- واختبار انوفا ) . أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن نسبة عالية من الطلبة كانوا على وعي صحي كافي حول كيفية الحفاظ على صحتهم والوقاية من الإصابة بفيروس كورونا.

بينت الدراسة عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة احصائية بين الطلبة عند مستوى الدلالة  $\alpha = 0,05$  بين المتوسطات الحسابية للوعي الصحي للوقاية من فيروس كورونا تعزى لمتغير السنة الدراسية ، والكلية .

وفي ضوء هذه النتائج تم تقديم توصيات يمكن أن تسهم في رفع الوعي الصحي بين طلبة جامعة الكويت للقضاء على هذه الجائحة والتغلب على هذه الأزمة الخطيرة بسلام .

الكلمات المفتاحية : تأثير - فيروس كورونا - وباء - الوعي الصحي - طلبة الجامعة -الوقاية

**Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on College Students at  
Kuwait University  
Health Awareness and Methods of Prevention  
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**Abstract**

The world is witnessing a coronavirus pandemic, Covid-19, a global outbreak that killed hundred thousands of people and infected millions according to the World Health Organization (WHO,2020). This study aims to examine the impact of coronavirus outbreak on college students attending Kuwait University and to measure their health awareness and perception about the best ways in fighting this pandemic. For the purpose of the study, a questionnaire was developed and distributed electronically to a sample of (120) undergraduate college students .The statistical analysis was made by using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, 24). Data analysis include frequency distribution, percentages, mean, standard deviation, t-test and one way Anova test, it was used to test the effects of year of study of the students (freshmen, sophomore, junior ,and senior) ,and their college department ( Science or literature). The study revealed that most college students possessed a high level of health awareness about preventive measures from coronavirus. It was found that t-test was not significant .P value (0.862)is greater than 0,05 then we conclude that there is no significant evidence to reject null hypothesis and the department of study of the students, does not affect the level of health awareness between them.

It was found that P value is (0,573) greater than 0,05 then we conclude that there is no significant evidence to reject null hypothesis , the year of study does not affect the level of health awareness about coronavirus between students referred to different stages of study.

**Keywords: Impact- coronavirus- pandemic- -college students- prevention-health awareness**

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**Introduction**

The Coronavirus Pandemic (Covid-19) is an outbreak that has infected millions of people and killed thousands according to official counts from World Health Organization (WHO, 2020), people are required to use personal protective equipment for coronavirus disease (COVID-19).The virus has been detected in most countries around the world. The novel Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), which emerged in December 2019 in Wuhan, China, is one of the major disease outbreaks the world has ever experienced. Since the outbreak was first announced in Wuhan in December 2019, more than 48.7 million people have been infected with the virus, with over one million deaths reported worldwide (WHO,2020). While the outbreak is a serious public health concern, most people who contracted the virus Covid-19, do not become seriously ill, they have mild symptoms like common flu. Surveillances, V.(2020) . The elderly and individuals with chronic diseases, and those with existing health conditions like heart or lung diseases are at higher risk. Restrictions all over the world had been taken to face the crisis and it's affecting everyone, people are required to stay home, to help save lives. Nobody knows how long this pandemic will last. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,( CDC ,2019), has advised against all non-essential travel to avoid infection with coronavirus, and the agency has warned the elderly, and individuals with health conditions who are categorized as high risk to avoid travel to any country. The entire economy worldwide is shut down.

According to John Hopkins University (2020), the morbidity and mortality associated with COVID-19 changes rapidly due to the

virulent nature of the virus. This has led to many healthcare systems around the world struggling to cope with COVID-19 care and treatment, with many patients requiring comprehensive care to survive ,Fisher. D et al (2020). Global efforts to fight the pandemic has seen many countries adopt COVID-19 preventive measures, including aggressive measures such as border closures and bans on public gatherings ,Abate .S et al (2020).

This study aims to examine the impact of Coronavirus (Covid-19) on college students attending Kuwait University, to measure their health awareness about the safety precautions needed to fight this invisible enemy. In addition, college students should follow healthy preventive measures and precautions to prevent the spread of this pandemic. .

### **Review of the Literature**

#### *The Impact of Coronavirus*

The Coronavirus pandemic is an unprecedented event in modern history, it is recognized as the fourth group of human viruses descendent from the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS - Covid-19).Van Der Hoek, et al. (2004).

The government of Kuwait took all the healthy measures and precautions advised from the world health organization, to protect its people from coronavirus infection. Lockdown is taken as a safety measure and all people in Kuwait were ordered to stay at home. A high percentage of people are asymptomatic careers of the virus and constitute a great danger on society because they can contract infection to others, Wang, V.(2020). Also everyone was ordered to wear a face mask and gloves and maintain social distancing, Relugat.C (2010). Human social distancing is one of the most important measure that communities are practicing across the world. Social distancing is when individuals change their social behavior and interaction with infected and susceptible individuals by reducing their interaction and increasing their distance apart from each other to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases during a pandemic as evident in the novel Covid-19 outbreak . Universities

and all schools, public and private, were closed. Online education started for students of all levels , Furthermore, gatherings were banned, and all public places like malls, restaurants, parks, were closed down, except for supermarkets had a curfew timing where a certain number of individuals were allowed to enter depending on their addresses ,to make sure in all areas, that the amount of people will be equalized and not overcrowded. In addition, this crisis affected oil prices and worldwide economy.

In its efforts to curtail the spread of the virus in Kuwait, the government instituted a number of policy measures including, border closure and partial lockdowns, testing, contact tracing and treating as well as calling on citizens to observe COVID-19 safety protocols, all schools and universities have remained closed until the time being.

#### *Impact of Covid-19 on Education*

Covid-19 has a significant impact on the world of education, including on educational system in Kuwait. Traditional and routine learning that emphasizes the interaction of teachers and students in the classroom and outside the classroom shifts to distance learning. In their study, McKinnon. D et al (2000) reported that “students motivation and attitudes toward technology decreased once the use of computer became part of the daily classroom instructional routine”.

Education must always be remembered that independence consist of three kinds: stand alone, not dependent on others, and can regulate yourself (Marope, 2017). Students who learn based on independence will always be energetic, optimistic, prospective, creative, and always brave to try new ones. They are always hungry and thirsty for knowledge. Before all college students return to universities, especially those who are the active group and likely to be at increased risk of COVID -19, it is important to evaluate their knowledge and health awareness regarding the virus. This is particularly important to help the government and the education authorities to understand what needs to be addressed to prevent the spread of the virus in schools and universities. No study has yet

investigated the knowledge and perception of students about COVID -19 in Kuwait. It is for this reason that this study was designed with the aim to assess the knowledge and health awareness about COVID-19 among college students.

#### *Health Awareness*

It is vital for all individuals to take health precautions seriously in order to prevent Covid-19. Health awareness include social distancing, hygiene such as continuously washing hands, wearing a mask and gloves at all times, and having proper ventilation. Most important is taking the vaccine against coronavirus. Abdelhafiz, A et al (2020). Safety health measures should be taken to avoid contracting the virus to each other, social distancing of at least 1-meter between individuals, in order to avoid contagious coughing or sneezing. Equally important, if indoor, there should be a wider distance in between one another.

There are steps in wearing a mask properly in order to ensure proper hygiene. Hands should be washed properly, before wearing the mask. The 3 C's should be taken into consideration: Closeness, Crowds, and closed indoor settings: such as gyms, dining lounges, churches, mosques, and all offices. In areas of worship people are standing close together and also have close communication, individuals talk out loud and might even have physical contact. The virus spreads rapidly in closed atmospheres from droplets through the respiratory systems, entering eyes, nose, or orally. The WHO has advised windows to be open in order to increase ventilation in a natural manner if indoor (Baker, et al 2020).

Proper hygiene is important in order to enhance cleanliness. Sanitizers, hand rubs, alcohol wipes, and especial soap and water. Hand wash is a vital routine that should be practiced daily. If hands are not properly cleaned, contamination will occur easily and the virus can be transferred by contact with nose, mouth or rubbing eyes as well. This is the simplest and most common way of getting infected. Therefore, the mouth should be covered with tissue when coughing, and when sneezing should be in the elbows. Moreover,

even the tissues and napkins used for nose cleaning should be correctly thrown away in a closed trash can, followed by a proper handwash routine. Following these steps will ensure the upmost hygiene and control the silent covid-19 disease from spreading. Another technique of care is by wearing gloves in order not to get contaminated. This includes avoid touching mobile phones, ATM cards, banks, supermarket bags, doors knobs, and public toilets (Kushlkumar, et al, 2020).

#### *Covid-19 symptoms*

Most people can be infected with coronavirus without noticing any changes, while others may not tolerate it and die immediately. Common symptoms include: runny nose, cough, shortness of breath, shivers, sour throat, dizziness, high constant fever, diarrhea, rashes, congested nose, body ache and tiredness, paining joints, vomiting, rashes in skin, and dehydration. If any of the following symptoms have been experienced ,it is important to be isolated from all individuals for 2 weeks till further doctor notice to get proper medical care. “Isolation is a health care term that means keeping people who are infected with a contagious illness away from those who are not infected” (Maragakis, 2020). It can take place at a hospital, care facility or at home. Special personal protective equipment will be used to care for these patients in health care settings. The covid-19 victim should not be in contact with any other individual until tested negative..

#### *COVID-19 Vaccination*

Vaccines save millions of lives each year. Vaccines work by training and preparing the body’s natural defenses – the immune system – to recognize and fight off the viruses and bacteria they target. After vaccination, if the body is later exposed to those disease-causing germs, the body is immediately ready to destroy them, preventing illness. Reuters Covid-19 Tracker.(2020) Kuwait’s COVID-19 vaccination drive will be almost complete by September,(2021) with the 850,000 citizens completed in the next three months if vaccines are available. Kuwait is deploying two

vaccines: the first one, developed by Pfizer-Biotech, will be supplied weekly starting next while the Oxford-AstraZeneca jab, which will be supplied in larger quantities, will be delivered on a staggered basis. Kuwait reported on April, (2021) daily rate, 962 new coronavirus cases , increasing the country's caseload to 170,998. The death toll rose to 966 after two COVID-19 fatalities were also recorded. (Kuwait Ministry of Health ,2021).

Vaccines are a critical new tool in the battle against COVID-19 and it is hugely encouraging to see so many vaccines proving successful and going into development. Working as quickly as they can, scientists from across the world are collaborating and innovating to bring us tests, treatments and vaccines that will collectively save lives and end this pandemic.

### **Importance of the Study**

This research is very important, it will measure the impact of the spread of coronavirus on college students ,and the degree of health awareness between them. This research will discuss the most effective ways and preventive measures taken by the students to fight Coronavirus. The study will suggest important recommendations to support college students during this crisis and after it. Healing process will take some time, and the need to provide all the medications, vaccines, medical equipment for treatment and methods of prevention. This research will bring new information that will help the government to better understand the students impact and action in the fight of Covid 19, and interventions to promote physical, mental and social wellbeing. It discussed the most effective ways and preventive measures undertaken by the college students of Kuwait University to fight coronavirus. There will be some challenges in easing the lock-down or changing in social realities as this crisis and its evolution is difficult to predict exactly. This research evaluated the impact of COVID- 19 pandemic, on college students, and created new



knowledge and discovered the degree of health awareness and unknown facts about the effects of this pandemic on them, in an effort to find improvements in fighting the spread and decreasing the infections and mortality rate.

### **Questions of the Study**

The study concentrated on the three following main research questions:

1- what is the degree of health awareness between college students about safety measures and precautions , to avoid infection with coronavirus.

2. There is no significant difference in the opinion of college students regarding their health awareness about coronavirus referred to their study level (freshmen ,sophomore, junior and senior).

3. There is no significant difference in the opinion of college students regarding their health awareness about coronavirus referred to their college department ,(science or literature).

### **Limitations of the study**

This study was conducted in the first educational semester in the year 2021, and it was limited to female undergraduate college students attending Kuwait University.

### **Methodology**

The purpose of the study was to measure the impact of coronavirus on undergraduate college students attending Kuwait University ,regarding their health awareness about the safety precautions needed to fight this invisible enemy, it will discuss the most effective ways and preventive safety measures the students are taking to fight Coronavirus to protect themselves from infection. For the purpose of the study, a questionnaire was developed and distributed to a random sample of the students in all different colleges and different majors at Kuwait University, using a quantitative approach based on an electronically generated and distributed questionnaire. The statistical analysis included computer data entry and analyses was made by using Statistical Package for the **Social Sciences (SPSS, 24)**. Descriptive statistics include

frequency distribution, percentages, mean, standard deviation, t-test and one way Anova test, to test the relation of year of study of the students (freshmen, sophomore, junior ,and senior) ,and their college department ( Science or literature) to the students health awareness about coronavirus.

### **Sample**

The sample used to conduct the research consisted from one hundred and twenty undergraduate college students attending Kuwait University, from different year of study (freshmen, sophomore, junior and senior) and different college department,( science and literature).

### **Instrument**

The instrument was developed by collecting data related to the methods of prevention from infection with coronavirus , and asking questions related to health awareness between college students about safety measures and precautions undertaken to avoid infection with coronavirus The questions were administered to a sample of students , some of the questions were deleted and some questions were added ,until the questionnaire was developed in its last form and was administered to college students attending different colleges at Kuwait University .the questionnaire consisted of two sections, the first section requested biographical information, students year of study and college of study,( science or literature). The 2nd section for rating the perception of the students for selected health awareness measures that they possess to fight Coronavirus pandemic outbreak, and the best ways to prevent infection. It consists of 13 questions . A new variable ‘ health awareness’ was created , which is the sum of all 13 questions related to the health awareness of covid-19.The responses to the questionnaire were rated on a three point rating scale as follows: disagree is denoted by the value 1 , I don’t know is denoted by the value 2 and agree is denoted by the value 3.

**Reliability & Validity**

Cronbach’s alpha coefficients were calculated for the health awareness scale of college students about coronavirus (Covid-19). Alpha coefficients were evaluated using the guidelines suggested by (George & Mallery, 2016). The items for Health Awareness had a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .733, indicating acceptable reliability. (table 1).

Table 1. Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,733	,766	13

Cronbach’s alpha is greater than 0,65 indicating that all questions are consistent.

**Results and Discussion**

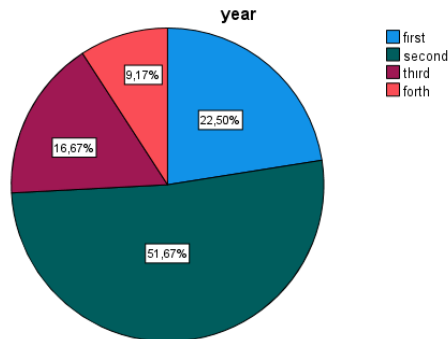
**Demographic characteristics of participants**

One hundred and twenty college students completed the questionnaire, the sample (99.0%) of the respondents were female students. Regarding the educational year of study , it was found that (22.5%) of the students were freshman ,(51.7%) were sophomore , (16.7%) were junior and (9.2%) were senior college students. (Table 2).

Table 2. Frequency distribution and percentage for various nominal independent variables (year of study).

Variable	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Freshmen	27	22,5	22,5	22,5
Sophomore	62	51,7	51,7	74,2
Junior	20	16,7	16,7	90,8
Senior	11	9,2	9,2	100,0
Total	120	100,0	100,0	

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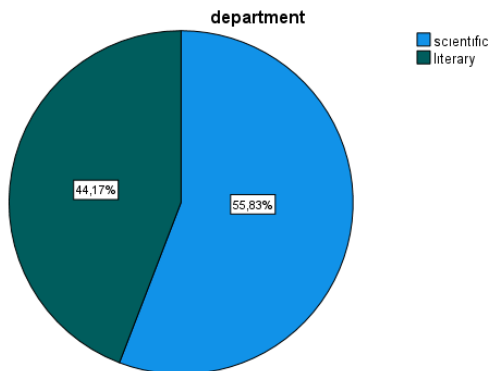
**Fig.1:replies 4 stages of years of study**

The distribution of students is represented in Fig.1, it showed that most of the students were in 2nd year level, sophomore, with( 52 %) of the respondents.

It was found (44.2%) of the students were from college of literature, and (55.8%) of the students were from college of science.(table 3).

*Table 3. Frequency distribution and percentage for various nominal independent variables (college).*

Variable	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Science	67	55,8	55,8	55,8
Literatur e	53	44,2	44,2	100,0
Total	120	100,0	100,0	



**Fig.2:replies-2 college department**

The distribution of students is represented in Fig.2 it showed that students from science colleges were (55.83%),while students from literature colleges were (44.17%).

To answer the first question of the study , what is the Perception of college students about safety measures , precautions ,and health awareness undertaken to avoid infection with coronavirus.

Table 4 showed that the highest value of satisfaction rating for questions regarding precautions to be taken to stay safe and protect yourself and others from infection with corona (covid-19), the rankings from the highest mean to the lowest mean were as the following:

Cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze ,was found to be the highest (  $M=2.95$  , $SD=.28$ ), followed by Make wearing a mask a normal part of being around other people,( $M=2.93$  ,  $SD=.33$ ), Clean your hands regularly and thoroughly with alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water,( $M=2.93$ ,  $SD=.32$ ), Avoid touching your eyes ,nose and mouth,( $M=2.93$ , $SD =.31$ ) , If I have fever ,or cough and difficulty breathing I seek medical help immediately,( $M=2.89$  , $SD=.40$ ) . The incubation period of COVID-19 is usually between 2-14 days and presents common symptoms such as fever, dry cough, feeling of tiredness and shortness of breath. Cirrincione L et al (2020). Maintain at least a 1-meter distance between yourself and others ,( $M=2.88$ ,  $SD=.43$ ). Avoid the spaces that are closed, crowded, or involve close contact ( $M=2.88$  , $SD=.44$ ). Clean and disinfect surfaces frequently especially those which are regularly touched ,( $M=2.84$ ,  $SD=.48$ ). If you have minor symptoms such as cough, headache, or mild fever ,would you self- isolate and stay home ,( $M=2.78$ , $SD=.56$ ). An individual can be infected with the virus when in close contact with an infected person via respiratory droplets from an infected person. Transmission of the virus may also occur when an individual touches his/her mouth, nose or eyes with the hands contaminated with the virus. Guan W, et al (2020).I keep up to date on the latest information and news about

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coronavirus spread from trusted sources ,such as WHO or local and national authorities in Kuwait ,(M=2.75, SD=.61). I know the full symptoms of Corona disease (Covid-19, ) (M=2.73,SD=.61). Online education is a very effective way of learning at this time because the increase spread of coronavirus (M=2.66,SD=.72) .Technology-enhanced education is becoming an increasingly important part of higher and professional education .Wernet S et al, (2000). Technology not only gives learners the opportunity to control their own learning process, but also provides them with ready access to a vast amount of information over which the teacher has no power or control (Lam & Lawrence, 2002). College students strongly agreed that It's very important to take the vaccine against coronavirus to increase immunity against infection from this disease ,(M=2.34,SD=.83). Most important is taking the vaccine against coronavirus. Abdelhafiz, A et al (2020).

*Table 4.Perception of the college students about health awareness from coronavirus*

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1:Maintain at least one meter between yourself and others	120	2,88	,434
Q2:Make wearing a mask a normal part of being around other people	120	2,93	,336
Q3:Avoid the spaces that are closed, crowded, or involve close contact	120	2,88	,441
Q4:Clean your hands regularly and thoroughly with alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water	120	2,93	,322
Q5:Avoid touching your eyes ,nose and mouth.	120	2,93	,310
Q6:Cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze.	120	2,95	,286
Q7:Clean and disinfect surfaces frequently especially those which are regularly touched.	120	2,84	,485
Q8:I know the full symptoms of Corona disease (Covid-19).	120	2,73	,618
Q9:If you have minor symptoms such as cough, headache, or mild fever ,would you self- isolate and stay home.	120	2,78	,568

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Q10:If I have fever ,or cough and difficulty breathing I seek medical help immediately	120	2,89	,406
Q11:I keep up to date on the latest information and news about coronavirus spread from trusted sources ,such as WHO or local and national authorities in Kuwait .	120	2,75	,612
Q12:It's very important to take the corona vaccine to increase immunity against infection from this disease	120	2,34	,835
Q13:Online education is a very effective way of learning at this time because the increase spread of coronavirus	120	2,66	,728
health awareness	120	36,50	3,269
Valid N (listwise)	120		

The results showed that the majority of the students possessed a high level of health awareness about COVID-19 symptoms, transmission and preventive measures . They admitted that it's very important to cover the mouth and nose when sneezing, make wearing a mask a normal part of being around other people and cleaning hands regularly with alcohol hand rub or wash them with soap and water. Most of the students agreed that it is very important to take the corona vaccine to increase their immunity against infection with the disease. Majority of the students admitted that online education is a very effective way of learning at this time because of the increase spread of coronavirus.

*Independent Sample t-test for Healthy Awareness according to college Department*

An independent sample t-test (George et al 2016) was conducted to detect if there is a significant difference between the opinion of college students from department of science and department of literature in their levels of health awareness about coronavirus. The means for both departments were almost the same value. Table 5.showed that the mean of health awareness for science students ( $M=36.18\%$ ,  $SD=3.08\%$ ), is almost the same as the mean of literature students ( $M=36.91\%$ ,  $SD=3.47\%$ ) .

Table 5. Independent Sample t-test for Health Awareness according to college of study

	Department	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Health Awareness	Science	67	36,18	3,089	,377
	Literature	53	36,91	3,471	,477

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Table 6. showed that t-test was not significant . P value (0.862)is greater than 0,05 then we conclude that there is no significant evidence to reject null hypothesis and the department of study of the students, does not affect the level of health awareness between them.

*Table 6.Independent Sample T- test for Health Awareness according to department of study (Science or Literature)*

		Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower Upper	
health awareness	Equal variances assumed	,030	<b>,862</b>	118	,228	-,727	,600	-,1914	,461
	Equal variances not assumed			105,076	,235	-,727	,608	-,1932	,479

Table 7 showed the independent sample T-test for health awareness about coronavirus among college students according to different stages of year of study.

The highest mean value was for senior students,(M=37.09 , SD=2.02),followed by freshmen (M=36.93,SD=3.10 ),sophomore (M=36.47, SD=3.26),and junior (M=35.70,SD=4.04).

*Table 7.perception of College Students about Health Awareness According to Year of Study*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Freshmen	27	36,93	3,100
Sophomore	62	36,47	3,263
Junior	20	35,70	4,041
Senior	11	37,09	2,023
Total	120	36,50	3,269

Table 8 showed One way Anova test for health awareness between college students according to different stages of year of study. Null hypothesis; the means of health awareness for different stages of study ( freshmen ,sophomore, junior ,senior) are the same ,alternate hypothesis, positive relationship, which means that the null hypothesis is false.

*Table 8. One Way Anova Test for Health Awareness between College Students*

Health Awareness	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	21,604	3	7,201	,668	,573
Within Groups	1250,396	116	10,779		
Total	1272,000	119			

P value is (0,573) greater than 0,05 then we conclude that there is no significant evidence to reject null hypothesis , the year of study has no effect to the level of health awareness about coronavirus between students referred to different stages of study.

### Conclusion

We conclude from this study that majority of college students attending Kuwait University



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