

# The Level of Emotional Sensitivity Among Students With Learning Disabilities

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## **Abstract:**

*This study aimed to identify the level of emotional sensitivity among students with learning disabilities in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and followed the descriptive approach, where the sample of the study consisted of (480) students. They were randomized, and the researcher used the emotional sensitivity scale. The study found that the level of emotional sensitivity is moderate. The results of the study showed that there were significant differences in the level of emotional sensitivity among students with learning disabilities due to sex variables for the benefit of females and in the academic level for the benefit of fourth, fifth and sixth graders. According to the study results, a set of recommendations and future studies were suggested.*

**Keywords:** Emotional Allergies, Learning Disabilities.

## **I. Introduction**

Emotional life is an important part of the personality, as it affects directing the behavior of the individual and interferes to a great extent in his psychological well-being. Emotion is an important part of the overall growth process, because it is one of the foundations that help in building the normal personality. It works to define and direct the correct path of growth for that character with all the emotions and thoughts it brings and the different patterns of behavior it achieves. (2010).

Emotion has a driving force that causes the organism to diversify in its behavior until it achieves its goal of emotion, and it reduces the tension that causes it, especially in the case of my emotional fear and anxiety, and therefore we find that emotion gives a person greater strength and ability to work in a state of calm, but exaggeration in emotion

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Such as feeling anxiety or anxiety, to the point where it affects the normal course of a person's life, causing discomfort and poor mental health (Abu Mansur, 2011).

Emotional sensitivity is strongly affected by regular situations that others may not fill in, and the emotionally sensitive person is the person who is affected more than necessary by the external factors surrounding him and outside him, he may interpret the word on more than it can bear and explain the view and movement so that he exaggerates a meaningless exaggeration (Wallbott & Seithe, 1993), It is characterized in light stressful situations by disrupting judgments, screams, arguments, pitiful nature, volatility and, lacks stability, speed of change from one state to another, emotional immaturity, and inadequate emotional responses to their stimuli, and his relationship with others and people are full of vibrating emotional trends.

So, they prefer isolation, as they feel safe alone, and their presence with others makes them feel anxious and fearful, so we see them suffering from social anxiety and emotional sensitivity. Emotional sensitivity is found in all members of society in general, and emotional sensitivity in others may be exaggerated. Where the emotionally sensitive person is affected quickly because the most trivial reasons may be illogical, and does not accept criticism, and interprets the words and views of others more than is likely to generate feelings of despair and frustration.

#### **The Problem of the study:**

Since emotional efficiency is an important dimension of human growth, the attempt to evaluate it and develop programs to improve it is an important and overlooked issue. The importance of detecting emotional sensitivity among students with learning disabilities is highlighted in light of the high percentage of students with learning disabilities present in regular schools and their influence and influence with their regular colleagues (Haseeb, 2001). The problem of emotional sensitivity is one of the most negative behavioral problems among students with learning difficulties, and one of the most common because of the resulting negative effects that concern all those dealing with these students (Lerner, 2000).

With regard to the interaction of teachers with children with learning difficulties, (Al-Khatib & Al-Hadidi, 2009) states that teachers have negative attitudes, and that they use less positive behavior during their interactions with children with learning disabilities, in addition to not providing adequate reinforcement to them. They also describe students with learning disabilities as using aggressive behaviors, and they show varying emotional responses, as for the interaction of students with learning difficulties with the family.

Dyson, (2003) indicates that children with learning disabilities have less positive reinforcement than parents compared to their regular peers. Also, students with learning difficulties are subject to negative attitudes by parents more than their regular peers, as parents describe their children with learning difficulties as reckless, and more alarming compared to ordinary students. If we look closely at the previous positions by the family and the school in general towards students with learning difficulties, we find negative positions on the majority, which may be due to the prior expectations towards these students, which are mostly negative in addition to the difficulties and pressures that may appear as a result of working with students with difficulties Learning by teachers and parents.

The interest of this study came to reveal the emotional sensitivity of students with learning difficulties in light of observing the different emotional responses of many of these students. This was during their interaction with the teacher and comrades in the school, and with family members, and their failure to adhere to the desired behaviors inside and outside the school.

**Study questions:**

What is the level of emotional sensitivity among students with learning difficulties?

Are there statistically significant differences in sensitivity among students with learning difficulties due to the gender variable?

Are there statistically significant differences in sensitivity among students with learning difficulties due to Class level variable?

**Objectives of the study:**

-Identifying the level of emotional sensitivity among students with learning difficulties.

-Detecting the difference in emotional sensitivity among students with learning difficulties due to two variables (gender, Class level).

**The importance of studying:**

The importance of the study emerges from the importance of the topic that it dealt with, as this study will enrich the theoretical framework related to learning difficulties in general and emotional sensitivity in this category in particular. The researcher also hopes that the results of the current study will benefit the workers in the field of special education with the nature and level of emotional sensitivity for students with learning difficulties, to help educational specialists in preparing appropriate educational rehabilitation programs to provide students with learning difficulties appropriate social and emotional skills.

**The limits of the study:**

The results of the study are determined by the following limits:

Thematic limits: emotional sensitivity in students with learning difficulties.

Human boundaries: a random sample of students with learning disabilities in the Irbid Kasbah Education Directorate.

Time limits: the second semester of the year 2018/2019.

Spatial Boundaries: Kasbah of Irbid.

Psychometric limits: It is represented by the scale used in this study, its psychometric properties (honesty and consistency), and the objective responses of the study subjects to the statements of the scale.

**Terms of study:**

Emotional Sensitivity: Very affected by normal situations that others do not care about and the emotionally sensitive person is the one who is greatly affected by the external factors surrounding him.

Procedurally, the researchers define it as the degree to which examiners obtain the emotional sensitivity scale used for the purposes of the current study.

Students with learning difficulties: They are those students who suffer from a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes, which includes understanding and using written or spoken language that appears in the disturbance of hearing, thinking, speech, reading, spelling, and math (Al-Rousan, 2001).

The researchers define it procedurally: “they are those students who were classified as having learning difficulties in the regular schools of the Directorate of Education and Learning based on the taxonomic foundations used in these schools, which include students with learning difficulties in reading and writing, mathematics and multiple learning difficulties.”

## **II. Theoretical framework and previous studies:**

Lush, (2008) divided emotional sensitivity in two dimensions: the first is negative emotional sensitivity, which is represented by exaggerated and aggressive reactions towards people, situations and events, and this may happen voluntarily as a respite from the aggressive suppressed aspirations of the individual, and emotional sensitivity may occur compulsively outside the will of The individual. As for the second dimension, it is the positive emotional sensitivity, which is a type of event that makes the individual able to read the faces of others and understand their impressions, personalities, verbal and non-verbal expressions, and he understands the meaning of signs, movements and gestures. Leticia & Feldman ( 2005) added a third dimension to the emotional sensitivity dimensions, which is emotional distancing, which represents the trend of individuals towards moving away from people in difficult or bad situations, in order to avoid negative sensitivity to them (Abu Mansour, 2011).

The sensitive personality has several characteristics that it has identified: independence, caution, self-defense, and sensitivity to criticism, awareness, awareness and sincerity (Sheikha, 2008).

Rajeh, (1999, p. 162) mentioned several theories that explained emotion and the emotional response, among them James-Lange's theory, cognitive theory, and Cannon's cold theory as follows:

James-Lange theory: The owners of this theory believe that the physiological changes that occur to the individual when he is exposed to environmental situations or stimuli are responsible for his emotions. A person realizes these emotions through sensory neurological messages sent to the brain, which means that the individual's twitching when exposed to a fearful situation is the reason for his feeling of fear. Hence, this theory explains the occurrence of emotional hypersensitivity as a result of feeling the physiological and muscular responses provoked by the external position, and not the result of perceiving the external position.

Cognitive theory: The owners of cognitive theory believe that emotional sensitivity consists of much complex information that includes the following:

- Information regarding environmental events that reach the cerebellum through the sense organs.
- The information stored in the brain that is used to estimate and interpret new events.

Neurological activities, whether in the peripheral nervous system or the autonomous nervous system, which receive and realize the occurrence of physiological and muscular changes. For cognitive theory, according to the level of emotional sensitivity determined based on the cognitive activity of the individual resulting from the environmental situation in which physiological and muscular changes occur.

Cannon-Bard theory: The owners of this theory see that emotion is caused by several patterns of neural activities resulting from environmental stimuli that affect the individual as follows:

-Patterns of nervous activity are sent to the autonomous nervous system, where they alert physiological and muscle changes to emotional hypersensitivity.

-Patterns of nervous activity are also sent at the same time to the cerebellum, where it causes perception. It is clear that Canon Bard's theory holds that the physiological and muscular changes have nothing to do with causing emotional hypersensitivity, but rather the individual's awareness of emotional allergens' situations that triggers physiological and muscular changes.

Although learning difficulties were defined primarily as academic difficulties, but many educators believe that learning difficulties have effects and dimensions that go beyond academic fields, and from this attention must be directed to such effects and dimensions that collide to revolve around the problems and difficulties of social and emotional behavior in Students with learning difficulties. Many researchers and educators believe that it is not sufficient to deal with academic difficulties in isolation from the social and emotional effects of these difficulties (Ritter, 2001). Al-Khatib and Al-Khazaleh, (2011) indicate that students with learning difficulties suffer from inadequate knowledge of the rules governing behavior, as they misbehave emotional situations and feel personal incompetence, and tend to show inappropriate, aggressive or withdrawal responses.

Jill, Michelle & Conway (2005) believes that students with learning difficulties suffer from feelings of deficiency and incompetence, they underestimate themselves and cannot resist the anxiety caused by the events and pressures of daily life, and they are always looking for psychological assistance to reduce the emotions caused by it.

Students with learning difficulties may not find themselves affected by what they are exposed to in regular situations in their environment. That makes them excited for the most trivial reasons, and they issued violent reactions that they cannot control. Moreover, their relationship with others is full of vibrating emotional tendencies, preferring to withdraw and be isolated from them; Because it makes them feel safe,

because the presence of others alongside them causes them anxiety. Therefore, they suffer from social anxiety and emotional allergies (Mercer, 2001).

Al-Zayat, (2001) indicates that the prevalence of difficulties related to general emotionalism (14%) of the total number of students who suffer from learning difficulties. So, emotional difficulties are considered to have different and multiple effects on the various aspects of the individual's personality in terms of personal, social and emotional compatibility.

Al-Waqfi, (1998) , Al-Khatib, Khazaleh (2011) and (Lerner, 2000) agree that many students with learning difficulties have emotional difficulties in addition to their academic problems. It is essential to realize that many students with learning disabilities may experience negative emotional problems - such as depression, anxiety, mood, and a desire to commit suicide - more than regular students. Several previous studies have indicated that people with learning disabilities show more frequent, severe, depressing levels of anxiety, depression, and frustration (Mercer, 1997).

Bryan (1998) emphasizes that emotions play an important role in the lives of children with learning difficulties, especially with regard to their relationships with others; children suffering from depression do not have strong social relationships. This may be because people prefer to be accompanied by happy people and avoid people Depressed and consequently. The effect of negative emotions is not limited to the psychological state of the individual only, but rather affects learning and social relations with others.

There are many opinions about the causes of disability in the emotional aspects of students with learning difficulties, however there are a set of hypotheses that believe that this disability may be due to weakness In language and communication skills. In addition to the difficulty in recognizing and understanding the emotions of others, not to mention the academic problems represented in low achievement, which leads to low self-concept. The inability to cognitive processing and the difficulty of solving problems play an important role in the weak social and emotional skills of people with learning difficulties ( Elksnin and Elksnin, 2005).

The study of Obaid,( 2018) aimed to reveal the emotional sensitivity of the preparatory stage students, the study sample consisted of (509) male and female students. The statistical analysis of the data showed the following results: The presence of a high emotional level of sensitivity among the fifth preparatory D students statistically, and the presence of statistically significant differences in Emotional sensitivity according to the gender variable, in favor of females, and the academic specialization variable, in favor of students of scientific specialization.

The study of Qurtubiya,( 2019) came to identify the level of emotional sensitivity among the hearing impaired in the Gulf College in the Sultanate of Oman . The study followed the descriptive approach, where the study sample consisted of (65) male and female students with hearing impairment. They were chosen using the intentional method of hearing impaired students at Gulf College. The researchers used the emotional sensitivity scale, and it was translated into the alphabet of finger spelling. The study found that the level of

emotional sensitivity among the hearing impaired in the College of the Gulf was at the intermediate level, where the mean arithmetic of emotional sensitivity (1.72). The results of the study showed that there were no statistically significant differences in the level of feeling of emotional sensitivity among students with auditory disabilities attributable to sex variables and the Class level.

### III. Study procedures:

This section presents the study methodology, its society, sample, variables and tools.

#### Study Approach:

The researchers used the descriptive approach, as it fits with the nature of the study, as it seeks to describe the nature of data drawn from the members of the study sample in light of some variables (gender, Class level).

#### Community of the study:

The study population consisted of all students with learning disabilities enrolled in resource rooms in government schools for the 2018/2019 academic year in the Kasbah of Irbid.

#### The study sample:

The researchers applied the study tool to an initial survey sample consisting of (20) students from one of the schools of the Kasbah of Irbid administration, in order to ensure the extent of understanding of students with learning difficulties with the scale statements. Then the researchers chose another reconnaissance sample of (40) male and female students from the original study community, and the study tool was applied to this sample in order to verify the validity of the tools for application to the sample members, through calculating their sincerity and consistency by appropriate statistical methods.

The study sample consisted of all students with learning difficulties enrolled in the resource rooms based on the diagnosis approved by the Ministry of Education, whose number is (480) male and female students in the second to sixth elementary grades, and distributed to (32) schools belonging to the Directorate of the Kasbah of Irbid who have source rooms for students with Learning difficulties, for the academic year 2018/2019. All study samples were randomly chosen stratified. Table (1) shows the distribution of the study individuals with learning difficulties according Class level and gender.

Table(1): Distribution of study sample with learning difficulties according to the class and gender.

number	level	variable
294	males	gender

186	females	
84	second	Class level
96	third	
132	fourth	
90	fifth	
78	sixth	
480	Total	

Tools of the study:

To achieve the goals of the study, the researchers used the emotional sensitivity scale: prepared by (Abu Mansour, 2011). The scale consists of (34) statements with alternatives to a five-year answer which are always - often - sometimes - rarely - and never (distributed on three main areas: individual negative sensitivity, and positive sensitivity) towards peer and emotional distancing. statements were graded (1,2,3,4,5) upon correction, and vice versa for the paragraphs in the opposite direction. Then grades are combined to obtain the total degree of emotional sensitivity for each student and then for all members of the sample. The results showed correlation between (0.278-0.689) while the alpha coefficient of Cro-Nebach was (0.701) which are acceptable degrees. After that, the researchers reformulated the statements of the emotional sensitivity scale to suit students with learning difficulties, and to verify the psychometric properties of the scale in the current study, the researchers Calculates validity and reliability as follows:

The researchers calculated the validity of the scale in two ways: the apparent honest method, and the vocabulary validation. Where the emotional sensitivity scale was presented in its initial form to eight arbitrators specialized in educational psychology, counseling, measurement and evaluation, special education from Ph.D holders at Yarmouk University, Ajloun National University and the Ministry of Education. The researcher asked the arbitrators to express their opinions and observations on the appropriateness of the paragraphs of the scale for the purpose of the study, the degree of affiliation of the paragraphs to him. The clarity of the linguistic formulation for each of the paragraphs of the scale, and to add any amendments and proposals that they deem appropriate, and after that an inventory of the opinions of the arbitrators was made and the agreement percentage was approved (80%) or more of the arbitrators 'opinions.

As for the reliability of the study tool, the researchers calculated the total reliability coefficient of the emotional sensitivity scale using the alpha-coefficient of an electrocardiogram for internal consistency.

The Alpha Coefficient of Cronbach for the scale was (0.865), and the reliability for the scale (0.896), which is a good stability coefficient and appropriate for the objectives of the study.

#### IV. The results of the study:

This part deals with the results of the study as follows:

First: Results related to the first question: What is the level of emotional sensitivity among students with learning difficulties? To answer this question, mean, standard deviations and the level of emotional sensitivity of the scale paragraphs were calculated as in Table (2).

Table (2): means, standard deviations, frequencies, percentages, and the level of emotional sensitivity

Level of emotional sensitivity	Sig level.05	T value		Hypothesis mean	SD	mean	frequencies	level	variable
		tabular	calculated					emotion al sensitivity	
low	sig	1.78	31.47	94	9.17	109.34	235	low	emotion al sensitivity
							164	medium	
							81	high	

It is clear from Table (2) that the level of emotional sensitivity for students with learning difficulties was significant and at a low level. This may be due to some characteristics and characteristics of students with learning difficulties, whether resulting from organic factors or social educational factors, such as recklessness, impulsivity, and lack of control their emotions, the difficulty of social communication, the low concept of self, and other personal and emotional characteristics that limit the social and emotional skills appropriate to them.

Second: Results related to the second question: Are there statistically significant differences in sensitivity among students with learning difficulties due to the gender variable? In order to answer this question, a T-test was used for the gender variable as shown in Table (3):

Table (3): mean, Standard Deviations, and T-TEST for Emotional Sensitivity Scale According to the Sex Variable

result	Level of	T value	DF	SD	mean	number	gender	Emotional Sensitivity
significant	0.00	7.23	478	0.168	2.56	294	males	Total
				0.156	2.84	186	females	

\* significant at level of  $\alpha \geq 0.05$

Table (3) shows that there are significant differences between males and females in the level of feeling emotional sensitivity in the overall degree of the scale in favor of females. This means that students with learning difficulties have a higher level of emotional sensitivity compared to male students. This may be attributed to the factors of maturity and growth. In the two stages of childhood, the growth of females is faster than the growth of males, and consequently, the acquisition of social and emotional skills is faster for females than for males, for females are faster than males in linguistic growth, which plays an important role in the emotional side.

Third: Results related to the third question: Are there statistically significant differences in sensitivity among students with learning difficulties due to the variable of class level? To find out if there were statistically significant differences in the level of emotional sensitivity due to the variable of class level among students with learning difficulties, the mean and standard deviations were calculated as shown in Table (4):]

Table (4): mean and standard deviations of emotional sensitivity according to the class level variable

SD	mean	numt	Class le	emotional sensitivity
0.399	2.08	84	second	Total
0.252	2.11	96	third	
0.188	2.18	132	fourth	
0.209	2.25	90	fifth	
0.155	2.36	78	sixth	
0.187	2.19	480	Total	

It is clear from Table (4) that there are some apparent differences in the mean in the level of emotional sensitivity for students with learning difficulties according to the class level variable and in order

to ensure that these differences are statistically significant, the One-Way ANOVA test was used as it appears in the table (5):

Table (5): Results of One-Way ANOVA variance for differences in emotional sensitivity according to the class level variable

result	Level sig	F value	Mean squares	DF	Sum squares	Source variation	emotional sensitivity
significant	* 0.00	13.046	0.963	4	3.853	Between groups	Total degree
			0.47	475	18.579	Inside groups	
				479	24.524	Total	

\* significant at level of  $\alpha \geq 0.05$

Table (5) shows that there are statistically significant differences in emotional sensitivity among students with learning difficulties according to the class level on the tool as a whole. To reveal the sources of differences according to the row variable, a Chevy test was used for the dimensional comparisons and Table (6) shows that.

Table (6): Results of the Chevy test for the dimensional comparisons of the class level variable

sixth	fifth	fourth	third	second	Class level	emotional sensitivity
*0.37	*0.27	*0.20	0.03		second	Total
*0.24	*0.24	*0.17			third	
0.173	0.069				fourth	
0.104					fifth	
					sixth	

\* significant at level of  $\alpha \geq 0.05$

The results of the overall tool indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the mean of second and third grade students, the mean of fourth grade students, the mean of fifth and fifth graders, and the mean of sixth graders in favor of fourth, fifth and sixth graders. This may be attributed to the fact that students in the first three grades are still in an early stage of development compared to the fourth, fifth and sixth grade students, and therefore the process of physical growth affects the psychological development of these students. The students of the first three grades are still living in the transition phase from home to school and thus They did not acquire appropriate emotional skills. It is believed that students in grades four, five and six have acquired many emotional experiences and skills because of their continuous interaction process in society, whether through playing with peers or interacting with parents and teachers. In addition to that students at this stage enjoy the independence, organization and formation of the concept

of self, as they go through experiences a new teaching is represented by the multiplicity of teachers who study them in addition to subjecting exam experiences in educational materials.

## **V. Recommendations:**

In light of the results of the current study, the researchers suggest the following recommendations:

- Preparing psychological counseling programs to reduce emotional sensitivity in students with learning difficulties.

- Curricula include some methodological and extracurricular activities that contribute to reducing emotional sensitivity in students with learning difficulties.

- Conducting other studies dealing with the level of emotional sensitivity in students with learning difficulties in light of other variables not covered in the study.

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