

# Awareness of Noise-Induced Hearing Loss and Use of Hearing Protection among Young Adults in Palestinian Universities.

**Supervisor:** Samar Khalidi

**Students:** Amal Zaqqa, Duha Abasi, Dina Awiwi, Baraa Fatayer, Asmaa Hussain, Huda Abu Esbaa.  
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## **Abstract:**

**Introduction:** Long-term noise exposure can result in sensorineural hearing loss (SNHL), known as Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL). It is one of most common and almost preventable hearing problems

**Objectives:** The purpose of this study was to identify and increase awareness of Noise-induced hearing loss and use of hearing protection mainly earplugs among young adults in Palestinian universities.

**Methods:** A non-probability convenience sampling strategy was used, 460 students filled the questionnaire completely. 73.% (n = 340) were females and 26.1% (n = 120) were males, aged 20.3 years  $\pm$  1.76) from four Palestinian universities. The questionnaire included 15 close-and open-ended questions targeting health of hearing, noise exposure and perception towards hearing protection, in addition to three demographic items about age, gender and attended university name. The answers were analyzed statistically, and comparisons were made using the t-test.

76.1% of the participants found hearing loss to be a very important issue.

**Results:** Among respondents, 72.4% have experienced at least one hearing symptom. 92% of participants showed awareness of noise-induced hearing loss. However, earplugs were used by only 5.2% of participants for hearing protection. This indicates that young adults in Palestine have a high awareness level of noise-induced hearing loss but obvious lack of awareness about the importance of hearing protection. On the other hand, 56.3% were likely or somewhat likely to use earplugs in the future ( $p < 0.01$ ) after getting information about hearing protection and noise-induced hearing loss.

**Conclusion:** It can be concluded that knowledge and awareness have a strong effect on the attitude of students. The social media, TV shows, educational institutes, audiologist, headphones Sellers and Medical staff have the responsibilities to increase awareness of the danger of loud sounds and use of hearing protection among young adults.