

# Well-Being Of College Students In Dormitories Under The 'New Normal' In COVID-19 Era: Cross-Sectional Observational Study In Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Thailand

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## Abstract

COVID-19 pandemic is a stressful event potentially causing negative effects on human well-being. This research was aimed to study well-being of college students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University. Participants in this research were 300 Thai college students who lived in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University. Research instrument was questionnaire on well-being of college students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University under the 'New Normal'. Results of this study revealed that an overall well-being score was 3.69. When considering each dimension, it was found that cognitive well-being was highest ( $\bar{x} = 3.81$ , S.D. = 0.96), followed by emotional well-being ( $\bar{x} = 3.91$ , S.D. = 0.54), interpersonal well-being ( $\bar{x} = 3.62$ , S.D. = 0.67), and physical well-being ( $\bar{x} = 3.63$ , S.D. = 0.58). In conclusion, this present study found that well-being of college students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University during COVID-19 pandemic in all dimensions were in normal high levels. This can be attribute to the well-adapted campus environments and university supporting strategies and staff.

**Keywords:** Well-being, College Students, New Normal, COVID-19.

## Introduction

Well-being, a term commonly used in medicine, psychology and education, refers to state of complete physical, mental, and social and not merely the absence of diseases and infirmity ([Kiefer, 2008](#)). Dunn defined 'well-being' as an integrated approach that focuses on empowering individuals ([Dunn, 1961](#)), while Street defined that well-being is an interdependent system of human internal systems such as physical, spiritual, intellectual, etc ([Street, 1994](#)). All of these components interact and affect each other. Well-being is a state in which a person is happy; thus, happiness is the balance of all dimensions between physical health, mental health, and access to the truth. Well-being is manifested by a person's appreciation of life, a healthy body, good mental health, and a good relationship with the society and community in where one lives. Thus, well-being is essential in the life of a person by promoting good physical, mental, social, and spiritual health through an integrated process of individual interrelated work.

Chiang Rai Rajabhat University had recognized the importance of producing quality graduates, thus promoting student activities that were complete and consistent with desirable graduate characteristics by encouraging students to develop their intellect, social skill, emotional expression, physical health, and morality, which accorded with the 5 desirable graduate characteristics: knowledge, thinking skills, interpersonal skills and responsibility, analytical and communicational skills, and personal moral development. The University had striven to provide students with optimal experience and environment both in the classroom and outside of the classroom by providing the basic facilities and necessary services, to promote emotional well-being of college students to be happier while they were in the university, which would result in students reaching further academic achievements.

The COVID-19 pandemic, a severe respiratory disease first discovered in Wuhan, China, in December 2019, imposes physical and mental stress to the world population ([Lopes & Nihei, 2021](#)). Based on data from the National

Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, lockdown conditions, limited transportation, residential isolation, and social distancing during the pandemic cause stress, irritation, boredom, and frustration among people worldwide ([Bhattacharjee & Ghosh, 2022](#)). College students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University had to take care of their well-being while living in the dormitories in the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic. They had to adapt to a new way of living (New Normal). This research was aimed to study well-being of college students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, which would be a guideline for students to understand their own health and gain knowledge and understanding of rectified self-care. In addition, this information might be crucial for planning of Chiang Rai Rajabhat University to develop students' well-being and being able to adapt themselves according to situation which change according COVID-19 pandemic.

## Materials and Methods

### Study design and participants

A cross-sectional study design has been performed in 300 Thai students living in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University. These were bachelor students from 8 faculties of the university. All the participants have signed consent forms before the study was carried out.

### Research instrument

Research instrument was questionnaire concerning well-being of college students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University under the 'New Normal', which was developed according to guidelines of Elizabeth and co-workers ([Venart et al., 2007](#)). This questionnaire was rating scale questionnaire according to 5-level Likert. It was

verified for content validity by 3 experts and verified for reliability by testing with college students with similar characteristics to the sample groups. Then, it was analyzed for Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Overall, the questionnaire had a high level of reliability of 0.96. Each part of the questionnaire had a high level of reliability between 0.89 - 0.93 from 63 questions and discrimination was 0.20-0.69.

## Data collection and analysis

In this study, we implemented to collect population data and brought the questionnaire to check completeness. The data were statistically analyzed using basic statistics such as mean and standard deviation (mean $\pm$ SD) of the well-being scores of students.

## Results

### General information

We analyzed general information of students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University as shown in Table 1. It was found that most of students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University were female (81.00%). The most of students were in fourth year (49.33%), followed by second year (25.67%), third year (15.67%), and first year (9.33%), respectively. The most of students were in faculty of humanities (38.33%), followed by school of traditional and alternative medicine (30.00%), faculty of education (15.33), school of tourism (6.67%), school of social science (4.00%), faculty of industrial technology (2.00%), and school of computer and information technology (1.67%), respectively. Most of the students stayed in dormitories for a period of 4 years (37.00%), followed by a period of 2 years (26.67%), a period of a year (22.67%) and a period of 3 years (13.67%), respectively.

**Table 1** General information of students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University (n = 300)

Variable	Number	Percentage
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	57	19.00
Female	243	81.00
<b>College Year</b>		
A first year student	28	9.33
A second year student	77	25.67
A third year student	47	15.67
A fourth year student	148	49.33
<b>Faculty/Affiliation</b>		
School of Traditional and Alternative Medicine	90	30.00
Faculty of Humanities	115	38.33
Faculty of Education	46	15.33
Faculty of Industrial Technology	6	2.00
School of Tourism	20	6.67
School of Social Science	12	4.00

Faculty of Management Science	6	2.00
School of Computer and Information Technology	5	1.67
<b>Length of stay in the dormitory</b>		
1 year	68	22.67
2 years	80	26.67
3 years	41	13.67
4 years	111	37.00

### Well-being of students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University

Well-being mean scores of students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University are shown in Table 2. It was found that students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University under 'New Normal' had the mean of overall well-being of  $3.69 \pm 0.56$ , which was

at a high level. When considering each dimension, it was found that cognitive well-being had the highest mean ( $3.81 \pm 0.96$ ), followed by emotional well-being ( $3.91 \pm 0.54$ ), physical well-being ( $3.63 \pm 0.58$ ), and interpersonal well-being ( $3.62 \pm 0.67$ ), respectively.

**Table 2** Well-being of students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University under 'New Normal' (n=300)

Well-Being	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level
Physical well-being	3.63	0.58	High
Emotional well-being	3.70	0.61	High
Cognitive well-being	3.81	0.56	High
Interpersonal well-being	3.62	0.67	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.69</b>	<b>0.56</b>	<b>High</b>

### Dimensional well-being of students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University

Individual scores of physical, emotional, cognitive, and interpersonal well-being of the students are shown in Table 3, 4, 5, and 6, respectively. The students had the mean of physical well-being of  $3.63 \pm 0.58$ , that was at a high level. When considering each question, it was found that 'I can sense my feelings as to what I am thinking, feeling or doing' was the highest mean ( $3.84 \pm 1.06$ ), followed by 'I choose to exercise gradually without overdoing it' ( $3.74 \pm 1.05$ ) and 'I always sleep soundly all night everyday' ( $3.74 \pm 0.99$ ), 'I choose having

nutritious food' ( $3.72 \pm 0.69$ ), 'I am more interested in the present than the past or the future' ( $3.71 \pm 0.85$ ), 'I will wake up when I get enough sleep' ( $3.66 \pm 0.95$ ), 'I choose the exercise method that is suitable for me' ( $3.63 \pm 1.17$ ), 'I sleep at least 7 hours a day, but not more than 8 hours' ( $3.46 \pm 1.01$ ), 'I am an easy sleeper' ( $3.41 \pm 1.21$ ) and 'I usually spend my time to calm my mind whether before bedtime or work-time' ( $3.41 \pm 1.03$ ), 'I avoid eating foods which are high in fat' ( $3.38 (3.74 \pm 0.76)$ ), 'I usually eat all the meals that my body needs each day' ( $3.19 \pm 1.01$ ), 'I control my weight by eating less flour and sugar' ( $3.14 \pm 1.04$ ), 'I exercise at least 3 days a week' ( $3.14 \pm 1.26$ ), 'I exercise at least 30 minutes a day' ( $2.99 \pm 1.10$ ), and 'I always exercise' ( $2.91 \pm 1.21$ ), respectively.

**Table 3** Physical well-being of students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University under 'New Normal' (n=300)

Physical well-being	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level
1. I choose having nutritious food.	3.72	0.69	High
2. I avoid eating foods which are high in fat.	3.38	0.76	Medium
3. I control my weight by eating less flour and sugar.	3.14	1.04	Medium
4. I usually eat all the meals that my body needs each day.	3.19	1.01	Medium
5. I exercise at least 3 days a week.	3.14	1.26	Medium
6. I exercise at least 30 minutes a day.	3.11	1.28	Medium
7. I always exercise.	2.91	1.21	Medium
8. I choose the exercise method that is suitable for me.	3.63	1.17	High
9. I choose to exercise gradually without overdoing it.	3.74	1.05	High
10. I sleep at least 7 hours a day, but not more than 8 hours.	3.46	1.01	Medium
11. I will wake up when I get enough sleep.	3.66	0.95	High
12. I always sleep soundly all night everyday.	3.74	0.99	High
13. I am an easy sleeper	3.41	1.21	Medium

14. I usually spend my time to calm my mind whether before bedtime or work-time.	3.41	1.03	Medium
15. I calm my mind by directing my own breathing.	2.99	1.10	Medium
16. I can sense my feelings as to what I am thinking, feeling or doing.	3.84	1.06	High
17. I am more interested in the present than the past or the future.	3.71	0.85	High
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.63</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>High</b>

In Table 4, the students had the mean of emotional well-being of 3.70 and a standard deviation of 0.61, that was at a high level. When considering each question, it was found that 'If I know what I'm doing is the right thing, then I'll keep doing it' ( $3.97 \pm 0.78$ ), 'I can tell my feelings whether I'm happy or sad' were the highest mean ( $3.97 \pm 0.89$ ), 'I know there are things I can't do only myself and I should ask someone for help' ( $3.94 \pm 0.89$ ), 'I can accept my emotions whether they are negative or positive' ( $3.93 \pm 0.85$ ), 'I know which I should improve myself in order to become a more qualified student' ( $3.91 \pm 0.66$ ), 'I avoid working when I am in a negative mood because I do not want to ruin my job' ( $3.90 \pm 0.76$ ), 'I know how to express

my feelings in different situations' ( $3.82 \pm 0.94$ ), 'I know my shortcomings and limitations' ( $3.77 \pm 0.89$ ), 'I can control my behavior' ( $3.71 \pm 0.93$ ), 'I always find fun things to do when I know I'm in a bad mood' ( $3.70 \pm 1.02$ ), 'I self-assess my studies without biasing or underestimating myself' ( $3.66 \pm 0.82$ ), 'When there are stressful things, I can always turn them into something relaxing or fun' ( $3.65 \pm 0.83$ ), 'When I know that I was going to face an uncomfortable job, I would find a new job' ( $3.54 \pm 0.91$ ), 'I like telling jokes to my friends to make it fun and relax a stressful situation' ( $3.34 \pm 1.12$ ), 'I can honestly share my needs with others' ( $3.25 \pm 0.99$ ), and 'I like to listen to my friends tell jokes' ( $3.18 \pm 1.29$ ), respectively.

**Table 4** Emotional well-being of students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University under 'New Normal' (n=300)

Emotional well-being	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level
18. I know my shortcomings and limitations.	3.77	0.89	High
19. I can honestly share my needs with others.	3.25	0.99	Medium
20. I can control my behavior.	3.71	0.93	High
21. I know which I should improve myself in order to become a more qualified student.	3.91	0.66	High
22. If I know what I'm doing is the right thing, then I'll keep doing it.	3.97	0.78	High
23. I know there are things I can't do only myself and I should ask someone for help.	3.94	0.89	High
24. I self-assess my studies without biasing or underestimating myself.	3.66	0.82	High
25. I can tell my feelings whether I'm happy or sad.	3.97	0.89	High
26. I can accept my emotions whether they are negative or positive.	3.93	0.85	High
27. I avoid working when I am in a negative mood because I do not want to ruin my job.	3.90	0.76	High
28. When I know that I was going to face an uncomfortable job, I would find a new job.	3.54	0.91	High
29. When there are stressful things, I can always turn them into something relaxing or fun.	3.65	0.83	High
30. I know how to express my feelings in different situations.	3.82	0.94	High
31. I always find fun things to do when I know I'm in a bad mood.	3.70	1.02	High
32. I like telling jokes to my friends to make it fun and relax a stressful situation.	3.34	1.12	Medium
33. I like to listen to my friends tell jokes.	3.18	1.29	Medium
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.70</b>	<b>0.61</b>	<b>High</b>

From Table 5, the students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University under 'New Normal' had the mean of cognitive well-being of  $3.81 \pm 0.56$ , that was at a high level. When considering each question, it was found that 'I understand that every problem has a solution' was the highest mean ( $4.15 \pm 0.71$ ), followed by 'Before deciding to solve

the problem, I will choose the best solution' ( $4.05 \pm 0.60$ ), 'I can accept the fact that happened' ( $3.95 \pm 0.79$ ), 'When I encounter a problem, I will do find the solution options and consequences before starting a solution' ( $3.89 \pm 0.73$ ), 'I know how to come up with a plan for solving problems both in studying and in my personal life' ( $3.83 \pm 0.69$ ), 'I am a person

who thinks rationally' ( $3.82 \pm 0.79$ ), 'Sometimes I like to imagine more than the reality of life' ( $3.81 \pm 0.94$ ), 'I am not an easy believer without evidence or facts' ( $3.79 \pm 0.85$ ), 'I believe that I am a person who does not believe easily unless there is a sufficient reason' ( $3.76 \pm 0.82$ ), 'I am someone who does not stick to the same repetitive framework' ( $3.71 \pm 0.83$ ), 'I can

follow my plan to fix the problem' ( $3.70 \pm 0.70$ ), 'I always think of doing what is possible' ( $3.69 \pm 0.79$ ), and 'I always keep track of information and issues going on in society' ( $3.41 \pm 0.95$ ), respectively.

**Table 5** Cognitive well-being of students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University under 'New Normal' (n=300)

Cognitive well-being	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level
34. I can accept the fact that happened.	3.95	0.79	High
35. Sometimes I like to imagine more than the reality of life.	3.81	0.94	High
36. I always think of doing what is possible.	3.69	0.79	High
37. I am a person who thinks rationally.	3.82	0.79	High
38. I always keep track of information and issues going on in society.	3.41	0.95	Medium
39. I am someone who does not stick to the same repetitive framework.	3.71	0.83	High
40. I believe that I am a person who does not believe easily unless there is a sufficient reason.	3.76	0.82	High
41. I am not an easy believer without evidence or facts.	3.79	0.85	High
42. I understand that every problem has a solution.	4.15	0.71	High
43. When I encounter a problem, I will do find the solution options and consequences before starting a solution.	3.89	0.73	High
44. Before deciding to solve the problem, I will choose the best solution.	4.05	0.60	High
45. I know how to come up with a plan for solving problems both in studying and in my personal life.	3.83	0.69	High
46. I can follow my plan to fix the problem.	3.70	0.70	High
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.81</b>	<b>0.56</b>	<b>High</b>

According to Table 6, the students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University under 'New Normal' had the mean of interpersonal well-being of  $3.62 \pm 0.67$ , that was at a high level. When considering each question, it was found that 'I always care about my family' was the highest mean ( $4.47 \pm 0.78$ ), followed by 'I care about my friend when he/she is in trouble' ( $4.11 \pm 0.81$ ), 'I can discuss my studies openly' ( $3.79 \pm 0.88$ ), 'I have dorm-mates who can give me good advice when I need it' ( $3.75 \pm 0.94$ ), 'No matter how hard I study, I will try to talk to the people around me when I have an opportunity' ( $3.67 \pm 0.96$ ), 'I usually spend my free time with close friends doing various activities together' ( $3.64 \pm 0.98$ ), 'I always get encouragement from my classmates' ( $3.60 \pm 1.03$ ), 'I have always received support and encouragement from my dorm-

mates' ( $3.59 \pm 0.88$ ), 'Talking with dorm-mates may help me to have a new idea to do something' ( $3.56 \pm 0.91$ ), 'I have many dorm-mates to exchange every information in college' ( $3.54 \pm 0.86$ ), 'I joined a club in the university' ( $3.54 \pm 0.98$ ), 'I can freely express my opinions when in class' ( $3.54 \pm 0.85$ ), 'Sitting with my eyes closed and contemplating my edgy emotions help me to calm my mood' ( $3.51 \pm 0.86$ ), 'I always bring new idea or things which I took from talking with my dorm-mates adapting to my study' ( $3.41 \pm 1.02$ ), 'I have been always looking for new dorm mates' ( $3.40 \pm 0.90$ ), 'I always spend my time relaxing with my family' ( $3.28 \pm 0.93$ ), and 'I always join seminar or training which I interest for myself-improvement' ( $3.09 \pm 1.02$ ), respectively.

**Table 6** Interpersonal well-being of students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University under 'New Normal' (n=300)

Interpersonal well-being	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level
47. I care about my friend when he/she is in trouble.	4.11	0.81	High
48. I always care about my family.	4.47	0.78	High
49. I usually spend my free time with close friends doing various activities together.	3.64	0.98	High
50. I always spend my time relaxing with my family.	3.28	0.93	Medium

51. No matter how hard I study, I will try to talk to the people around me when I have an opportunity.	3.67	0.96	High
52. Sitting with my eyes closed and contemplating my edgy emotions help me to calm my mood.	3.51	0.86	High
53. I have many dorm-mates to exchange every information in college.	3.54	0.86	High
54. I have been always looking for new dorm mates.	3.40	0.90	Medium
55. I joined a club in the university.	3.54	0.98	High
56. I always join seminar or training which I interest for myself-improvement.	3.09	1.02	Medium
57. I can discuss my studies openly.	3.79	0.88	High
58. I can freely express my opinions when in class.	3.54	0.85	High
59. I have always received support and encouragement from my dorm-mates.	3.59	0.88	High
60. I always get encouragement from my classmates.	3.60	1.03	High
61. Talking with dorm-mates may help me to have a new idea to do something.	3.56	0.91	High
62. I always bring new idea or things which I took from talking with my dorm-mates adapting to my study.	3.41	1.02	Medium
63. I have dorm-mates who can give me good advice when I need it.	3.75	0.94	High
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.62</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>High</b>

## Discussion

From the research of well-being of students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University under 'New Normal', it was found that the overall well-being level of students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University under 'New Normal' was at a high level. Effects of COVID-19 pandemic on well-being of persons are various. Among the Indonesian, Taiwanese, and Thai University Students, Thai students had the highest levels of anxiety, but the lowest levels of confidence in pandemic control and available resources against COVID-19 ([Pramukti et al., 2020](#)). On the other hand, Taiwanese students were more negatively affected by information gathered from the internet and from medical staff than were Indonesian or Thai students ([Pramukti et al., 2020](#)). Meanwhile, foreign students in Thailand, who were happier were more likely to study for longer at home, but that studying for longer increases stress levels ([Monorom & Piantanakulchai, 2020](#)). Students who were less happy and more stressed were more likely to speak on the phone for longer, while doing exercise at home for longer increased the likelihood of happiness ([Monorom & Piantanakulchai, 2020](#)). On the other hand, Tiaprapong and colleagues showed that the prominent health risks among the Thai health professional students included sedentary behavior, obesity, and mental symptoms ([Tiaprapong et al., 2021](#)). Interestingly, this present study showed no negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on well-being of the students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University.

In this research, when considering each dimension, it was in line with findings of Cedeno Laurent and colleagues that living environment was associated with health of undergraduate students on

dimension of physical health ([Cedeno Laurent et al., 2020](#)). It was consistent with this research that student in dormitories always cared themselves by having healthy food and exercises. Pertaining to emotional well-being, it was found that the mean of emotional well-being was also at a high level. This research was consistent with the research of Cedeno Laurent and colleagues that physical activities and mental well-being of college students were interrelated ([Cedeno Laurent et al., 2020](#)). Visser & Wyk found association between mental health of college students and emotional well-being in COVID-19 situation ([Visser & Law-van Wyk, 2021](#)) – it was found that students had more anxiety, depression, feelings of loneliness and emotional problems, and students could not meet their friends and were unable to do any activities with their friends. Considering cognitive well-being, it was found that the mean of cognitive well-being was also at a high level. This finding was not consistent with the research of Cedeno Laurent and colleagues that studied mental health and well-being of college students, of which the result revealed that undergraduate students had more anxiety and depression ([Cedeno Laurent et al., 2020](#)). This discrepancy might be explained by the fact that the environment of the students in their study was different from the environment in this present study. Furthermore, in the research of Hernández-Torrano and co-workers found association between mental health and well-being of college students, which required design of a program that will help students have good well-being, especially emotional, mental, and cognitive well-being ([Hernández-Torrano et al., 2020](#)). Lastly, interpersonal well-being mean score was found high as well. This was consistent with the research of Worsley and colleagues, which reported



relationship between environment of dormitories and mental health of students (Worsley et al., 2021). Therefore, dormitory staff and surrounding environment were important in ensuring students feeling of unity and togetherness.

In conclusion, this present study reported that well-being of college students in dormitories in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University during COVID-19 pandemic was normal in all each dimension. This might be due to the well-adjusted campus environments and supportive staff.

### Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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