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## Language Education Students' Well-being in Online Learning during the Pandemic

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### A B S T R A C T

This study investigated perceived challenges and opportunities, as well as perceived impacts of policies to mitigate complex implications of the Pandemic COVID-19 for the first year of language students Batch 2020 of Sanata Dharma University. 58 students of the English Language and Education Study Program (ELESP) and the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program (ILLESP) participated in this study. Both numerical and verbal data were gathered using a Google Form survey. While numerical data presents an optimistic outlook on how to maintain their well-being, the written expressions reveal a much more complex and challenging atmosphere. Students' subjective well-being was found to be the least gained due to the lack of personal encounters, poorly managed classes, and untimely (absent) feedback provision on learning tasks. Lecturers were supposed to transform their teaching habits relevant to digital learning contexts.

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### 1. Introduction

Well-being among students and teachers in the era of online learning is very crucial. As a response to the school closures due to Covid-19 outbreaks, there has been a massive change around the world, where the learning design has been marked by asynchronous learning (Daniel, 2020). A report from the Global Survey Report (Marinoni, Van't Land, & Jensen, 2020) done across five continents found that the learning movement towards blended learning (mostly done through asynchronous learning) was chosen.

The change in learning modes from offline to online certainly presents some complex challenges. Baloran (2020) reports a case in the Philippines, where the students admitted to being unwilling to the online-blended learning approach. Fully moving to online learning created uncomfortable experiences among university students. Teachers also voiced similar issues. Baker et al. (2021), in their survey involving 454 New Orleans charter school teachers, found that lack of connection and online teaching challenges were the most difficult aspects of teaching during the pandemic. The challenges faced by teachers in Germany were no less complex. König, Jäger-Biela, & Glutsch (2020) reveal that the burden on teachers is multiplied. On the one hand, they are required to transfer materials to online platforms. On the other hand, at the same time also have to learn to use technology.

Well-being is a complex construct. A growing body of research places well-being no longer as a personal challenge (Street, 2021). A person's well-being is determined by relationality with other community members. In the same vein, Turner, Scott-Young, & Holdsworth (2017) contend that educational institutions need to create ecological systems for students' well-being. In such a system, students will interact with each other in healthy relationships, and eventually form resilience from within themselves.

Efforts have been made to improve well-being among students. Darling et al. (2021) describe a specific protocol to guide well-being. The facilitator will follow the step-by-step procedures that have been set to facilitate the growth of inner comfort among students. The results of the study are promising. Roulston, Montgomery, Campbell, & Davidson (2018) reported a study on how to improve well-being through a six-week Mindful course. Drawing on the Buddhist tradition of mindfulness, participants are trained to undergo meditational practices.

This study uses well-being as a theoretical framework. Several empirical studies related to well-being reflect the dynamic complexity of efforts to enhance well-being among students. Plominski & Burns (2018) found a critical point in second-year undergraduate students. Sophomore students seem to share the same problem, called a sophomore slump. Compared to non-honours students, honours students tend to have greater well-being. It is more likely that they are more satisfied with how life gives meaning. The authors contend that they may be more hardworking and consequently, the results are also more rewarding.

Baik, Larcombe, & Brooker (2019) surveyed 2776 undergraduate students. They intended to capture what undergraduate students expected from their lecturers. Seven areas of well-being were identified, namely: academic teachers and teaching practices; student services and support; environment, culture, and communication; course design; administration programs; assessment; and student society activities. The findings from this study offer important insight to related parties, such as university educators and administrators about the role they can play in better supporting student well-being and preventing the high rates of psychological distress.

Benbassat (2014) investigated the well-being of medical students. He found that teaching methods in medical schools tend to create emotional distress - which in turn negatively affects their development and their clinical abilities. The presence of mentoring among undergraduate students plays an important role in improving well-being, integration, and retention (Collings, Swanson, & Watkins, 2014). Pascoe, Hetrick, & Parker (2020) conducted a literature review of various scientific articles related to sources of stressors among students. They conclude that the impact of academic-related stress includes students' learning capacity and academic performance, mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety, sleep disorders, and substance use.

On the one hand, the concept of well-being has become a policy commodity in various governments, which put an economic approach as early as the 1930s (Salvador-Carulla, Lucas, Ayuso-Mateos, & Miret, 2014). Various approaches to place well-being as a policy framework use a positivistic perspective such as the Genuine Progress Indicator developed by Cliff Cobb in 1995 (Salvador-Carulla et al., 2014). This positivistic approach has been heavily criticized (White, 2015). For a long time, various studies in well-being have been trapped in a positivist approach, which places humans more as objects, and whose variability is to be investigated through observation rather than inter-location. Therefore, White (2015) places well-being more as an area of relational, qualitative approach.

This research report attempts to uncover a series of challenges faced by students of the Language Education Department (Indonesian and English) from one of the private universities in Yogyakarta. This research is important because: (a) from the university perspective, lecturers have been massively prepared to accommodate online learning. and (b) in terms of students, they are those who have never set foot on the campus, and never met lecturers and their colleagues directly. This is a challenge in itself.

Sanata Dharma University (SDU), as the only Jesuit university in the country, receives the mandate of exercising its vision and mission in line with the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs) - <https://www.jesuits.global/uap/introduction/>. The UAPs have four major areas to cover, namely: (a) showing the way to God, (b) walking with the excluded, (c) journeying with the youth, and (d) caring for our common home. A faith-based institution, SDU holds four core values as a foundation for all its operations and services, namely, (a) seeing the ultimate truth, (b) celebrating differences, (c) maintaining human dignity and humanistic values, and (d) struggling for social justice. This study sets out to embark on investigating how the first-year students of SDU, in particular those of Language Education Department students, deal with daily challenges in their efforts to develop themselves through academic learning. This group is particularly unique given the fact that almost all of them haven't visited the campus, met their counterparts and their lecturers, and are obliged to work on their academic activities on their own. The COVID-19 Pandemic has inevitably forced all students and lecturers to find new ways to deal with such unprecedented challenges.

A close reading of Drijarkara's philosophy suggests that the existential reason for SDU lies in its axiological stance, i.e. *cura personalis*. Central to the concept of *cura personalis* is a basic assumption that educational institutions are expected to nurture meaningful encounters among community members. Each group member is believed to grow and thrive in a small community. A sociological work by Bryk, Lee, & Holland (1993) among Catholic schools in the United States highlights the importance of the subsidiarity principle in Catholic school operations and services. This principle dates

back to the Vatican Council II in the 1960s and has largely been applied in all Catholic schools. Catholic schools remain to be small in comparison to large public schools, housing between 1500 to 2000 students. The subsidiarity principle suggests that each student must be called by name, not numbers. While it is common that impersonality has become rampant among public schools, it never happens among Catholic schools.

Upon the emergence of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Indonesia in March 2020, almost all regular university activities have practically been halted. For students of Batch 2020 in particular, this has brought significant limitations. They had no access to visit the campus, and met with their lecturers and their peers, making learning experiences less personalized and meaningful. The learning experience has inevitably created unprecedented challenges. First-year undergraduate students are seen to undergo two kinds of daunting tasks. First, they are in their transitional period from teenage years to adulthood. It is their developmental task to better understand who and what they are (i.e., their perceived self-identities). Second, in the meantime, they are in search of their true callings or vocations in life. They inevitably need a meaningful context to grow – where they will psychologically feel safe and secure. Without direct encounters in real classrooms, we are expected to invent new, meaningful ways to create all human potentials to grow. This study is set to describe how Language Education Department lecturers have attempted to “journey with the youth” during such tumultuous moments in the past year.

Anecdotal evidence gathered by the researchers suggests some degree of flexibility and breakthroughs done by some lecturers. However, to date, no systematic study is done to portray, describe, and problematize data on how both students and lecturers view perceived challenges. In addition, previous surveys were not necessarily established on a solid research foundation, making it hard to draw robust claims concerning the phenomena under investigation.

During the online learning in the past two years, the 2020 students were a group that has never received education through direct interaction on campus. As a response to the high number of people exposed to COVID-19, the education agenda for the 2020/2021 Academic Year had to be delivered through online learning. There was no chance for both lecturers and students to meet each other on campus. Such a condition inevitably had negative impacts on a couple of things, such as the possibility to know each other, the quality of learning mediated by digital technologies, and the degree of well-being on the part of both the lecturers and students. Such an abnormal condition raises various questions, especially related to the quality of education obtained by students. Two research questions formulated in this research are:

1. How were second-semester students of Batch 2020’s well-being best described?
2. What do they expect to develop to meet their needs (well-being)?

## **2. Methods**

To gather data for this research, an online survey and a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) were conducted. Fifty-eight second-semester students of two study programs, namely Indonesian Language and Literature Education (ILLESP) and English Language Education Study Program (ELESP) responded to the survey. These groups of students were used as respondents in this research considering that they had never had direct encounters with their friends and their lecturers. To answer questions about their well-being and also expectations, data were collected through an online survey using Google Forms. There were two types of questions proposed in the online survey.

The first group of questions consisted of close-ended 20 survey questions with a four-Likert scale (1: Strongly Disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Agree, and 4: Strongly Agree). The questions are categorized into six themes, namely time use, subjective well-being, clarity of the nearest future, connectivity, self-health maintenance, and learning experience. The second group of questions was open-ended. The students were asked to respond to two questions related to their learning challenges and their expectations from their lecturers. In addition to online survey data, a Focus Group Discussion was conducted. Ten students were willing to participate in this online meeting. The FGD was transcribed to assist the data analysis process.

The data analysis was carried out in three ways. First, the close-ended survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Second, for the self-reported written data, the analysis was done by reading the results of the written expressions repeatedly to get a comprehensive understanding. Expressions relevant to these two research questions were tagged, categorized, and utilized to frame the discussion

of the research. Third, FGD results were used to triangulate the survey results and written, self-reported expressions.

### 3. Results and Discussion

This study has two main questions, namely related to how the well-being of students is described, and what the expectations of students towards lecturers are. Results and discussions are presented in the order of the research questions.

#### 3.1. RQ #01: How was their well-being best described?

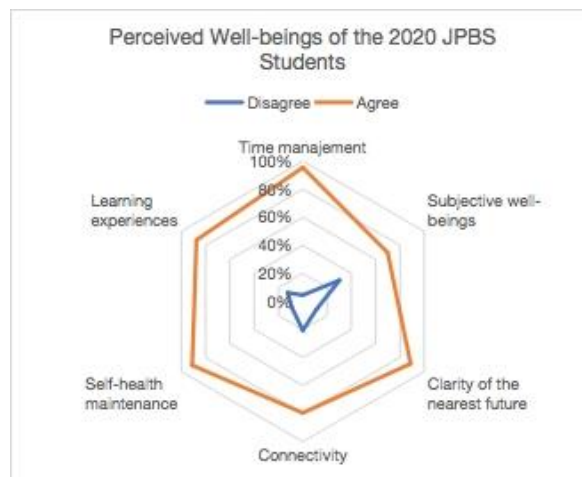


Figure 3.1. Survey Summary

The survey result summary provides an overview of the six dimensions of well-being investigated in this research. From Chart 3.1., it is evident that time management (time use) and self-health maintenance are the highest sources of their well-being. Eighty-eight percent of research respondents admitted that they managed their time well. Eighty-six percent of respondents said that they were able to maintain their health.

Two other categories that fall into the high category are learning experiences and near-future clarity. Seventy-nine percent of respondents admitted that the learning experience and clarity about the near future among them were good. The last two categories fall into the middle and low groups, namely connectivity and subjective well-being. It is evident from the data that only 74% of the respondents were well-connected with each other. The main source that depletes their well-being is this last component. Sixty-five percent of the research respondents admitted that they had problems with their well-being.

In a broad stroke, the numerical data survey gave an optimistic outlook on how the students navigated themselves during online learning and sustained their well-being. However, their self-reported, written data suggest a more nuanced complexity concerning how they navigated themselves.

Table 3.1. Survey results

	SD	D	A	SA
<b>Time use</b>				
Doing hobbies	3%	22%	33%	42%
Independent learning	2%	3%	5%	91%
Doing class assignments	1%	4%	6%	88%
<b>Subjective well-being (stress level)</b>				
Comfortable with online learning	3%	32%	48%	18%
Internet access	3%	37%	55%	5%
Comfortable asking questions	2%	33%	49%	17%
Non-academic services	3%	28%	43%	26%
<b>Near Future Clarity</b>				
Knowing what is needed for learning	1%	19%	29%	52%
Knowing how to solve learning problems	1%	19%	28%	53%
<b>Connectivity</b>				
Knowing classmates	3%	34%	50%	13%
Comfortable at communicating	4%	20%	30%	45%
Comfortable at asking questions	5%	12%	18%	65%
<b>Self-health maintenance</b>				
Regular exercise	1%	28%	41%	30%
Sufficient food intake	1%	12%	18%	68%
More prayerful	2%	7%	11%	80%
Longing for shared religious observance	0%	3%	4%	93%
<b>Learning experience</b>				
Met expectation	1%	18%	26%	55%
Enjoyment to learn	2%	28%	41%	29%
Self-care	1%	20%	30%	49%
Feedback provision	1%	15%	22%	62%

3.1.1. Time use

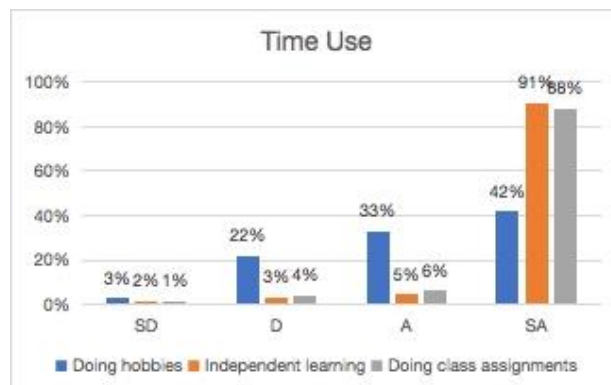


Figure.1.1. Time use

Survey data suggest that students were able to navigate themselves during online learning. They admitted to having managed their time well, especially related to learning autonomy (96%) and the completion of the course assignments (94%). In particular, however, the survey data also suggests that students found a challenge in doing their hobbies. 75% of them stated that they were still able to carry out their hobbies. A sizable 25% of students said that they could not carry out their hobbies, which was believed to be another source of losses to their well-being.

A stark contrast to the numerical data, the self-reported data on the survey suggest a more nuanced reality concerning students' time management. Drawn from the same survey, the written data reveal two major problems that are directly linked to time management, namely: (a) video-making assignments, and (b) dealing with close deadlines of numerous assignments.

### **Video assignments**

Video assignments are seen as a source of tension that negatively influences students' well-being. The assignment to make videos as evidence of the process and learning outcomes by students is something that many lecturers do. Making videos usually also requires cooperation between students. On the one hand, such assignments are certainly very relevant to the current digital era. However, students are not always in line with the expectations of their lecturers. The following excerpt highlights the challenges faced by one of the respondents:

not to mention if the assignment is in the form of a video presenting themselves. Sometimes the making of video assignments has to be done many times because there are some shortcomings or interruptions and it is very stressful. It also makes the mood down to do other tasks that are still piling up. When zooming in, there are certain times when the Internet connection at home is not sufficient and the house conditions are not conducive so sometimes students are left behind in class and confused about what to do.

From the excerpt above, as well as several other expressions, it was revealed that the challenges of making videos include: (a) the weak technical ability of students in making videos (so they must be taken repeatedly), (b) limited infrastructure in the form of an Internet connection at home, respectively, (c) the condition of the house which is often not conducive to video shooting. The students felt that the assignment to make videos was a burden for them.

### **Task deadlines**

Challenges to meet numerous deadlines become a source of paradox faced by students, which in turn negatively affects their well-being. On the one hand, numerical data shows that time management is very good. In other words, their well-being is very well-maintained in terms of their time management. On the other hand, the written expressions conveyed through the survey indicate a growing tension between them. The self-reported data reveal three related problems, namely the sheer number of tasks having close deadlines, the tasks assigned abruptly, and the teacher-made deadlines with no consultation with their students.

Salient excerpts illustrate the complexity of dealing with the task deadlines:

[a case in point] I've got an online quiz with only 10 minutes to complete. A couple of times, I missed completing the quiz. We've got a blackout, no electricity, and no Internet connection. I hope that the lecturers can give enough time to give quizzes or give tolerance for students who have problems.

hope that the deadlines are not non-negotiable. Some lecturers gave abrupt tasks with limited time to complete. How can I do an assignment given today with a deadline of tomorrow? Classes have tasks to complete. Even, for today's deadlines, I am still not done with them. How can I do tomorrow's tasks when I'm still heavily occupied with today's deadlines?

Listening to the challenges faced by students related to many assignments with tight deadlines, it is quite natural that some students "feel tired and stressed". With so many tasks being assigned at the

same time, it is also natural that they find it difficult to manage their time. It is also worth noting that students find it challenging to manage time for group assignments. Not all group members have the same good internet access. This inhibits the group's task execution, which contributes to the loss of well-being among them.

Second-semester students are actually in a relatively well-established position, given that they have been through the lecture process for a half year. Unfortunately, this batch underwent unpleasant moments in their senior high school years. They did complete their high school but in a truncated fashion. Their last year in senior high was mostly done online. Most of them even had never set foot in the university they are currently attending.

### 3.1.2. Subjective well-being

Survey data from students shows that subjective well-being reached one of the lowest points. Subjective well-being has four elements, namely: feeling at ease with online learning, access to the Internet, feeling at ease with asking questions to their lecturers, and availability of non-academic support. First, only 64% of students admitted that they were comfortable with online learning. However, a sizable number of students, i.e. 32%, stated that they were not comfortable with online learning. Second, another element that determines subjective well-being is limited internet access. 60% of students said they had no problem with internet access. Another 40% said that they had very limited in terms of internet access. Third, relationships with lecturers were also one of the elements that made up their subjective well-being. 66% of students stated that they were comfortable asking questions to the lecturers, and 34% stated otherwise. The fourth component is the availability of non-academic support. 69% stated that the support was good, and 31% said that the support was not good.

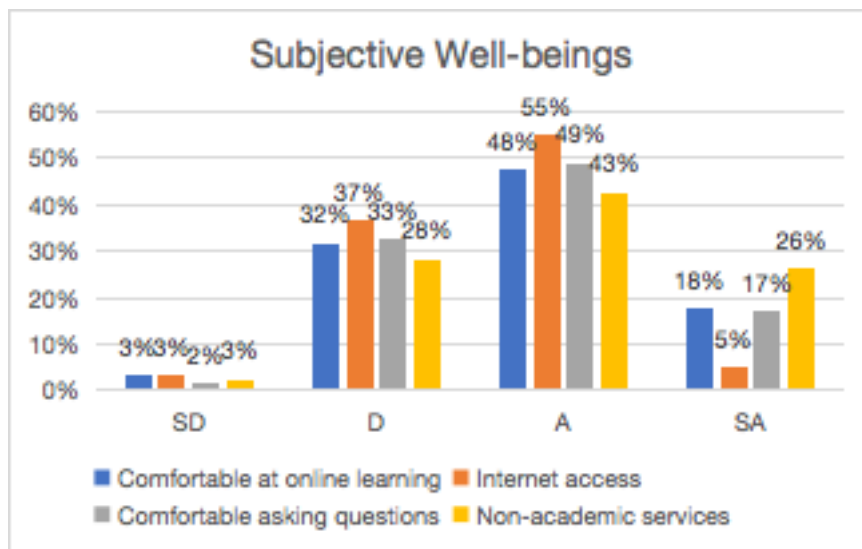


Figure 3.1.2.

What is displayed in numeric data is more or less also reflected in written expressions. Subjective well-being is strongly influenced by various things. In general, it can be said that the majority of students do not have sufficient comfort to build their well-being during this online learning process. The students admitted that they faced a lot of pressure because there were too many assignments, and it was difficult to coordinate with their collaborating friends. They stated that group work was difficult. They face difficulties to determine the time, especially because they have to adjust their respective schedules. Other challenges associated with these collaborative tasks are “how to manage differing opinions” and “the importance of willingness among group members to do the task fairly.”

The availability of an unstable internet network is one source of problems that are not easy to handle. There was one student who complained that one of the quizzes assigned by the lecturer used a time limit. The problem faced is the existence of an unreliable network. Several lecturers felt that they did not quite understand the challenges faced by students.

Some students expressed difficulties in establishing communication with lecturers. When they feel they do not understand something being taught, they feel less comfortable asking questions. Online learning does not allow students to develop a sense of security and comfort in learning, as reflected in the following excerpt:

I often feel nervous and scared before class starts. I hope that the lecturers bring the class a calm and pleasant atmosphere so that students do not feel pressured when participating in learning.

### 3.1.3. Near future clarity

Near future clarity is the ability to identify the problems at hand. Survey data gathered in this area suggests that students' well-being was at a very good level. Eighty-one percent of students admitted that they knew what was needed for learning. It was also apparent that 81% of the respondents knew how to find solutions for their learning problems. The lowest score was related to self-management to meet own needs. Seventy-seven percent of students claimed that they were good at self-management. However, a sizable 23% admitted that they were diametrically opposite to the rest.

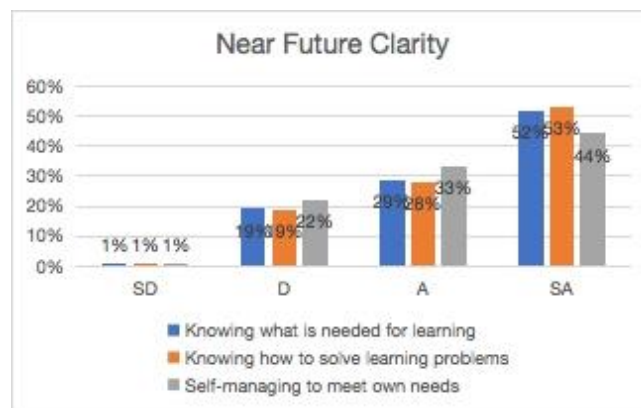


Figure 3.1.3. Near future clarity

Self-reported, written expressions by the respondents present the complexities faced by students. There are three fundamental issues identified related to the challenges of the near future clarity. First, the students did not have a solution to the difficulties in doing collaborative assignments. This challenge is reflected in the following excerpt: "Because many tasks are collaborative assignments, many of them can't be completed well, due to some reasons." Failure to do collaborative assignments was found to cause the loss of their well-being. Second, being too home-bound was another challenge. A case in point, confined in her room, a female student was not able to construct her true identity as an undergraduate student. "The network is bad, and it makes me not enthusiastic about studying because from home it doesn't feel like I'm in college. Although college assignments are sometimes a lot, that doesn't make me feel that I'm a college student." A male student reported having received more tasks from his parents. At times, he failed to meet deadlines because his father asked him to prioritize household chores over his academic tasks. Third, students did not feel their development as college students. Technology-mediated online learning removes direct and authentic encounters with other colleagues. A female English student lamented: "I will enter semester 3, but my English speaking skills have not improved yet. I don't feel challenged to speak at these online lectures."

### 3.1.4. Connectivity

Connectivity refers to human relationality. Three main elements form the components of this connectivity area. These three things include getting to know classmates, being comfortable communicating with each other, and being comfortable asking questions. The level of recognition of each other was indeed very compromised with the conditions of online learning. Only 63% said they still knew each other. 37% of students admitted that this aspect of getting to know each other was problematic. Interestingly, however, the lack of getting to know each other did not hinder the ease of communication. 83% of students admitted that they did not face any difficulties in communicating. For academic activities, it was not easy for students to be involved in the learning process more deeply. Only 75% of students said they were comfortable asking each other questions.



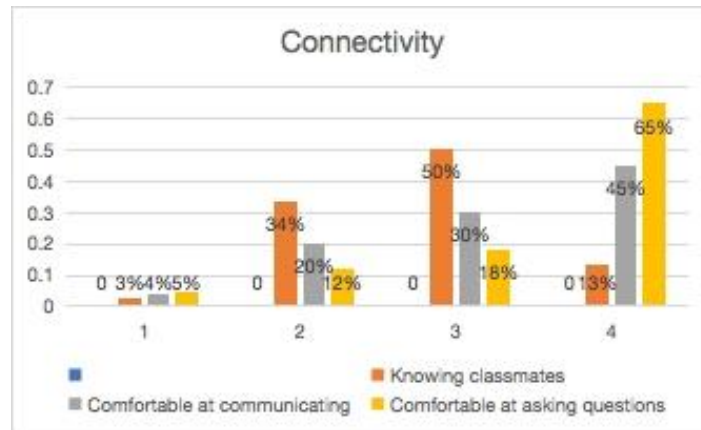


Figure 3.1.4. Connectivity

As described elsewhere, collaborative tasks were seen as a source of challenges encountered by the respondents. Given that they minimally knew each other, the tasks were found to be very burdensome. Academic data suggest that both the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program (ILLESP) and the English Language Education Study Program (ELESP) have students from 22 provinces in Indonesia. To prevent COVID-19 from worsening, partial closures of businesses were in place, and human mobilizations across cities and islands were not allowed. College students were inevitably forced to be homebound. Many of them were forced to attend lectures online from their respective regions of origin. It was evident from the self-reported written expressions that without authentic face-to-face encounters with each other, these students faced difficulties in establishing more comfortable relationships.

### 3.1.5. Health-keeping

Numerical data from the survey suggests that respondents were good at taking care of themselves. Maintaining health refers to physical activities, food intake, and spirituality. It is evident from the data that students have sufficient ability to take care of their health. Eighty-eight percent of respondents admitted to enjoying good food, which partly explains their physical well-being was maintained. Unfortunately, the good food intake was not properly accompanied by regular physical exercises. Only 71% of respondents stated that they exercise regularly. Concerning their spiritual well-being, students admitted to having been more prayerful. The numerical data suggests that students tried to balance both physical well-being and spiritual well-being as well. 99% have a longing to immediately carry out religious activities together.

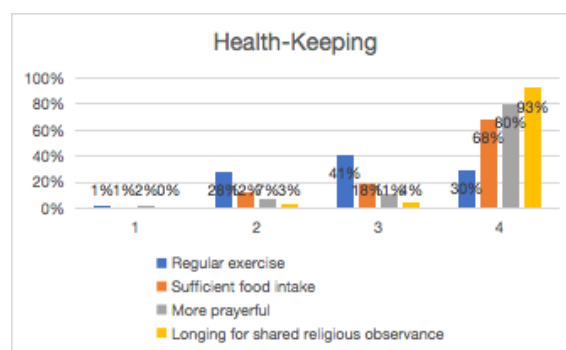


Figure 3.1.5. Health keeping

In particular, self-reported data did not raise further elaboration on this issue.

### 3.1.6. Learning experiences

There are four aspects under the learning experiences, namely meeting expectations, enjoyment to learn, self-care, and feedback provision. Numerical self-reported data related to learning experiences

provide a full picture of optimism among the research respondents. Eighty-two percent of respondents reported that the learning experiences met their expectations. Seventy percent of the respondents reported having a high degree of learning enjoyment. However, a sizable 30% of them are diametrically opposed to the statement. Seventy-nine percent of the respondents stated that they were able to take care of themselves during the lesson. 84% of students received meaningful feedback on their learning.

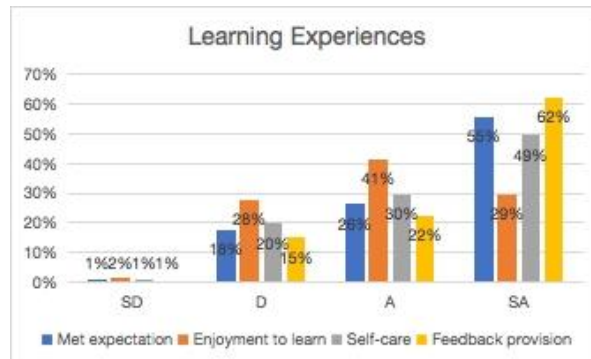


Figure 3.1.6. Learning experiences

As discussed in previous sections, there are four basic problems faced by students. First, several students complained about the abrupt assignments given by the lecturers. They considered that the lecturers did not prepare to learn optimally. Second, they complained about the class assignments with close deadlines. They considered that there was no coordination and communication among the lecturers. Third, they found that collaborative tasks that required cooperation with other students had a higher level of difficulty. Unquestionably, collaborative skills are one of the soft skills that will be needed in the world of work. However, the students encountered tough challenges in completing collaborative assignments. Fourth, the technology-mediated classes did not allow all students to receive appropriate attention from the lecturers.

### 3.2. RQ #2: What do they expect to develop to meet their well-being?

To answer the second question, written expressions by students gathered through an open-ended Google Form survey and the FGD transcript were analysed. Both their written expressions and the FGD transcript were read multiple times to gain a comprehensive understanding. The analysis was done by identifying meaningful units and then categorizing them into certain themes. Three big themes were eventually obtained, namely expectations in learning, relationality, and technology utilization. A growing body of research related to learning shows the importance of the capacity to navigate oneself (references). It is characterized by the ability to self-regulated learning, metacognitive knowledge, and learner autonomy (Benson, 2010). It is interesting to find two students who have particularly high levels of self-agency:

[despite all the challenges] hopefully, I can struggle to reach my goals, even though online can make me even more enthusiastic.

Personally, I find less difficulty in terms of media and internet networks. However, since distance learning requires us to be more independent in learning, I think self-management is a very important thing that every individual must have.

These two excerpts show the strong mental attitude of these two students. The first refers to ownership. He places various problems in his circle of control. The second Excerpt places himself as a personal figure who must be an autonomous learner. Apart from the two students who can manage themselves, the following is an elaboration of the expectations they convey. Three kinds of expectations were revealed from their written expressions, namely (a) learning tasks, (b) relationality, and (c) technology use.

Related to this teaching, there are several aspects involved, namely (a) learning tasks, (b) access to materials, and (c) fun learning.

### 3.2.1. *Learning tasks*

The change from offline to online mode is a shocking experience for all parties. On the one hand, lecturers are not quite easy to change instructional modes, from offline to online. On the other hand, there is not enough time for lecturers to learn quickly to adopt this digital learning. The perceived result is that the students feel that the assignments given by the lecturers are too many. They feel an excessive burden because some of the assignments given by the lecturers are delivered suddenly. The students feel even more pressured when the deadlines of various assignments are almost the same. One other thing that they find too burdensome is the task of making videos as evidence of the learning that has taken place in the students.

However, not all of them really expect to reduce the tasks given by the lecturer. There are opinions from students who expect to reschedule related to deadlines for learning tasks. This means that the student is still able to manage himself. Another basic thing that is expected from them is meaningful feedback.

Give feedback and criticism of our learning outcomes during this online study in a brief and don't beat around the bush. For example, what materials we have mastered and have not mastered so that we know our ability to learn and can improve it even better.

### 3.2.2. *Access to the materials*

The students expect the lecturer's ability to make adjustments to the learning materials. Adaptability in using relevant materials is one of the expectations expressed by the students. They expect that the materials used can be implemented in everyday life. Online learning is a challenge that is not easily handled by students. Apart from internet network problems, students also have difficulty understanding the material given by the lecturer.

Another challenge faced by students is how to access teaching materials. Moodle-based Learning Management System ([learning.usd.ac.id](http://learning.usd.ac.id)) has very complete features. However, its use is highly dependent on the abilities and skills of the lecturers. Even though there has been a series of workshops to practice various features in the LMS, several lecturers have had difficulty developing the LMS that is easy for students to navigate. On the other hand, the students also do not automatically master the LMS that has been provided. They expect to always be updated about the use of LMS.

Another expectation from students is the availability of recordings of lecture activities. The use of Zoom as a means for delivering material is indeed one of the most likely things. The university has subscribed to Zoom accounts which are sufficient for more than 11,000 students (university-wide). However, the challenge faced by students is access to this synchronous learning. Given that not everyone can follow Zoom, they expect that Zoom recordings can be accessed asynchronously by students again.

### 3.2.3. *Fun learning*

Online learning that is run by the lecturers is felt to present its pressure in the eyes of the students. On the one hand, for lecturers, technology-mediated interactions (e.g. through Zoom and LMS) present inconvenience. They are awkward because they rarely give learning in that way. Meanwhile, the learning process must continue and cannot be delayed any longer. On the other hand, the students felt discomfort. The class becomes too stiff and tense. Such a condition causes students to easily feel bored with the learning process. They feel they have lost their enthusiasm for learning, as reflected in the following excerpt:

[the class] needs more fun activities together, such as [probing] questions from the lecturer, and direct responses from students. In my observation, more than that, the process of online learning makes students feel uncomfortable. Therefore, they are afraid to ask questions. I am just curious to know how to prevent the class from being feared so that the students were comfortable and enthusiastic about learning.

#### 3.2.4. *Relationality*

In the educational tradition that is oriented towards humanism, knowing one another is a central issue. Bryk & Schneider (2003) found that one of the main keys to education reform in Chicago schools is relational trust. Sociological studies of Catholic schools in the United States highlight the importance of understanding one another Bryk, Lee, & Holland (1993). Budiraharjo (2015) points out that Muslim students at a Catholic university in Yogyakarta feel comfortable, especially because they have the freedom to express their faith.

When face-to-face learning is carried out, getting to know each other is inevitable. Students, as individuals who are looking for identity, grow together with other colleagues through togetherness. This kind of relationality is missed. Their written expressions reflect this kind of longing, such as: “teach us in a way that is not boring,” “understand our problems”, and “there should be an opportunity for sharing and reflection sessions together, involving lecturers and students.”

Such expressions vividly show a longing for the establishment of more meaningful communication and interaction during the online learning process. They expect the growth of communicative capacity among lecturers. One of the unique things they raised was the challenge of collaborative learning. Collaborative learning carried out through joint assignments is felt to be a burden in itself, as reflected in this excerpt:

In my opinion, working on assignments in groups is not entirely good for all students. If the process is more valued, there needs to be an appropriate reward for the process as well. The value given must be balanced with the efforts that have been made, even though the resulting product is not very suitable, many challenges have been faced in working on group assignments.

In the same vein, from the FGD, a student observed how poor collaboration took hold among them during online learning:

I think the challenge has come from our colleagues. Actually, in this online learning, students are required to be more creative and independent. However, many would say, ‘I follow you, I’m good at obeying what’s been decided.’ What happens when all are just obedient? Who’s going to take the initiative? I happened to go ahead and take a lead in many classes. But, with no ideas and the active participation of others, I felt so tired.

One way to maintain well-being, especially in the aspect of relationality, is the importance of maintaining fairness in giving assessments to students. Collaborative work will certainly create an asymmetrical relationship. Not all members can contribute equally. In this case, lecturers are expected to be able to understand the condition of each group and provide an assessment according to the contribution of each member.

#### 3.2.5. *Technology utilization*

The use of learning technology is central to this online learning. It must be admitted, apart from various facilitation from universities so that lecturers can learn technology quickly, the process of adopting and adapting technology cannot run smoothly, and a fast time. Therefore, it is natural that students face several challenges.

The biggest challenge felt by students is the lack of internet quota they have. Limited funds make them unable to buy internet quota to support learning activities. A large number of students do get internet quota assistance from the government. But for one reason or another, a small number of students were unable to get this kind of help. They expect assistance from study programs to negotiate with the government so that they can get internet quota assistance. Still related to the limited quota, the students also felt that the frequency of using Zoom for synchronous learning was too frequent. The use of Zoom which is too frequent is a problem that is not easy to overcome because this application demands a large internet quota.

Expectations of the next student related to LMS. On the one hand, students appreciate the use of LMS (learning.usd.ac.id). Lecturers are required to use this LMS to facilitate online learning. This LMS has been developed since 2007. In 2012, Moodle-based LMS was adopted. In 2017, a newer version of the Moodle-based LMS was installed. However, the utilization by all lecturers to use it is not optimal.

Along with the demands to carry out online learning, all lecturers must learn how to use the LMS. Of course, it is natural for students to expect that lecturers will increase the use of LMS.

The adoption of learning technology demands a change in mindset, namely trusting students. This is one of the challenges presented in the following excerpt:

I hope that there are no longer lecturers who require their students to print exam questions while the exam is in progress. Because it is very difficult for us to access prints, especially those in villages that take a long time to reach the photocopying place. Honestly, I had a hard time finding a print service this morning and it also had a bad impact on my grades because the time was also reduced and we had to scan again, and made us hurry (experience in Grammar II course)

This excerpt clearly illustrates that the lecturer in Grammar II Class has not fully accepted digital learning. Students are required to print the assigned questions, answer in handwriting on printed text, and then scan the results of the work to be submitted online.

### *Discussion*

Sanata Dharma University follows the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs) as a mandate for all Jesuit universities around the world. The four preferences include showing the way to God, walking with the excluded, journeying with youth, and caring for our common home. Through these preferences, Jesuit universities are expected to deepen their personal, communal and institutional conversion. In other words, the focus of education promoted by Jesuit universities is not only on academic achievement, but is also targeted to become a holistic means of human development, which includes aspects of spirituality, concern for those who are marginalized, accompanying young people, and ecological awareness.

In line with this mandate, this study seeks to reveal the perceived well-being among early semester students as they underwent online learning during this pandemic. The data shows that perceived well-being was compromised by the lack of social encounters with other students and lecturers, which in turn has an impact on a low degree of subjective well-being. There are four main elements in this subjective well-being, namely being comfortable with online classes, having Internet access, being comfortable asking questions to lecturers and colleagues, and having access to non-academic services on campus.

The data suggests that online learning posed unprecedented challenges among students, which in turn reduced their well-being. This is reasonable, given the fact that they were not used to studying independently by following the modular curriculum. In addition, it must also be admitted that the majority of lecturers were not ready to transform the teaching mode, i.e., from on-site teaching to online teaching. Even though the university has invested much to prepare lecturers to embrace learning technologies, including training series, Learning Management System (LMS) procurement, and learning technology clinic for lecturers, changing teaching habits among lecturers has been a formidable task to deal with.

Another challenge has come from the absence of relationality among students. The students of this batch ended their high school in a pandemic condition, which arguably caused them to suffer significant learning losses. The lack of a smooth transition from high school to university has been exacerbated by the absence of personal encounters between students and their lecturers. The data shows that they were not comfortable exchanging ideas, let alone asking questions to each other and their lecturers. With unstable internet access, online learning has been a painstaking experience for most of them. Online learning requires a robust internet network, as well as a huge internet quota. The students felt that they could not learn optimally, especially when the majority of classes required synchronous meetings through video-conferencing tools. Internet quota assistance from the government was both untimely obtained and insufficient.

This research reveals what the students needed to allow them to obtain their well-being. First, it is very important to arrange lectures in an orderly, neat, and scheduled manner. Students find it very difficult when several lecturers give abrupt assignments, which are not stated in the course plan. Second, assignments require timely feedback. In some cases, lecturers assign certain tasks, and feedback on these tasks is never given. The absence of timely feedback will certainly reduce their motivation to learn and their well-being. Third, lecturers are required to be more skilled in using relevant

learning technologies. A case in point, to encourage active learning, it is helpful when flipped learning is implemented. Students are required to always be ready and anticipate what will be learned on a particular day. Therefore, lecturers must be skilled in managing the learning experience, including using technology to facilitate materials delivery.

#### 4. Conclusions

It can be concluded that these second-semester students have experienced complex challenges. On the one hand, a brief overview of the four well-being indicators, i.e., time use, learning experiences, self-health maintenance, and near future clarity, suggest an optimistic outlook on their well-being. On the other hand, the other two indicators, i.e., subjective well-being and connectivity, are the two main sources of losses in their well-being. In addition, data analysis of both self-reported written expressions and FGD transcript, reveals a much more complex dynamic in terms of the challenges they face, as well as the expectations they convey.

This study portrayed the condition of the students in the first year. To some extent, the data displayed is a tentative portrayal that may still change from time to time. Further research, especially to understand more comprehensive dynamics across the years, becomes a pressing need, especially given the extended period of online learning so far. A case in point, this research is not able to reveal the durability of their resilience during such a technology-mediated learning process so far. While it is true that their enthusiasm for online learning was pretty high, it remains unclear as to how long that attitude will last. In other words, this study cannot predict whether these very students will remain enthusiastic to learn or not.

The first year of college is a transition, from late adolescence to early adulthood. Lectures are more targeted at creating a foundation for broad understanding in their respective fields of study. Learning in the following semesters certainly requires more complex abilities and skills. Further research is expected to further reveal the challenges they face so that the management of study programs and lecturers can be more responsive in providing more optimal services.

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