



WELL-BEING OF COLLEGE STUDENTS: EXAMINING THE CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES AMONG STUDENTS IN THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES AND TEACHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the well-being of students in the College of Arts and Sciences and Teacher Education (CASTE) during the School Year 2025-2026, by examining the challenges they encounter, the coping strategies they employ, and the impact of these factors on their overall well-being. Using the Input-Process-Output (IPO) model as its framework, the study focused on the dimensions of physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, and financial well-being, as well as challenges related to financial concerns, academic workload, personal issues, interpersonal relationships, and technological stress. The study also explored coping strategies such as time management, stress management, support systems, and resiliency. Findings revealed that CASTE students experience various challenges that significantly affect their well-being, particularly financial difficulties and academic workload. However, effective coping strategies, especially strong support systems, resilience, and time management skills, were found to positively influence their overall well-being. The study further established a significant negative relationship between challenges and well-being and a significant positive relationship between coping strategies and well-being. Based on the findings, an intervention program was proposed to enhance the holistic well-being of CASTE students by addressing key challenges and strengthening adaptive coping mechanisms. The results provide valuable insights for educational institutions in developing programs and support services that promote student well-being, academic success, and personal development.

Keywords: *Well-being, Physical health, Emotional well-being, Mental health, Spiritual and moral well-being, financial well-being, financial challenges, Academic workload, Personal challenges, Interpersonal relationships, Technological stress, Coping strategies, Resilience, Intervention program.*

INTRODUCTION

Student well-being has emerged as a critical concern in higher education because it directly influences students' academic performance, persistence, personal development, and overall quality of life. As universities continue to face increasing demands for academic excellence, students are exposed to multiple stressors that may adversely affect their physical, emotional, psychological, social, and financial well-being. According to Bakker and Mostert (2024), student well-being is shaped by the interaction between study demands and available resources, suggesting that excessive academic demands coupled with limited institutional support increase the risk of stress and burnout among university students. Their Study Demands–Resources Theory further emphasizes that adequate personal and institutional resources promote engagement, resilience, and academic success.

Recent evidence also indicates that financial constraints, academic workload, and social pressures remain among the most prevalent challenges experienced by university students worldwide. In a large cross-sectional investigation, academic responsibilities, financial difficulties, employment obligations, and social demands significantly contribute to students' mental health concerns and reduced well-being. The study further emphasized the need for higher education institutions to strengthen support systems that address students' diverse psychological and socioeconomic needs (Liverpool et al., 2024).

Beyond identifying challenges, contemporary research has highlighted the importance of adaptive coping strategies in promoting student well-being. Rojas-Ruiz et al. (2024) reported that resilience, positive coping behaviors, and cultural factors significantly influence university students' overall well-being. Their findings demonstrated that students who employ adaptive coping mechanisms tend to experience higher levels of psychological well-being despite encountering academic and personal stressors. Similarly, a comprehensive scoping review by Waterhouse and Samra (2025) concluded that coping strategies such as effective time management, emotional regulation, social support, and resilience development are consistently associated with reduced stress and improved academic functioning among university students across diverse educational settings. These findings underscore the importance of strengthening students' adaptive capacities through evidence-based institutional interventions (Rojas-Ruiz et al., 2024; Waterhouse & Samra, 2025).

Within the Philippine context, research likewise demonstrates the importance of coping strategies in enhancing students' well-being. Resilience and approach-oriented coping strategies positively influence the academic, social, and mental well-being of Filipino college students. The study further recommended that higher education

institutions develop programs that strengthen students' resilience and coping competencies to improve their overall well-being (Valladolid, 2021).

Despite the growing body of international and local literature on student well-being, empirical evidence focusing on students enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences and Teacher Education (CASTE) remains limited. Most existing studies have examined university students as a general population without considering the unique academic, financial, personal, and institutional contexts experienced by CASTE students. Addressing this gap is essential for developing context-specific intervention programs that respond to students' actual needs. Hence, this study investigated the well-being of CASTE students at Saint Theresa College, Tandag City, by examining their level of well-being across multiple dimensions, identifying the challenges they encounter, determining the coping strategies they employ, and analyzing the relationships among these variables. The findings are expected to contribute to the growing literature on student well-being and provide empirical evidence for designing institutional programs that foster holistic student development and academic success.

Research Questions

This study aimed to examine the well-being of students in the College of Arts and Sciences and Teacher Education (CASTE) at Saint Theresa College, Tandag City. Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of well-being of CASTE students in terms of:
 - physical well-being;
 - emotional well-being;
 - mental well-being;
 - spiritual and moral well-being; and
 - financial well-being?
2. What is the extent of the challenges experienced by CASTE students in terms of:
 - financial challenges;
 - academic workload;
 - personal challenges;
 - interpersonal relationship challenges; and
 - technological stress?
3. What coping strategies are employed by CASTE students in terms of:
 - time management;
 - stress management;
 - support systems; and
 - resilience?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the challenges experienced by CASTE students and their level of well-being?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the coping strategies employed by CASTE students and their level of well-being?
6. Based on the findings, what intervention program may be proposed to enhance the holistic well-being of CASTE students?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to examine the well-being of students in the College of Arts and Sciences and Teacher Education (CASTE) at Saint Theresa College, Tandag City, Philippines. The descriptive component assessed respondents' levels of physical, emotional, mental, spiritual and moral, and financial well-being, as well as the challenges they encountered and the coping strategies they employed. The correlational component determined the relationships between challenges and well-being and between coping strategies and well-being. The study involved 173 respondents selected through complete enumeration, comprising 153 CASTE students, 10 faculty and staff members, and 10 part-time employees, thereby ensuring comprehensive representation of the target population. Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire that underwent expert validation and pilot testing to establish its content validity and reliability. Prior to data collection, ethical approval and institutional permission were secured, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, weighted mean, and standard deviation, were used to summarize the data, while Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was employed to examine the relationships among the study variables. All statistical analyses were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) with the level of significance set at 0.05. The findings served as the basis for developing an intervention program aimed at promoting the holistic well-being of CASTE students.

RESULTS

Table 1. Level of Well-Being of CASTE Respondents

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Physical Well-being	3.56	Affecting	4
Emotional Well-being	4.00	Affecting	2
Mental Well-being	3.71	Affecting	3
Spiritual and Moral Well-being	4.21	Very Much Affecting	1
Financial Well-being	3.52	Affecting	5
Overall	3.80	Affecting	

Table 2. Extent of Challenges Experienced by CASTE Respondents

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Financial Challenges	3.58	Affecting	1
Academic Workload	3.49	Affecting	2
Personal Challenges	3.44	Affecting	3
Technological Stress	3.30	Less Affecting	4

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Interpersonal Relationship Challenges	3.29	Less Affecting	5
Overall	3.42	Affecting	

Table 3. Coping Strategies Employed by CASTE Respondents

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Resilience	3.96	Affecting	1
Support Systems	3.89	Affecting	2
Stress Management	3.61	Affecting	3
Time Management	3.26	Less Affecting	4
Overall	3.68	Affecting	

Table 4. Relationship Between Challenges and Well-Being

Variables	Pearson's <i>r</i>	<i>p</i> -value	Decision	Interpretation
Overall Challenges and Overall Well-being	-0.78	0.04	Reject H_0	Significant Negative Relationship

Table 5. Relationship Between Coping Strategies and Well-Being

Variables	Pearson's <i>r</i>	<i>p</i> -value	Decision	Interpretation
Overall Coping Strategies and Overall Well-being	0.80	0.005	Reject H_0	Significant Positive Relationship

Table 6. Proposed Intervention Program

Identified Concern	Proposed Intervention	Expected Outcome
Financial Challenges	Financial literacy seminars and financial assistance programs	Improved financial well-being and reduced financial stress
Academic Workload	Time management workshops and academic support sessions	Better academic performance and reduced academic stress

Identified Concern	Proposed Intervention	Expected Outcome
Mental and Emotional Well-being	Counseling services and mental health awareness activities	Improved psychological well-being
Limited Support Systems	Peer mentoring and student support groups	Stronger social connectedness and emotional support
Need for Greater Resilience	Resilience-building and wellness programs	Enhanced coping capacity and holistic well-being
Spiritual and Moral Development	Spiritual formation and values enhancement activities	Sustained spiritual and moral well-being

DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that the respondents generally demonstrated a positive level of well-being, with spiritual and moral well-being emerging as the highest-rated dimension, while financial well-being received the lowest rating. This suggests that although respondents possess strong values, purpose, and moral orientation, financial concerns continue to affect their overall quality of life. These findings support the assertion of Smith et al. (2026) that financial stress is a significant determinant of students' mental health and well-being, often resulting in emotional distress and reduced quality of life when adequate financial support is unavailable. Likewise, Chye et al. (2024) emphasized that students with stronger personal resources and resilience tend to maintain better psychological well-being despite academic pressures and environmental stressors (Chye et al., 2024; Smith et al., 2026).

The study further identified financial challenges and academic workload as the most significant stressors experienced by the respondents. These findings indicate that economic constraints and increasing academic responsibilities remain major obstacles to students' holistic well-being. Similar findings were reported by Faber et al. (2025), who observed that workload, multiple assessments, and difficulties in balancing academic and personal responsibilities were among the most frequently reported sources of stress among undergraduate students. In addition, Jeyapalan and Blair (2024) concluded that academic pressure, financial concerns, and emotional exhaustion adversely influence students' academic outcomes and psychological health, underscoring the need for institutional support systems that reduce academic and financial burdens (Faber et al., 2025; Jeyapalan & Blair, 2024).

Regarding coping strategies, the respondents relied primarily on resilience and support systems, while time management was the least utilized strategy. These findings suggest that respondents depend heavily on their ability to recover from adversity and seek assistance from peers, family members, and significant others when confronted with challenges. This finding corroborates the longitudinal study of Wang et al. (2024), which demonstrated that resilience and adaptive coping strategies significantly contribute to improved well-being, positive academic experiences, and healthier help-seeking

behaviors among college students. Similarly, Chye et al. (2024) emphasized that resilience is an essential protective factor that enables students to adapt effectively to academic stress and maintain psychological well-being despite challenging educational environments (Chye et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2024).

The correlation analysis established a significant negative relationship between challenges and well-being, indicating that increased exposure to financial, academic, personal, and technological challenges is associated with lower levels of well-being. This finding confirms that unmanaged stressors may adversely affect students' physical, emotional, and psychological functioning. The result is consistent with the findings of Smith et al. (2026), who reported that persistent financial stress significantly undermines students' mental health and overall well-being. Likewise, Jeyapalan and Blair (2024) emphasized that prolonged exposure to academic stress contributes to burnout, emotional exhaustion, and declining academic performance among university students (Jeyapalan & Blair, 2024; Smith et al., 2026).

Conversely, the study found a significant positive relationship between coping strategies and well-being, suggesting that students who employ effective coping mechanisms experience better holistic well-being. This finding demonstrates the protective role of adaptive coping behaviors in minimizing the adverse effects of academic and personal stressors. The result aligns with the study of Wang et al. (2024), who found that resilience and adaptive coping significantly improve students' psychological well-being and academic adjustment. Moreover, Faber et al. (2025) concluded that effective stress management, time management, and supportive relationships enable students to cope more successfully with academic demands and promote positive educational outcomes (Faber et al., 2025; Wang et al., 2024).

Overall, the findings indicate that although CASTE respondents exhibit relatively high levels of well-being, particularly in spiritual and moral aspects, financial difficulties and academic workload remain significant barriers to their holistic development. Strengthening resilience, promoting effective coping strategies, expanding financial assistance, and enhancing institutional counseling and student support services may substantially improve students' well-being and academic success. These findings provide empirical support for the proposed intervention program aimed at fostering a healthier, more supportive, and resilient higher education environment.

Conclusions

The findings of the study indicate that the respondents generally exhibited a positive level of well-being, with spiritual and moral well-being emerging as the strongest dimension, reflecting the importance of values, purpose, and moral responsibility in sustaining their overall quality of life. However, financial well-being received the lowest rating, suggesting that financial concerns remain a significant issue that may affect students' holistic development. Furthermore, the study revealed that financial challenges and academic workload were the most prevalent stressors experienced by the respondents, indicating that economic constraints and increasing academic demands continue to pose substantial barriers to students' well-being and academic success.

The respondents primarily relied on resilience and support systems as their coping strategies, demonstrating the importance of adaptive behaviors and social networks in managing academic and personal challenges. Nevertheless, the relatively lower utilization of time management suggests that respondents may benefit from interventions aimed at strengthening organizational and self-management skills. Moreover, the study established a significant negative relationship between challenges and well-being, confirming that increased exposure to financial, academic, personal, and technological stressors is associated with lower levels of well-being. Conversely, a significant positive relationship was found between coping strategies and well-being, indicating that students who employ effective coping mechanisms tend to experience better physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, and financial well-being.

Overall, the study concludes that promoting holistic student well-being requires a comprehensive institutional approach that not only minimizes the challenges encountered by students but also strengthens their adaptive coping capacities. The findings provide empirical evidence supporting the implementation of an intervention program focusing on financial literacy, academic support, counseling and mental health services, resilience-building activities, time management enhancement, peer support initiatives, and spiritual formation. Such interventions are expected to foster a more supportive educational environment that enhances students' well-being, academic performance, and personal development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

Higher education institutions, particularly Saint Theresa College, should strengthen their student support services by implementing comprehensive wellness programs that address students' physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, and financial well-being. Greater emphasis should be placed on providing accessible counseling services, mental health awareness activities, and wellness initiatives that foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment. In addition, the institution should enhance financial assistance programs through scholarships, emergency financial aid, financial literacy seminars, and budgeting workshops to help reduce the financial challenges experienced by students.

Academic administrators and faculty members are encouraged to review and manage academic workload by adopting balanced instructional practices, realistic assessment schedules, and flexible learning strategies that promote students' academic success without compromising their well-being. Faculty members should also integrate mentoring, academic advising, and regular consultations to identify students experiencing academic or personal difficulties and provide timely support and appropriate referrals when necessary.

Students are encouraged to strengthen their adaptive coping strategies by actively participating in resilience-building programs, peer support groups, stress management

workshops, and time management training. Developing effective organizational skills, maintaining healthy lifestyles, seeking social support, and utilizing available institutional services may help them better manage academic and personal challenges while enhancing their overall well-being.

The proposed intervention program should be implemented and periodically evaluated to determine its effectiveness in improving students' holistic well-being. Regular monitoring and assessment will enable the institution to refine program components and ensure that interventions remain responsive to the evolving needs of the student population. Collaboration among administrators, faculty members, counselors, student organizations, and community partners is likewise encouraged to sustain comprehensive wellness initiatives.

Future researchers are encouraged to replicate and extend this study by involving larger and more diverse samples from different higher education institutions to enhance the generalizability of the findings. They may also examine additional factors influencing student well-being, such as family support, learning environment, digital well-being, emotional intelligence, and institutional climate. Furthermore, employing mixed-methods or longitudinal research designs may provide deeper insights into students' lived experiences, the long-term effects of coping strategies, and the effectiveness of intervention programs in promoting holistic well-being.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles governing research involving human participants. Prior to the conduct of the study, permission to undertake the research was obtained from the appropriate authorities of Saint Theresa College, Tandag City, and all research procedures adhered to the institution's ethical guidelines to ensure the protection of the participants' rights, dignity, privacy, and welfare. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents before data collection. The participants were adequately informed about the objectives of the study, the nature of their participation, their right to decline or withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences, and the measures implemented to safeguard the confidentiality of their responses.

To maintain the integrity of the research, the anonymity and confidentiality of all participants were strictly preserved throughout the study. No personally identifiable information was collected, and all data were used exclusively for academic and research purposes. The collected data were securely stored and accessed only by the researchers. The authors further declare that there are no conflicts of interest, whether financial or personal, that could have influenced the conduct or outcomes of this study. Moreover, this research did not receive any specific funding from public, commercial, or not-for-profit organizations. The datasets generated and analyzed during the study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to institutional policies and ethical considerations. Finally, all authors made substantial contributions to the conceptualization and design of the study, data collection, statistical analysis,

interpretation of findings, manuscript preparation, critical revision of the article, and approval of the final manuscript for publication.

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