



Thai High School Students Quality of Life during COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed at exploring the Quality of Life of Thai high school students during the self-quarantine as the effect of COVID-19. Students have to undergo intensive lifestyle change due to five main factors: physical health, mental health, social relationships, education and living environment. Since human is social animal, being isolated for a long period of time have a chance of causing them to be depressed. Moreover, this research also aimed to find the factors which have the greatest impact on the quality of life. The online survey was given to 200 Thai high school students to measure their quality of life. The survey's criteria group the student into three levels: good, moderate and poor quality of life according to the calculation of score ranging from 1 to 5. The results of the survey concluded that 86% of all students are considered to have moderate level of well-being with education as the factor that significantly lower the quality of life. On the other hands, having a good living environment seem to keep the life quality in moderate level. Knowing the cause of the issue, the solution can be continuously made to effectively solve the problem in the future.

Keywords: COVID-19, quarantine, Quality of Life, Thai high school students.

INTRODUCTION

In the first quarter of 2020, there was a COVID-19 pandemic that has worsen the Thai high school student's quality of life. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), The meaning of Quality of Life is "an individual's perception of their life in the context of culture and value system in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns".

The virus takes approximately 14 days infected people to develop symptoms. If someone has traveled to risky area or has contracted with infected patients by direct fluid transfer, that person must do 14 days-quarantine oneself in the house. The quarantine caused the lifestyle to change in several ways. It also has the impact on the quality of life due to five main factors: physical health, mental health, social relationships, education and living environment.

Firstly, it affected both physical and mental health of the individual. People could not go outside to do

outdoors exercise, so they are only able to do indoor exercise which might not be as effective. Research proposed that outdoor exercise is more beneficial than the indoor exercise because people have more positive mood when they are exercising in outdoor environment (Sarah E. Hooper, 2003). Being isolated for long period of time would lead to the mental illness. The study conducted by a group of researchers from King's college London (2020) indicated that the quarantine have a negative impact on psychological well-being.

Moreover, the quarantine prevents people from meeting others, therefore the relationship could be worse. Furthermore, students have to study online at home instead of going to school. A study on Ohio charter school and Florida public school students, suggested that the online classes are less effective than the traditional class (June Ahn & Andrew McEachin, 2015). Lastly, the living environment play an important role in every other aspect.

The purpose of this research is to identify the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the quality of Thai high school student's life. This is very important due to the fact that it has an influence to restrictions on life. In addition, the research also aims to find the factor that have the most negative effect on the quality of life, in order to find the solution to this problem.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

An online questionnaire containing twenty-three statements representing 5 factors: physical health, mental health, social relationships, education and environment of Thai high school students during the COVID-19 pandemic was given to 200 students. The survey result was rated from the scale of 1 to 5 ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The score of each individual was calculated and classified into 3 range according to total score: good, moderate and poor quality of life.

Levels of Quality of Life	Range of score
Poor	23-53
Moderate	54-84
Good	85-115

Table 1: shows the range of score for each level.

The data was constructed into pie chart to clearly demonstrate the percentage of people in each group. Moreover, the score from each factor was computed into mean to identify the aspect which most worsen the high school student's quality of life.

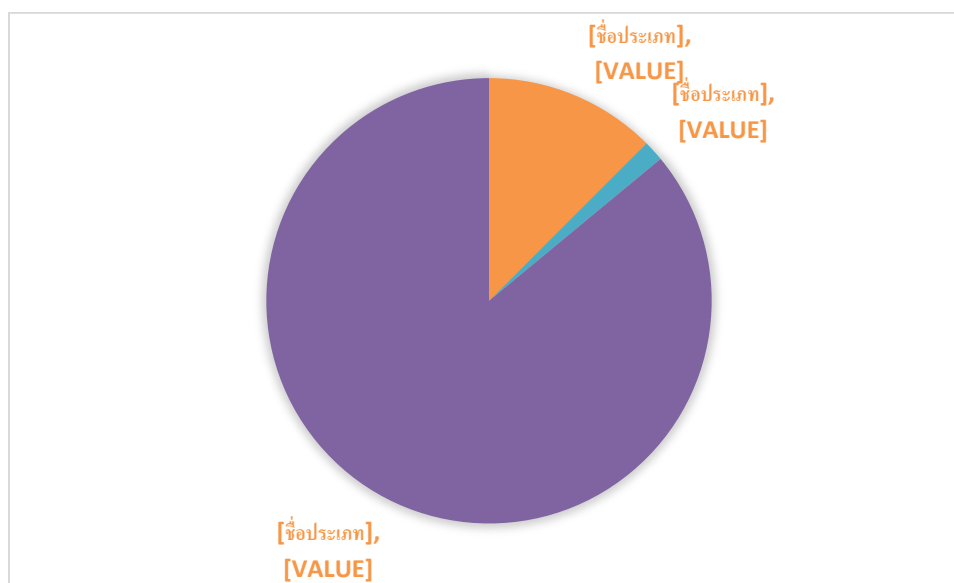
RESULT

The researchers predicted that most people will be in poor level. Surprisingly, the actual mean of score is 73.485 which is considered as moderate level.

According to Table 2, the majority were having moderate level in quality of life while only a fractional proportion of the group were having poor level in the standard of living. In addition, nearly one tenth of the participants were having good quality of life.

Levels of Quality of Life	Participants
Poor (23-53)	3
Moderate (54-84)	172
Good (85-115)	25

Table 2: shows the number of students in each level.



Graph 1: shows the percentage of students in each level.

From the Table 3, the mean score of physical health is 3 which is within the normal range, meaning that there is no significant effect on the quality of life. For mental health, the average score is 3.33. The reason that the mean score slightly increase is because the participants have low depression.

Social relationship has the average score of 3.75 and this is because the participants still communicate frequently and feel comfortable to live with their family. Surprisingly, the mean score of education drop significantly to 2 due to the fact that online class is not as effective as intense traditional class. On the other hand, the mean score for the environment rise sharply to 4. The rationale behind this is that everyone seems to have a suitable living environment during quarantine.

Factors	Average score
Physical Health	3
Mental Health	3.33
Social Relationships	3.75
Education	2
Environment	4

Table 3: shows the average score for each factor.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research tends to find the quality of Thai high school student's life. The researcher hypothesis is that the score should be lower than moderate level due to several factors, for example, the isolation can lead to higher level of stress. However, the outcome of this study revealed that the quality of Thai student's life is in moderate level. In addition, according to Chwaszcz et al (2020), during the COVID-19 pandemic people can handle with the situation better, thus the quality of life is greater than expectation.

According to the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory which was proposed by Dr. Stevan E. Hobfoll in 1989, people who receive less resources tend to be more stressful and this might lead to the lower quality of life. This study suggests that the lack of factors that is related to essentials resources, such as education, has truly worsened the quality of life.

However, the effect on some factors such as social relationships are less than the others, therefore these factors support the elevating the quality of life. In other words, even though there are some factors that lower the quality of living, there are also few factors which help to improve the level of well-being.

To sum up, this research reveals that there are various factors: physical health, mental health, social relationships, education and environment which affect the quality of life but the most effective one is education since it has played a significant role in high school student's life. Therefore, this point should be focused more in order to improve quality of life.

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