

Survey of Hostel Life at a Private Medical and Dental College

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ABSTRACT

Background: Hostel is becoming a necessity with increasing number of students coming from peripheral areas. Hostel life is not without problems, limitations and challenges.

Aim: To show student satisfaction with hostel facilities and look into the issues of hostel life.

Methodology: A quantitative cross-sectional survey was carried out on the students residing in the hostels of a private medical and dental college in May, 2019. Among all the hostellers, 159 responded to fill the validated questionnaire. The questionnaire had open comments and close ended 16 items to which a four point Likert scale was applied: (Excellent - Poor). Data collected was analyzed by SPSS Version 20.

Results: The data collected at one time was analyzed by SPSS Version 20 and frequencies and percentages calculated. Infrastructure and rooms had a 93-99%, mess food- 67.7%, gymnasium facilities 72-82%, washroom - 60%, security- 94% and overall hostel rating was 90% positive responses.

Conclusion: It can be concluded that facilities provided to the hostel showed satisfaction of students related with good food, 24 hours electricity, medical facility and peaceful environment. The need was to pay attention to some issues raised regarding mess food and washroom, for improvement.

Keywords: Hostel life, students, satisfaction, medical, dental, college

INTRODUCTION

A survey on hostel life gives view of students and shows the various positive and negative effects of hostel life. A hostel is like a family of students with the warden as the head. Students develop a sense of friendship and fellow feeling. Students learn the value of discipline.¹ It teaches them a sense of responsibility in matters of taking care of books, clothes and health. Students do all the work with their own hands, thus becoming self-dependent. While it is equally important to find time for using a library and reading room, play grounds, gymnasium, and getting trained to improve their skills and achieve wholesome development is essential, too¹. A student residing in hostel, studies with full concentration and gets help from fellows or senior students on entering the college. In the hostel, one has to share room with a room partner, usually those who have never shared room with anyone; the change can be difficult to adjust; roommates may be from a joint family and have not been exposed to keep a private environment in the room^{2,3}.

But there are still many other problems that may be faced by the hostellers relating to e.g., mess food, washroom, power supply and internet facilities etc. The study was conducted to show student satisfaction with hostel facilities and look into the issues of hostel life in a private medical & dental college and suggest improvements.

METHODOLOGY

A quantitative cross-sectional survey was carried in May, 2019 in a private medical and dental college. The validated

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questionnaire was distributed among all the students residing in the hostel on day of data collection, 159 respondents filled it, and anonymity was assured to participants. There were 16 items to which a four point Likert scale was applied (Excellent – Poor) in addition, open-ended comments were also included. The instrument for data collection had items relating to hostel infrastructure, room and mess facilities, quality of food served in hostel. In addition, items relating to security, washroom facilities, warden attitude, library and gym access and recreational opportunity were also included in the questionnaire. SPSS version 20 was used to analyze the data and presented as percentages and frequencies.

RESULTS

The study was conducted to identify issues in the hostel of a private medical and dental college by quantitative cross-sectional survey carried in May, 2019. The study included all the students residing in the hostel at the time of data collection, from which 159 responded.

The results of the questionnaire which had 16 items was analyzed for frequencies by SPSS version 20. The responses excellent, good and average were taken as positive. As shown in Table 1 the response to hostel infrastructure gave a 99% positive response depicting a good purpose-built building with ample spaced rooms giving a good 93% response. Mess related questions gave a 67.7% positive response, but open comments show many students reservations about served food. Medical facility was good response of 62% computer & library facilities was 52-81% positive response. Gymnasium facilities was a 72-82% positive response and students

showed satisfaction to the type of equipment as well as opportunity to use the facility. Recreational visits were a 72% positive response, but a lot of students want more frequent visits. Laundry & washroom facilities are 60-70% and security 94% positive response with very well satisfied

students as to vigilance of the deputed guards. Warden cooperation and cordiality had an 86% response and overall hostel rating was 90% positive response. Open ended comments mostly show an improvement required for mess food as well as washrooms.

Table 1: Student feedback on hostel facilities (n=159)

Statement	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair
Hostel Infrastructure	48(30%)	92(58%)	15(9%)	4(3%)
Facilities in the Room	23(15%)	70(44%)	52(33%)	14(9%)
Mess Facilities	13(8%)	45(28%)	62(39%)	39(25%)
Food Quality	3(2%)	46(29%)	58(37%)	52(33%)
Medical Facilities	15(9%)	36(23%)	47(30%)	61(38%)
Computing and Internet Facilities	9(6%)	24(15%)	43(27%)	83(52%)
Indoor games facilities	25(16%)	58(37%)	48(30%)	28(18%)
Outdoor games facilities	23(15%)	50(31%)	41(26%)	45(28%)
Library Access & Facilities	39(25%)	57(36%)	32(20%)	31(19%)
Study Hours	47(30%)	70(44%)	29(18%)	13(8%)
Wardens are cordial & co-operative	49(30%)	57(36%)	27(17%)	26(16%)
Security facilities	83(52%)	52(33%)	15(9%)	9(6%)
Laundry facilities	14(9%)	41(26%)	40(25%)	64(40%)
Washrooms facilities	19(12%)	53(33%)	40(25%)	47(30%)
Recreational visits	26(16%)	59(37%)	29(18%)	45(28%)
Overall rating of the Hostel	18(11%)	75(47%)	51(32%)	15(10%)

The open comments are as follow:

- "Washrooms need more attention"
- "The washrooms should be cleaned more often"
- "Security is satisfactory and wardens are welcoming. Other facilities are also good"
- "Security system is very good"
- "The menu of mess should be improved"
- "Everything is ok. But try to improve food quality and mess menu"
- "Mess food quality should be improved"
- "Mess is very good"
- "Everything is flawless. But fact which I want to notify is that sometime mess menu fluctuates and provided food in some time not provided according to"
- "Everything is excellent and especially the cooperative staff. I love hostel and it feels like home"
- "Study rooms must be open for 24 hours 7 days a week"
- "More venues for outside visits"
- "I suggest improving laundry facilities"
- "Need to do something about laundry, rest of all is fine"
- "Improve internet facilities"
- "The security is satisfactory and wardens are welcoming"
- "Warden is very cooperative with students"
- "Wardens should be more cooperative"

DISCUSSION

College life is a beginning of a journey, which for a number of students maybe away from home, in a hostel. The word hostel is specifically used in some countries for students and travelers. A survey on hostel life gives view of students and shows the various positive and negative effects of hostel life. A hostel is like a home, family of students living cordially with warden as head. Hostel gives a sense of friendliness and fellow feeling within a controlled environment². The warden maintains discipline as students

from varied backgrounds and stature were to live in harmony. This teaches students the value of discipline, a sense of responsibility in matters of taking care of all their chores as well as books, clothes and health, thus, becoming self-dependent^{1,2}.

The important hostel satisfactory factors identified from students who live in hostel by the survey are environment & ambiance, hostel mess, electricity & internet facility, security, recreational activities, gymnasium, location, medical, washroom and water supply facilities discussed below.

Environment the first and the main important factor in hostel, because the it was the one which encompasses all the living and nonliving things occurring naturally on earth. The hostel environment plays a vital role in accommodation of hostel because if the environment is not good then the student gets stressed and effected and no one likes to live in such hostel.⁴ The furniture and other additional such as bedding, sofas, was also a necessary factor, which overall showed satisfaction by students. However, as the popular saying goes people do change with changes in time, likewise hostel does bring change in students, as to personality, behavior, thinking etc. On entering hostel the comforts of home are left behind, everything is new and can lead to stress in students effecting their academics^{2,4}.

The hostel location is also very important, situated in a good place, the environment outside the hostel must be good and which community of people live there and whether the hostel is safe or not. The distance from college, lecture halls and exterior of the hostel with number of students residing has impact on satisfaction of students with hostel facilities^{5,6}.

As seen quite a number of students gave comments on improving mess food and service. The hostel mess attracted lot of comments probably due to the fact that it is restrictive menu with timings, not like home situation where student would have whatever they desire to eat and when. A strong evidence has been seen in a study of significant relationship between food quality, cleanliness as to

affecting hostel stay of students.⁵ Sometimes in the hostel one has to be tolerant and amenable, as to food may not be of choice, may have to wait in dining mess and follow the timing of food service provided⁷.

Essentially the hostel must have uninterrupted electricity because if electricity is not there then it would be difficult for the students to study and carry out their other chores. The results showed students highly satisfied with power supply as the hostel had good generator backup, too. Most students were very well satisfied with the provided internet services but few commented to improve the speed.

The hostel must have both indoor and outdoor games facility, it must contain playground and have some indoor games by which student can have some recreation. In fact, students can become lazy in a hostel without sports facility. Most of the student's reaction was positive to good gymnasium and other sports activities as well as outdoor visits. Physical fitness leads to good health, with students able to concentrate more on their study. However, some students felt that some new malls have opened in the city and they desired them to be added to the recreational routes.

The students are far away from their homes and the parents send their children to study and they must ensure that his/her child lives in a hostel which is safe⁵. The round the clock security was in practice for students and the study showed high satisfaction not only with hostel security but also good attitude of the guards.

The water facility for drinking as well as other uses though important but more so is the clean supply. Students comments showed overall satisfaction with warm water being available, too but laundry needs improvement as well as bathroom facilities. The hostel availability of medical services with ambulance service had no issues and students gave a positive satisfaction for these facilities.

Hostel life helps a student to become more self-dependent, social, interacting with peers making new friends and promotes independent thinking. Hostel is basically a home away from home of a student.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that some facilities provided to every hostel are of same level where as some facilities are of different level. Satisfaction of students related with good food, 24 hours electricity, medical facility and peaceful environment. The need was to pay attention to some issues raised regarding mess food and washroom, for improvement. Management should also try to fulfill the gap of facility levels to make a good balance between students of hostel. In addition, some thought should be given to provide counselling especially to newly inducted students to settle in the hostel.

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