



Understanding and Mitigating Stress among Hostelite Youth: A Comprehensive Review of Factors and Interventions

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Abstract: This study examines the factors influencing stress among hostelite youth, focusing on the impact of communal living on mental well-being, academic performance, and social adjustment. Through an analysis of various stressors, including homesickness, dissatisfaction with food quality, and strict hostel regulations, the research highlights the challenges faced by students in hostel environments. Using a quantitative approach, the study reveals age-based variations in stress perception, underscoring the need for tailored support strategies to enhance students' hostel experience. The findings suggest that effective interventions, such as improved counseling services, diverse meal options, and flexible management policies, can mitigate stress and support overall well-being. This study also emphasizes the global relevance of addressing hostelite stress, as these insights can inform best practices in student housing worldwide, contributing to improved academic and personal outcomes for students across borders.

Keywords: Hostelite Stress, Communal Living, Student Well-Being, Academic Performance

INTRODUCTION

The transition to higher education often marks a period of significant change and challenge for young adults, particularly those living in hostels or other communal living arrangements. Hostel life can present a unique set of stressors and demands that influence the well-being of students. This introduction aims to contextualize the research on stress among hostelite youth by drawing upon a variety of relevant studies that explore related themes such as social innovation, health risk behaviors, digital nomadism, and quality of service in communal living environments.

Alegre and Berbegal-Mirabent (2016) provide insight into the broader context of social enterprises within the hospitality and tourism sectors, highlighting factors that contribute to the success and sustainability of such enterprises. Their work underscores the importance of

understanding organizational environments, which can be paralleled to hostel settings where management practices and service quality play crucial roles in residents' experiences.

Similarly, Alshehri, Byrne, and Grace (2019) focus on health risk behaviors among Saudi Arabian university students, providing valuable insights into how perceptions of health risks can impact students' lives. This research underscores the significance of addressing health and behavioral concerns in student populations, a factor that likely intersects with stress experienced by hostel residents. In a different but related vein, Andino-Frydman (2023) explores the evolving identities of digital nomads, revealing how changes in work and living arrangements can affect personal well-being. While not exclusively about hostelites, the study highlights the broader implications of changing living conditions and work environments on stress and mental health.

The structural design of national youth and sports information systems by Ben-Ali (2011) offers another angle, emphasizing how information systems can support youth development and well-being. Understanding how such systems might support hostel residents could be valuable for enhancing their overall experience. Bond's (2017) case study on unemployment and social stigma in Lowestoft provides a lens through which to view the challenges faced by youth in precarious situations, including those living in hostels. The stigmatization and financial pressures discussed in Bond's research can be closely related to the experiences of hostel residents who may face similar social and economic challenges.

Bonner and Luscombe's (2009) exploration of suicide and homelessness further underscores the critical need to address mental health issues within vulnerable populations. Although their study is focused on homelessness, the parallels with hostel life highlight the importance of mental health support for young people in communal living settings. Brady et al. (2018) highlight the significance of involving young people in research related to drug and alcohol use. Their findings emphasize the need for tailored interventions and support mechanisms that could be beneficial for hostel residents facing similar challenges.

Brochado, Rita, and Gameiro (2015) provide insights into backpackers' perceptions of hostel service quality, which can directly impact their stress levels and overall well-being. Understanding service quality from the perspective of residents can inform improvements in hostel management practices. Burgess-Allen, Langlois, and Whittaker (2006) examine the health needs of ex-prisoners and implications for resettlement, shedding light on the broader issues of health and social integration that are also relevant to hostel residents. Das and Shah (2014) offer a perspective on special education in India, which, while not directly related to hostel life, underscores the importance of tailored support for diverse needs, a concept that can be applied to the varied needs of hostel residents. Day and Paul (2007) discuss strategies for preventing homelessness and addressing substance use among young people, issues that intersect with the challenges faced by hostel residents. Gherrissi-Labben and Johnson (2004) explore the image of young tourists at Swiss festivals, reflecting on how young people's experiences and perceptions are shaped by their environments, a concept relevant to understanding hostel life.

METHOD

This study aimed to investigate the factors contributing to stress among hostelite youth, focusing on aspects such as communal living conditions, academic pressures, and mental well-being. The primary objectives were to (1) identify the key stressors experienced by students living in hostels, (2) analyze the influence of demographic variables, such as age and gender, on stress levels, and (3) evaluate the relationship between specific hostel-related factors—food quality, homesickness, strict timings—and overall student satisfaction. The hypothesis was formulated to examine whether significant differences existed in stress levels based on demographic variables and hostel conditions, hypothesizing that these factors impact stress levels among hostelite students.

To conduct the analysis, quantitative data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire administered to hostelite students at a university. The questionnaire contained

sections covering demographic information, perceived stress levels, and ratings on specific hostel attributes such as food quality, timing regulations, and social support availability. Responses were measured on a Likert scale, allowing for detailed analysis of subjective perceptions of the hostel environment.

The data collected were then processed and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software. SPSS was instrumental in conducting ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) to examine relationships between independent variables, such as age and gender, and dependent variables, including stress levels, food ratings, and homesickness. The F-tests conducted via ANOVA provided insights into the statistical significance of the differences among demographic groups. Furthermore, descriptive statistics helped illustrate the distribution and frequencies of variables, supporting a comprehensive understanding of the data.

Overall, the methodology effectively integrated quantitative data and statistical tools to explore the nuances of hostelite stress, offering valuable insights that can be applied in improving hostel environments for student well-being and academic performance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15-18	15	14.3	14.3	14.3
	19-21	60	57.1	57.1	71.4
	22-25	30	28.6	28.6	100.0
	Total	105	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 displays the age distribution of participants, with the majority (57.1%) aged between 19 and 21, indicating that most respondents are in a transitional period typically associated with early university life. The 22-25 age group makes up 28.6%, representing senior students, while the 15-18 group is the smallest, at 14.3%, capturing younger, likely newer hostel residents. This age range distribution provides insights into how stress factors may vary across different stages of higher education, helping tailor interventions according to the unique challenges faced by each age group in hostel settings.

Table 2. Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	59	56.2	56.2	56.2
	female	46	43.8	43.8	100.0
	Total	105	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 illustrates the gender composition of the participants, with males representing 56.2% and females 43.8% of the sample. This slight majority of male respondents provides a balanced gender perspective on stress among hostelite youth, allowing for comparisons across genders in stress factors and coping mechanisms. Understanding these differences is crucial as gender can influence social dynamics, academic pressures, and general hostel experiences. The near-equal representation enhances the study’s ability to address stress from both male and female perspectives, enabling hostel management to consider gender-sensitive support measures.

Table 3. Education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
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Valid	Higher secondary	67	63.8	63.8	63.8
	UG	24	22.9	22.9	86.7
	PG	14	13.3	13.3	100.0
	Total	105	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 categorizes participants by education level, with 63.8% having higher secondary education, 22.9% at the undergraduate level, and 13.3% in postgraduate studies. The prominence of higher secondary students suggests a younger demographic entering hostel life, likely experiencing initial adjustment stress. Undergraduates face unique academic and social pressures, while postgraduates may deal with different stressors, such as research demands. This distribution is valuable for understanding how stress factors vary by educational stage, emphasizing the need for tailored support initiatives to address the distinct challenges faced by students at each academic level.

Table 4. ANOVA between Age and Factors

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
stress level for staying in hostels	Between Groups	3.098	2	1.549	1.169	.315
	Within Groups	135.150	102	1.325		
	Total	138.248	104			
Rating of food in hostels	Between Groups	43.829	2	21.914	3.976	.022
	Within Groups	562.133	102	5.511		
	Total	605.962	104			
Rating of homesickness to 1s	Between Groups	3.631	2	1.815	.320	.727
	Within Groups	578.217	102	5.669		
	Total	581.848	104			
Rating on the timings and strictness of hostels	Between Groups	.807	2	.404	.082	.921
	Within Groups	499.250	102	4.895		
	Total	500.057	104			
Pain and caused on 1s	Between Groups	33.714	2	16.857	.993	.374
	Within Groups	1732.133	102	16.982		
	Total	1765.848	104			
Were you honest on	Between Groups	6.681	2	3.340	10.932	<.001

your answers you mentioned above	Within Groups	31.167	102	.306		
	Total	37.848	104			

Table 4 presents an ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) analysis examining how age affects various factors related to hostel life among hostelite youth. This statistical test assesses whether there are significant differences in responses across age groups for each factor, thereby highlighting which aspects of hostel living may be perceived differently depending on the age of the residents.

For the "level of satisfaction with staying in hostels" factor, the results show a between-groups sum of squares of 3.098, with a mean square of 1.549, an F-value of 1.169, and a p-value of .315. Since the p-value is greater than .05, we conclude that there is no statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels across age groups. This result suggests that general satisfaction with hostel life does not vary notably by age, meaning hostelites across different age groups report a similar level of contentment with their stay.

The "rating of food in hostels" reveals a between-groups sum of squares of 43.829, with a mean square of 21.914, an F-value of 3.976, and a p-value of .022. Here, the p-value is below .05, indicating a significant difference between age groups in their perceptions of food quality. This suggests that age influences how students view hostel food, with certain age groups likely rating it more favorably or critically than others. These findings could be valuable for hostel management to consider, as they may need to address specific dietary preferences or expectations related to age.

For "rating of homesickness," the table displays a between-groups sum of squares of 3.631, a mean square of 1.815, and an F-value of .320, with a p-value of .727. Since this p-value is above .05, we find no significant age-related difference in homesickness ratings. This suggests that feelings of homesickness are fairly consistent across age groups, indicating that age does not strongly affect homesickness experiences among hostel residents.

The factor of "timing and strictness of hostels" shows an F-value of .082 with a p-value of .921, also above .05, suggesting no significant age-related differences in views regarding hostel timing and strictness policies. This result implies that perceptions of hostel rules and regulations are stable across age groups, pointing to a generally shared experience among hostel residents, regardless of age.

Finally, the factor on "honesty in responses" shows a significant result, with a very low p-value (<.001), indicating that age groups differ in how they perceive their honesty in responses. This difference may reflect varying levels of self-reflection or comfort in providing honest responses, possibly influenced by age. This insight could be important for interpreting the reliability of responses across different age groups, as younger and older residents may vary in their self-reported honesty.

Overall, these results offer a nuanced view of how age influences certain aspects of hostel life, providing actionable insights for improving hostel environments to meet the needs of diverse age groups more effectively.

Table 5. ANOVA between Gender and Factors

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Stress level for staying in hostels	Between Groups	1.710	1	1.710	1.290	.259
	Within Groups	136.538	103	1.326		

	Total	138.248	104			
Rating of food in hostels	Between Groups	1.209	1	1.209	.206	.651
	Within Groups	604.753	103	5.871		
	Total	605.962	104			
Rating of homesickness to hostelites	Between Groups	.007	1	.007	.001	.972
	Within Groups	581.841	103	5.649		
	Total	581.848	104			
Rating on the timings and strictness of hostels	Between Groups	2.371	1	2.371	.491	.485
	Within Groups	497.686	103	4.832		
	Total	500.057	104			
Pain and caused on hostelites	Between Groups	7.317	1	7.317	.429	.514
	Within Groups	1758.531	103	17.073		
	Total	1765.848	104			

Table 5 presents an ANOVA analysis examining whether gender significantly affects various experiences and perceptions of hostel life among hostelite youth. This analysis explores how factors like stress levels, satisfaction with food, homesickness, perceptions of hostel rules, and general pain or discomfort vary between male and female residents.

For stress levels related to staying in hostels, the ANOVA shows a between-groups sum of squares of 1.710, with an F-value of 1.290 and a p-value of .259. Since the p-value is greater than .05, there is no statistically significant difference between male and female students regarding stress levels due to hostel life. This suggests that both genders experience similar stress levels in the hostel environment, indicating that gender does not play a major role in stress perceptions within this context.

In evaluating the rating of food in hostels, the table indicates a between-groups sum of squares of 1.209 and an F-value of .206, with a p-value of .651. Here, too, the p-value exceeds .05, indicating no significant difference between genders in their satisfaction with the food quality. This lack of difference implies that both male and female hostelites tend to share similar views about the food provided, suggesting that hostel food quality is perceived consistently across genders.

The rating of homesickness among hostel residents also shows no significant gender difference, with a between-groups sum of squares of .007 and a p-value of .972. Since this p-value is well above .05, it can be concluded that both genders experience similar levels of homesickness. This result could indicate that homesickness is a universal experience for hostelites, not influenced by gender, as both male and female students seem equally affected by being away from home.

For opinions on hostel timings and strictness, the ANOVA results show a between-groups sum of squares of 2.371, with an F-value of .491 and a p-value of .485, again above the .05 threshold. This lack of significant difference implies that both male and female students share similar views on the timing restrictions and strict rules in the hostel. This shared perception might indicate a general consensus among students, regardless of gender, regarding hostel regulations.

Finally, in terms of pain and discomfort experienced by hostel residents, the table shows a between-groups sum of squares of 7.317 and an F-value of .429, with a p-value of .514. Since this p-value is also above .05, it suggests that both male and female hostelites experience similar levels of discomfort. This could indicate that physical or emotional discomfort related to hostel life is common among students, regardless of gender.

In summary, Table 5 reveals that gender does not significantly affect any of the factors analyzed—stress levels, food satisfaction, homesickness, adherence to hostel rules, or levels of discomfort. These findings imply that both male and female hostelites have comparable experiences and perceptions across various aspects of hostel life, indicating a largely shared experience in the hostel environment.

Table 6. ANOVA between Education and Factors

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Stress level for staying in hostels	Between Groups	2.381	2	1.191	.894	.412
	Within Groups	135.866	102	1.332		
	Total	138.248	104			
Rating of food in hostels	Between Groups	54.859	2	27.430	5.077	.008
	Within Groups	551.103	102	5.403		
	Total	605.962	104			
Rating of homesickness to hostelites	Between Groups	9.320	2	4.660	.830	.439
	Within Groups	572.527	102	5.613		
	Total	581.848	104			
Rating on the timings and strictness of hostels	Between Groups	3.640	2	1.820	.374	.689
	Within Groups	496.417	102	4.867		
	Total	500.057	104			
	Between Groups	42.107	2	21.054	1.246	.292

Pain and caused on hostelites	Within Groups	1723.740	102	16.899		
	Total	1765.848	104			

This table shows the results of an ANOVA analysis assessing whether age groups significantly affect different aspects of hostel life for hostelite youth. The analysis considers factors like stress levels, food quality, homesickness, rules and strictness, and physical discomfort. For stress levels due to hostel life, the analysis shows a between-groups sum of squares of 2.381, with an F-value of .894 and a p-value of .412. Since the p-value is above .05, it indicates that there is no significant difference in stress levels among different age groups. This finding suggests that hostel-related stress is experienced fairly consistently across various ages, pointing to the shared pressures of communal living that might affect all residents similarly.

When looking at food quality ratings, there is a significant difference among age groups, as shown by a between-groups sum of squares of 54.859 and a p-value of .008. With a p-value below .05, this result suggests that perceptions of food quality vary between different age groups. Younger or older students may have distinct expectations or dietary habits influencing how they perceive hostel food quality, pointing to the need for food services that meet diverse age-related preferences. For homesickness ratings, the table shows a between-groups sum of squares of 9.320 and a p-value of .439, indicating no significant difference across age groups. This result implies that homesickness is a common experience among hostelites regardless of age, possibly due to the shared challenges of being away from familiar home environments.

The rating of hostel timing and strictness reveals a between-groups sum of squares of 3.640, with an F-value of .374 and a p-value of .689. This high p-value suggests no significant differences between age groups regarding opinions on hostel rules and timing. This uniformity indicates that all age groups may view hostel rules similarly, reflecting a common reaction to the restrictions imposed in communal settings. Lastly, the rating of physical discomfort also shows no significant difference among age groups, with a between-groups sum of squares of 42.107, an F-value of 1.246, and a p-value of .292. This lack of significance indicates that physical discomfort related to hostel life does not vary substantially with age. It suggests that environmental factors contributing to discomfort, such as room conditions or shared facilities, might impact all residents similarly.

In summary, this ANOVA table reveals that while perceptions of food quality differ significantly by age, other factors like stress levels, homesickness, opinions on hostel rules, and physical discomfort are consistent across age groups. These findings highlight that while certain preferences may vary, the general hostel experience is relatively uniform across different ages, underscoring the need for inclusive support structures and services that address both common and age-specific needs.

CONCLUSION

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of stress factors impacting hostelite youth, revealing critical insights into how communal living influences well-being, academic performance, and personal development. The findings demonstrate that, regardless of age, hostelites face a range of challenges including homesickness, food quality dissatisfaction, and stress due to hostel rules and shared spaces. However, certain perceptions, such as food quality, vary across age groups, highlighting the importance of age-sensitive approaches in managing hostel environments.

The global implications of this research underscore the need for hostels and communal living spaces worldwide to adopt practices that support mental and physical well-being. Stress factors identified here, such as homesickness and dissatisfaction with hostel services, are universal issues among hostelites globally, from developed nations to emerging economies. By addressing these stressors, hostels can enhance the quality of life for students, supporting them

in a manner that positively impacts their academic pursuits, mental health, and social integration. Institutions in other countries can apply these findings to evaluate and reformulate their policies to cater to a diverse, international student population, ultimately enhancing global educational standards and outcomes.

The future scope of this research lies in exploring targeted interventions that could alleviate hostel-related stressors. For example, introducing varied meal options, enhancing counseling support, and creating a flexible rule framework that balances safety with personal freedom may benefit hostelites significantly. Additionally, this research could be expanded by studying the influence of cultural background, financial pressures, and family distance on hostelite stress, given that these factors are likely to shape students' experiences in nuanced ways. A longitudinal approach to assessing the impacts of these stressors on academic outcomes and long-term mental health would also add value to this research area.

Furthermore, technological integration, such as apps for meal feedback or mental health tracking, could be explored as a future solution to improve hostel life. Global collaboration in sharing best practices could also foster an international framework for managing hostel stress, especially as higher education becomes increasingly accessible and students from diverse backgrounds experience communal living. Ultimately, addressing hostelite stress is not only a matter of enhancing student life but also a step towards nurturing a well-rounded, resilient, and globally competent future generation.

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