RESEARCH ARTICLE

Perceptions and Practices of Anti-Social Behavior among University Hostel Students in Punjab University, Lahore, Pakistan: A Cross-Sectional Study

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Anti-social behavior (ASB) among university students, particularly in hostel settings, is a growing concern worldwide, impacting the overall well-being and academic performance of students. This research investigates the perceptions and practices of ASB among university hostel students at Punjab University, Lahore, Pakistan. The primary objectives are to (i) assess the prevalence of ASB, specifically focusing on aggression, bullying, violence within peer relations, and harassment; (ii) gauge the students' perceptions of the prevalence of ASB; and (iii) explore the relationship between the hostel environment, peer relations, and ASB. A cross-sectional survey was conducted with 188 male hostel students, selected through proportionate random sampling from all male hostels at the University of the Punjab. Participants included both Bachelor's and Master's program students, chosen using the Taro Yamane (1976) formula. Data was collected using standardized questionnaires from various established tools. The study sample (N=188) consisted of 48.4% individuals aged 18-22 years and 51.6% aged 23-26 years. Regarding hostel environment satisfaction, 43.1% of respondents were satisfied with hostel management, 52.1% with self-dependency, and 45.7% with the calm and peaceful environment. However, dissatisfaction was noted with common bathrooms (25.0%) and restrictions (35.1%). Antisocial behaviors were prevalent, with 50.0% reporting joking about others, 61.2% engaging in teasing to make others angry, and 65.4% experiencing the spreading of rumors. Significant associations were found between hostel environment satisfaction and reduced exposure to violence (p=0.000), bullying (p=0.000), and harassment (p=0.154), but not with aggression (p=0.185). The study suggests that university and hostel administrations implement measures to reduce ASB by improving the hostel environment and fostering positive peer relations. Further research is recommended to develop more specific interventions and preventive strategies to mitigate ASB in university hostels.

1. Introduction

Anti-social behavior has become a global concern in developed and developing countries, yet crime and aggressive conduct are more prevalent in the United States than in many other countries. In the previous couple of decades, youth behavioral problems including externalizing, internalizing behavior, truancy, misbehavior, arrogance, bullying, aggression, aggressive behavior, disruptive behavior, daily life frustration, loneliness, use of weapons, and vandalism received a lot of attention from researchers [1,2]. Researchers on ASB often start by acknowledging its existence and then explore why people are increasingly anti-social today. The 'breakdown of communities' is frequently cited, with young people lacking positive role models and frameworks to develop into sociable adults. Anti-social behaviors are rapidly increasing worldwide, leading to high incarceration rates, particularly among juveniles in the United States[1,3].

In addition to these behaviors, if they continue, they can lead to other problematic behaviors such as injury, risk-taking, safety problems, low social skills, the development of narcissism and self-esteem problems, a short temper, poor academic performance, disrespectful behavior, and school expulsion. Persistent childhood behavior problems have a detrimental impact on adult well-being, career, and marriage [2]. The Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement [2001] reported that 293 per 100,000 juveniles aged 21 years were in detention in Washington State [4]. In Canada, youth crime rise by 7 percent in 2000 [5]. The severity of these incidents often makes it difficult to measure [6]. The international community must understand whether this global literature applies to Pakistan, which is currently experiencing a war and terror situation[7].

In Pakistan, negative social behavior among university students is a major concern. No agency, department, or institution is responsible for addressing such behavior, leading to many unrecorded incidents [8]. Social, cultural, and national barriers prevent locals from reporting many negative actions or behaviors [9]. Such behaviors are prevalent in poor urban and rural areas, particularly affecting university or college students. The sharp increase in negative social behaviors in Pakistan is troubling, with limited reporting to relevant authorities[10]. Tobacco smoking prevalence is estimated at 36% for males and 9% for females. Among university students, smoking prevalence is 15%, with the majority being male smokers[11].

There is no agency, department, or institution in Pakistan responsible for addressing negative social behavior, resulting in many unrecorded incidents [12]. Social, cultural, and national barriers prevent locals from reporting many negative actions or behaviors14. The young generation, especially university students, often indulges in anti-social behavior despite their education and maturity, engaging in activities like cheating, harassment, and bullying[13]. Anti-social behavior is linked to illegal or criminal acts, with early violence being a risk factor for serious criminality, social, and mental health problems among youth [14].

The primary challenge is the conflict between students' local culture and the hostile university environment, leading to anti-social behavior. This behavior is manifested through verbal abuse, physical torture, use of jargon, and substance abuse. Media influence, economic and social background, and individual clashes contribute to anti-social behavior[15]. This study seeks to understand the perceptions of hostel students from rural areas and their impact on anti-social behavior, aiming to provide deeper insights into the factors influencing such behavior[16].

In Pakistani universities, student federations, which can be associated with political or sectarian groups, significantly influence student behavior. Violent clashes among these groups often lead to property damage and disruptions[17]. Therefore, this study aims to examine the perception and practices of anti-social behavior among hostel students at Punjab University, particularly those from outside Lahore. It will explore the relationship between the hostel environment, peer relations, and anti-social behavior, providing recommendations for university and hostel administrations to mitigate such behaviors and improve the overall environment.

2. Methodology

2.1 Sample Size Calculation

To ensure a statistically significant representation, the sample size for this study was determined using Taro Yamane's formula 17 as given in **Eqn. 1**.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Eqn. 1
Where,
n = Sample Size
e^2 = level of significance
N = total population of the students living in all hostels
This formula calculates the sample size required from a given population, considering a specified margin of error. Proportionate sampling was employed to guarantee that the sample accurately mirrors the population distribution across various hostels. This method involves selecting samples in proportion to the size of each subgroup within the population. By implementing this approach, the study ensured that each hostel's representation in the sample corresponded to its size in the overall population. With a total population of 2500 students residing in the hostels and a 7% level of significance, the sample size was computed to be 188 respondents.

2.2 Data Collection and Procedure

To effectively capture the distinctions of the research topic on antisocial behavior among youth, a comprehensive set of tools was developed, including questionnaires and interview guides. Initial groundwork involved visiting Punjab University hostels to gather essential information regarding the number of students per hostel. This information served as the basis for selecting respondents using the proportionate sampling technique. By stratifying the sample according to hostel size, the study aimed to achieve a balanced and representative sample. Data collection took place over a three-week period. In-person interviews were conducted with selected respondents, with each session lasting approximately 20 to 25 minutes. The

timing and duration of the interviews were carefully chosen to accommodate participants' schedules and ensure optimal data quality. Throughout the interviews, respondents' responses were recorded verbatim to capture data accurately.

2.3 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations played a pivotal role throughout the data collection process. Participants were provided with detailed information about the study's objectives and procedures, ensuring informed consent. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured to protect participants' privacy and foster open communication. Additionally, efforts were made to minimize any potential discomfort or inconvenience experienced by participants during the data collection phase.

2.4 Statistical Analysis

Quantitative data analysis was conducted using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences [SPSS] software. The chi-square test was employed to examine hypotheses and explore relationships between variables. This statistical approach enabled the study to discern significant associations and patterns within the data. Qualitative data analysis utilized domain analysis, a methodological framework for identifying overarching themes and patterns within qualitative data. By systematically categorizing and analyzing qualitative responses, the study gained deeper insights into participants' perceptions and experiences related to antisocial behavior among youth. This comprehensive approach facilitated a nuanced understanding of the research topic, enriching the study's findings and conclusions.

3. Results

3.1 Socio-demographic Characteristics

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents (N=188) are summarized in Table 1. The sample consisted of 48.4% (91) individuals aged 18-22 years and 51.6% (97) aged 23-26 years. In terms of discipline, 61.7% (116) were from Social Sciences, while 38.3% (72) were from Natural Sciences. Regarding their program, 57.6% (108) were pursuing a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree, and 42.6% (80) were enrolled in Master's programs. The majority of respondents were from urban areas (54.8%, 103) compared to rural areas (45.2%, 85). Regarding religious sects, 80.3% (151) identified as Sunni Muslims, while smaller proportions identified with Deoband (9.0%, 17), Ahla Hadees (4.8%, 9), Ahla Toshi (4.8%, 9), and other sects (1.1%, 2).

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents (N=188)

Age of respondents	Percentage
18-22 (years)	91(48.4%)
23-26 (years)	97(51.6%)
Discipline	
Social Sciences	116 (61.7%)
Natural Sciences	72(38.3%)
Program	
BS	108 (57.6%)
Master	80 (42.6%)
Area	
Urban	103(54.8%)
Rural	85 (45.2%)
Sect	
Sunni	151(80.3%)
Deoband	17 (9.0%)
Ahla Hadees	9(4.8%)
AhlaToshi	9(4.8%)
Others	2(1.1%)

Table 2. Respondent's satisfaction about hostels environment (N=188)

Sr. No.	Statements	Very Satisfied n(%)	Satisfied n(%)	Neutral n(%)	Dissatisfied n(%)	Very Dissatisfied n(%)
1	Satisfaction of hostel management	27 (14.4)	81(43.1)	32(17.0)	35(18.6)	13(6.9)
2	Self-dependency	30(16.0)	98(52.1)	46(24.5)	11 (5.9)	3 (1.6)
3	Use of Mobile	70(37.2)	63 (33.5)	42(22.3)	9 (4.8)	4 (2.1)
4	Rules and Regulations	21 (11.2)	66(35.1)	43(22.9)	39(20.7)	19(10.1)
5	Security System	20 (10.6)	60(31.9)	43(22.9)	42(22.3)	23(12.2)
6	Sense of Sharing	25 (13.3)	85(45.2)	56(29.8)	17(9.0)	5(2.7)
7	Calm and Peaceful environment	44(23.4)	86(45.7)	30(16.0)	14(7.4)	14(7.4)
8	Self-Responsibility	42(22.3)	85(45.2)	37(19.7)	20(10.6)	4(2.1)
9	Punctuality	27(14.4)	82 (43.6)	46(24.5)	24(12.8)	9(4.8)
10	Common bathrooms	22(11.7)	41(21.8)	39(20.7)	47(25.0)	39(20.7)
11	Security fees	22(11.7)	74(39.4)	56(29.8)	22(11.7)	14(7.4)
12	Quality of food	34(18.1)	88(46.8)	32(17.0)	21(11.2)	13(6.9)
13	Entertainment facility	33(17.6)	59(31.4)	29(15.4)	39(20.7)	28(14.9)
14	Freedom	73(38.8)	78(46.5)	18(9.6)	16(8.5)	3(1.6)
15	Restrictions	16(8.5)	57(30.3)	66(35.1)	33(17.6)	16(8.5)
16	Increase friend circle	46(24.5)	74(39.4)	45(23.9)	18(9.6)	5(2.7)
17	Behavior of warden	30(16.0)	69(36.7)	43(22.9)	24(12.8)	22(11.7)
18	Big common room	18(9.6)	51(27.1)	45(23.9)	42(22.3)	32(17.0)
19	Learns about different culture	46(24.5)	74(39.4)	34(18.1)	17(9.0)	17(9.0)
20	Social isolation	31(16.5)	66(35.1)	56(29.8)	25(13.3)	10(5.3)
21	Moral values	40(21.3)	79(42.0)	32(17.0)	21(11.2)	16(8.5)
22	Increase the Confidence	49(26.1)	92(48.5)	26(13.8)	14(7.4)	7(3.7)
23	Use of drugs	25(13.3)	28(14.9)	40(21.3)	45(23.9)	50(26.6)
24	Use of internet	61(32.4)	76(40.6)	29(15.4)	16(8.5)	6(3.2)
25	Ragging	22(11.7)	50(26.6)	56(29.8)	25(13.3)	35(18.6)

3.2 Hostel Environment Satisfaction

Table 2 presents respondents' satisfaction levels with various aspects of hostel environments. Overall, respondents reported varying levels of satisfaction. Notably, 43.1% expressed satisfaction with hostel management, while 52.1% were satisfied with their self-dependency. Satisfaction levels varied across amenities and regulations, with higher satisfaction reported for calm and peaceful environments (45.7%), self-responsibility (45.2%), and punctuality (43.6%). However, dissatisfaction was noted with common bathrooms (25.0%) and restrictions (35.1%).

3.3 Antisocial Behaviors

The prevalence of antisocial behaviors among respondents is detailed in Table 3 to 5. Table 3 outlines respondents' behaviors related to peer relations. The most common behaviors included making rude remarks (49.5%), joking about others (50.0%), and excluding others from activities (45.2%). However, fewer respondents reported behaviors such as encouraging fights (6.9%) and spreading rumors (47.3%).

Table 4 presents respondents' engagement in aggressive behaviors. Notably, the majority reported never engaging in behaviors such as physical fights (73.9%), threatening others (75.5%), or slapping/kicking someone (73.9%). However, teasing to make others angry (61.2%) and getting angry easily (46.8%) were more prevalent.

Table 3. Respondents' Behaviors Related to Peer Relations.

S. No.	In the past year at this school…	Never n(%)	Sometimes n(%)	Once or twice a month n(%)	Once a week n(%)	Several times a week n(%)	Everyday n(%)
1	Made rude remarks at a student	83(44.1)	93 (49.5)	7(3.7)	0	3(1.6)	2(1.1)
2	Got my friends to turn against a student	109(58.0)	61(32.4)	14(7.4)	1(0.5)	3(1.6)	0
3	Made jokes about a student	49(26.1)	94(50.0)	19(10.1)	8(4.3)	10(5.3)	8(4.3)
4	Crashed into a student on purpose as they walked	114(60.6)	46(24.5)	15(8.0)	6(3.2)	5(2.7)	2(1.1)
5	Picked on a student by swearing at them	113(60.1)	54(28.7)	14(7.4)	4(2.1)	1(0.5)	2(1.1)
6	Told my friends things about a student to get them into trouble	96(51.1)	57(30.3)	20(10.6)	8(4.3)	6(3.2)	1(0.5)
7	Said things about their looks they didn't like	64(43.0)	72(38.3)	31(16.5)	11(5.9)	7(3.7)	3(1.6)
8	Got other students to start a rumor about a student	89(47.30)	51(27.1)	27(14.4)	13(6.9)	6(3.2)	2(1.1)
9	Got other students to ignore a student	104(53.3)	51(27.1)	20(10.6)	8(4.3)	3(1.6)	2(1.1)
10	Threw something at a student to hit them	128(68.1)	30(16.0)	12(6.4)	11(5.9)	3(1.6)	4(2.1)
11	Left them out of activities or games on purpose	85(45.2)	60(31.9)	27(14.4)	8(4.3)	6(3.2)	2(1.1)
12	Kept a student away from me by giving them mean looks	103(54.8)	36(19.1)	25(13.3)	11(5.9)	10(5.3)	3(1.6)

Table 4. Aggression

S. No	Statements	0times n(%)	1times n(%)	2times n(%)	3times n(%)	4times n(%)	5times n(%)	6+times n(%)
1	I teased students to make them angry.	115(61.2)	31(16.5)	21(11.2)	6(3.2)	7(3.7)	3(1.6)	5(2.7)
2	I got angry very easily with someone.	88(46.8)	47(25.0)	25(13.3)	14(7.4)	5(2.7)	2(1.1)	7(3.7)
3	I fought back when someone hit me first.	119(63.3)	32(17.0)	19(10.1)	7(3.7)	2(1.1)	3(1.6)	6(3.2)
4	I said things about some students to make other students laugh.	70(37.2)	34(18.1)	28(14.9)	20(10.6)	14(7.4)	3(1.6)	19(10.1)
5	I encouraged other students to fight.	140(74.5)	14(7.4)	13(6.9)	10(5.3)	5(2.7)	5(2.7)	1(0.5)
6	I pushed or shoved other students.	127(67.6)	26(13.8)	11(5.9)	14(7.4)	6(3.2)	2(1.1)	2(1.1)
7	I was angry most of the day.	108(57.4)	30(16.0)	27(14.4)	11(5.9)	2(1.1)	0	10(5.3)
8	I got into a physical fight because I was angry.	139(73.9)	21(11.2)	14(7.4)	5(2.7)	4(2.1)	5(2.7)	0
9	I slapped or kicked someone.	139(73.9)	23(12.3)	10(5.3)	8(4.3)	6(3.2)	0	2(1.1)
10	I called other students bad names.	114(60.6)	24(12.8)	22(11.7)	16(8.5)	2(1.1)	2(1.1)	8(4.3)
11	I threatened to hurt or to hit someone.	142(75.5)	15(8.0)	14(7.4)	8(4.3)	3(1.6)	4(2.1)	2(1.1)

Table 5. Exposure to Violence

S. No	At university, how often have you seen other beings	Never n(%)	Once n(%)	Sometimes n(%)	Often n(%)
1	Hit by a student.	127(67.6)	22(11.7)	31(16.5)	8(4.3)
2	Hit by staff.	138(73.4)	31(16.5)	14(7.4)	5(2.7)
3	Kicked or pushed by a student.	125(66.5)	30(16.0)	29(15.4)	4(2.1)
4	Kicked or pushed by university staff.	142(75.5)	24(12.8)	17(9.0)	5(2.7)
5	Badly beaten up.	143(76.1)	24(12.8)	19(10.1)	2(1.1)
6	Threatened with a knife or sharp weapon.	158(84.0)	19(10.1)	6(3.2)	5(2.7)
7	Attacked with a knife or sharp weapon.	157(83.5)	16(8.5)	13(6.9)	2(1.10
8	Threatened with a gun.	153(81.4)	21(11.2)	8(4.3)	6(3.2)
9	Verbally or emotionally abused by a student that is, being called names or having things said to you that make you feel bad about yourself or afraid.	120(63.8)	28(14.9)	28(14.9)	12(6.4)
10	Verbally or emotionally abused by university staff.	129(68.6)	30(16.0)	19(10.0)	10(5.3)
11	Sexually harassed by a student.	158(84.0)	14(7.4)	14(7.4)	2(1.1)
12	Sexually harassed by school staff.	159(84.6)	12(6.4)	12(6.4)	5(2.7)
13	Sexually assaulted.	167(88.8)	10(5.3)	9(4.8)	2(1.1)
14	Robbed.	140(74.5)	26(13.8)	11(5.9)	11(5.9)
15	In a fight after drinking or getting high.	156(83.0)	20(10.6)	9(4.8)	3(1.6)

Figure 2. shows respondents' experiences of harassment. While most reported never experiencing harassment, significant proportions reported incidents such as spreading rumors (65.4%) or being verbally abused (63.3%).
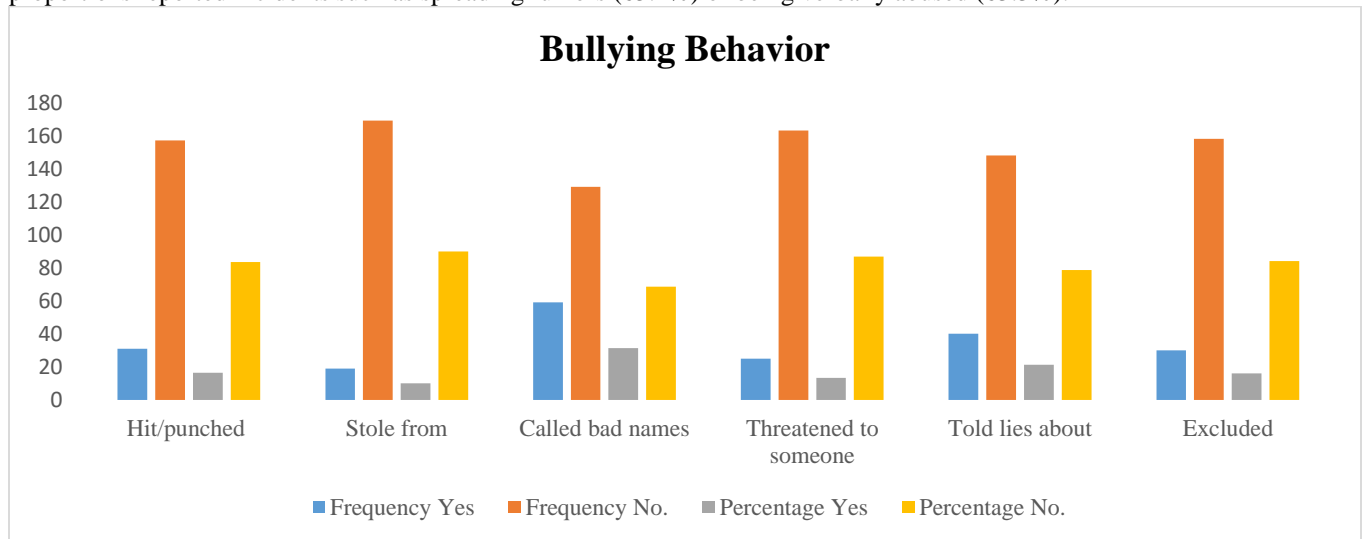

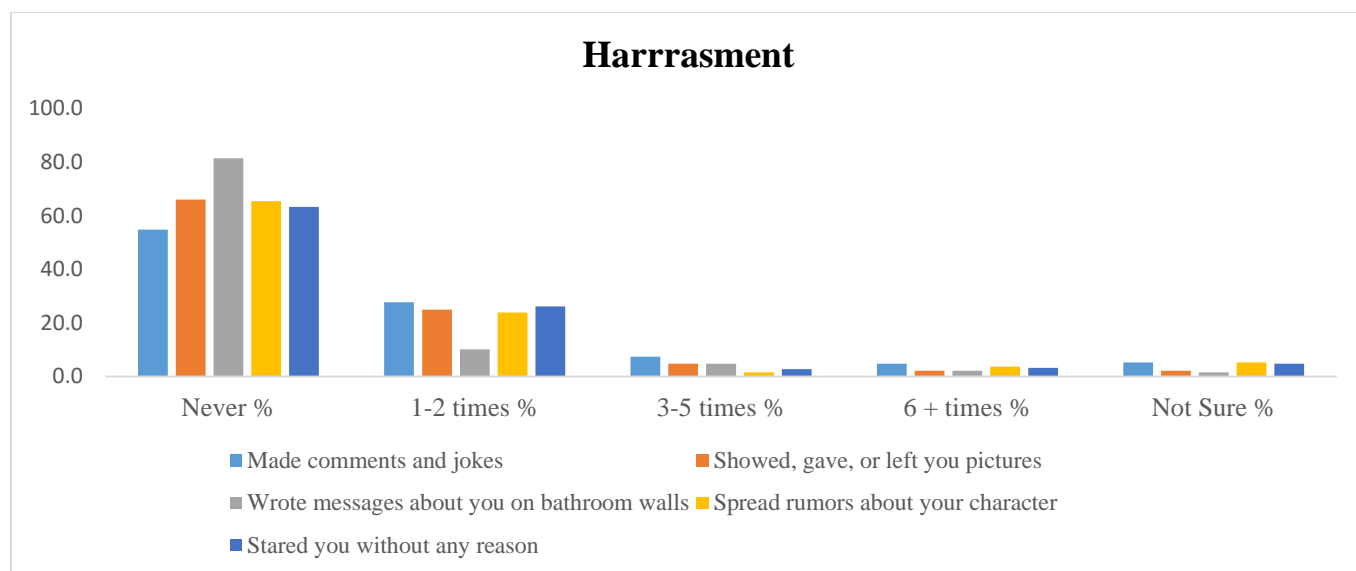Table 5 illustrates respondents' exposure to violence. While most reported never being exposed to violence, significant proportions reported witnessing peers being hit (16.5%) or threatened with weapons (84.0%).

3.4 Association between Hostel Environment and Antisocial Behaviors
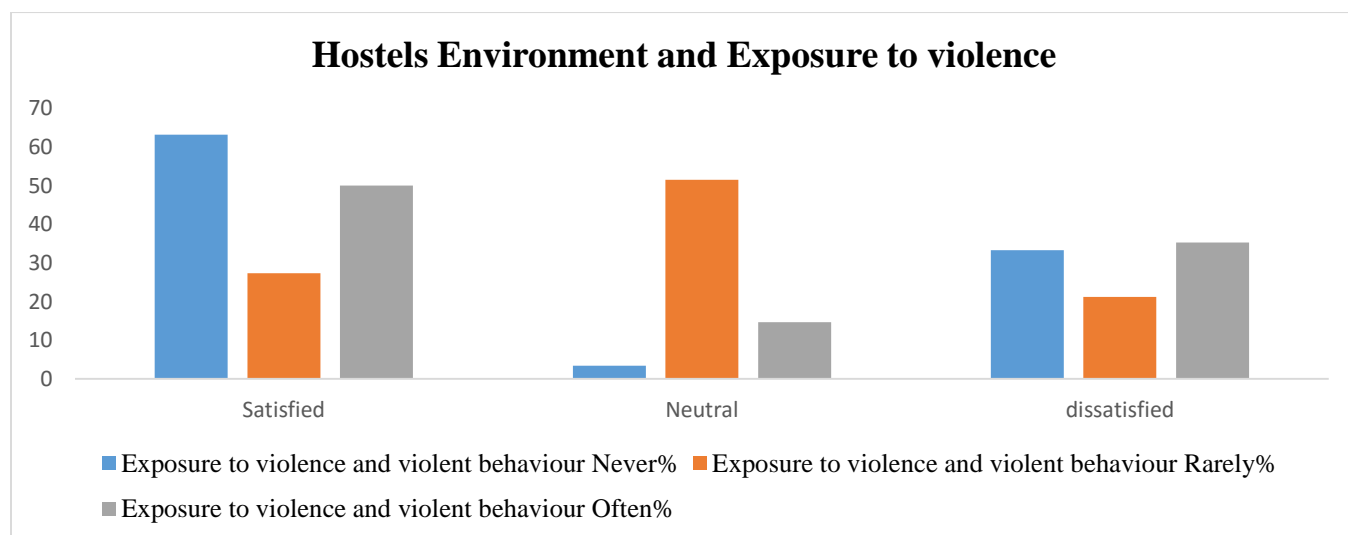
Figure 3 to 5 explore the relationship between respondents' satisfaction with the hostel environment and their involvement in antisocial behaviors, including exposure to violence, bullying, aggression and harassment. Significant associations were found between hostel environment satisfaction, and exposure to violence ($p=0.000$) Figure 3,

bullying ($p=0.000$), and harassment ($p=0.154$) Figure 4, indicating that higher levels of satisfaction were associated with reduced incidences of these behaviors. However, no significant association was observed between hostel environment satisfaction and aggression ($p=0.185$) Figure 5.
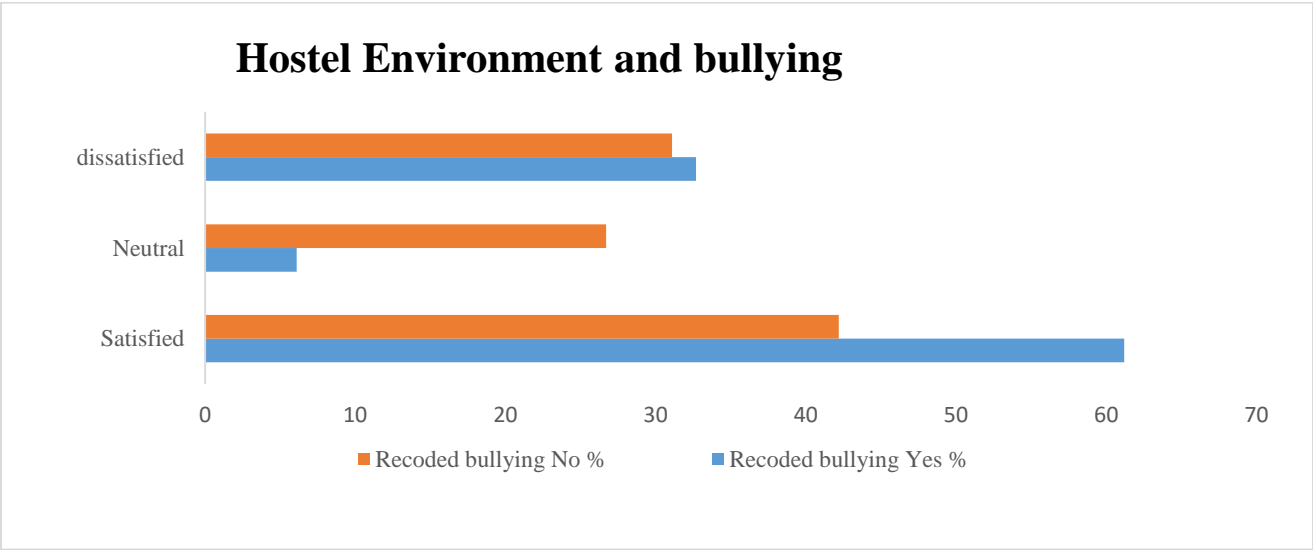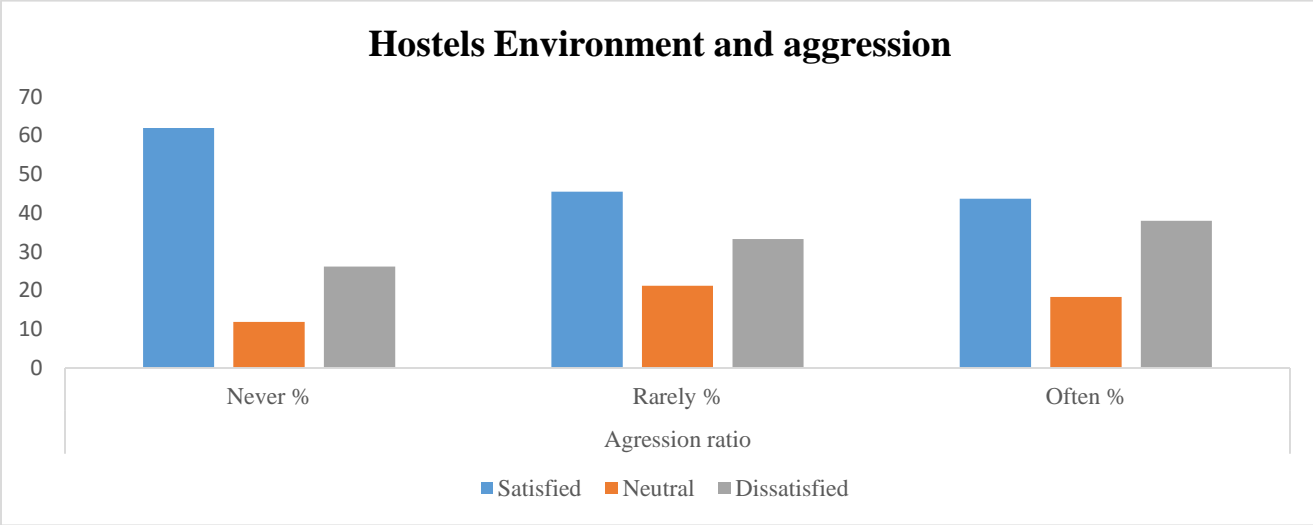
Figure 2. experience of harassment

Figure 3. Hostel environment and exposure to violence

Figure 4. Hostel Environment and bullying

Hostel Environment and bullying

Legend:
■ Recoded bullying No %   ■ Recoded bullying Yes %

Categories (y-axis): dissatisfied, Neutral, Satisfied
X-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70

Figure 5. Hostel environment and aggression

Hostels Environment and aggression

X-axis: Never %, Rarely %, Often %
Agression ratio
Legend: ■ Satisfied ■ Neutral ■ Dissatisfied

4. Discussion

The hostel environment significantly influences students' overall college experience, affecting their academic performance, personal development, and social interactions. Satisfaction with hostel facilities and management is crucial for students' well-being and success. Understanding socio-demographic factors such as age, discipline, program level, and background is essential for addressing diverse needs. Differences in urban and rural backgrounds and religious affiliations can impact expectations and satisfaction with hostel environments [16]. Antisocial behaviors, including bullying, aggression, and harassment, are common in hostel settings and can negatively affect students' mental health and academic performance [18,19]. A supportive hostel environment

may reduce the incidence of such behaviors, fostering a more conducive atmosphere for growth. Despite extensive research on student life, the direct relationship between hostel satisfaction and antisocial behaviors remains underexplored. This study aims to examine this association among university students. A key takeaway from our study is the critical role of hostel management and security systems in shaping positive student experiences. Ensuring the safety and well-being of students is paramount, and our findings underscore the importance of robust security measures, efficient management practices, and clear communication of rules and regulations. However, our study also highlights the need to address specific areas of concern, such as the adequacy of common bathroom facilities and the behavior of wardens, which can significantly impact student satisfaction and well-being. When comparing these findings with previous literature, it becomes clear that certain themes are consistently emphasized, while new dimensions are also brought to light.

Prior research has highlighted the critical role of hostel management and security systems in shaping student experiences. Our study aligns with this literature, demonstrating high levels of satisfaction among students regarding these aspects. This consistency underscores the importance of safety and administrative support in fostering positive hostel environments. For instance, Williams et al. 2016 found that efficient hostel management and robust security measures are fundamental to student satisfaction, a sentiment echoed in our study [20]. However, our findings also reveal areas of concern, particularly regarding rules and regulations, common bathrooms, and the behavior of wardens. While these issues have been documented in prior research, our study provides significant insights into their prevalence and impact on student satisfaction. Adhikary et al. 2021 and Maillet et al. 2023 noted that overly strict or poorly communicated rules can lead to dissatisfaction and stress among students, a finding that our study validates [21,22]. Addressing these concerns is essential for enhancing the overall quality of hostel living and promoting student well-being.

Similarly, peer aggression and bullying within hostel settings have been well-documented in the literature. Our study confirms these findings, highlighting the prevalence of verbal abuse, physical violence, and exclusionary behaviors among students. Espelage in 2018, emphasized the detrimental effects of such behaviors on mental health and academic performance, which our findings support [22,23]. This consistency underscores the need for proactive measures to promote positive peer relations and conflict resolution strategies within hostel communities.

Our study highlights the pervasive nature of violence and harassment within hostel environments, echoing previous research on campus safety and sexual misconduct. Hoxmeier et al. 2023 and Acquaviva et al. [2018] have discussed the alarming rates of such incidents and their profound impact on student well-being [24,25]. Our findings align with these studies, emphasizing the necessity of comprehensive prevention strategies and victim support services. By understanding these experiences within the broader socio-cultural and institutional landscape, our study contributes to a more significant understanding of the complex dynamics shaping student experiences within hostel settings.

Previous research has also explored the relationship between environmental factors in hostels and academic engagement. Our study's findings on the influence of room conditions, access to study areas, and overall hostel infrastructure on academic performance resonate with existing literature. For instance, studies by Okoree et al. 2020 and Stahl in 2021 have highlighted that conducive living conditions are critical for academic success, a finding mirrored in our study [26,27]. Enhancing these aspects of hostel environments can therefore play a significant role in boosting academic engagement and performance.

The impact of hostel living on mental health is another critical area explored in prior research. Our findings that stressors such as poor hygiene, inadequate facilities, and interpersonal conflicts contribute to mental health issues align with the work of Lou et al. reported in 2023 [28]. Addressing these stressors through improved facilities and support systems is crucial for promoting mental health and overall well-being among hostel residents.

Study Limitations

Despite the valuable insights provided by this study, several limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, the cross-sectional design restricts our ability to infer causality or temporal relationships between variables. Longitudinal studies are needed to explore the dynamic nature of hostel environments and their impact on student outcomes over time. Additionally, the reliance on self-report measures may introduce biases such as social desirability or recall errors. Future research could benefit from multi-method approaches and objective measures to enhance the validity and reliability of findings.

5. Conclusion

This study contributes to our understanding of hostel environments and their influence on student well-being and academic engagement. By identifying areas of satisfaction, concern, and potential intervention, our findings provide valuable insights for university administrators, policymakers, and other stakeholders. Addressing the challenges within hostel settings requires a multi-faceted approach that prioritizes safety, inclusivity, and student support. Peer aggression and bullying remain significant challenges within hostel environments, and our

findings emphasize the need for proactive measures to promote positive peer relations and address conflict effectively. By raising a supportive and inclusive community, universities can mitigate the negative impact of these behaviors on student mental health and academic performance. Furthermore, the pervasive nature of violence and harassment within hostel settings calls for comprehensive prevention strategies and robust support services for victims. Environmental factors, including room conditions and access to study areas, play a crucial role in academic engagement and performance. Our findings echo existing literature, emphasizing the importance of conducive living conditions for academic success. Addressing these factors through improved facilities and infrastructure can enhance student satisfaction and academic outcomes. Finally, the impact of hostel living on mental health cannot be overlooked. Our study highlights the need to address stressors such as poor hygiene, inadequate facilities, and interpersonal conflicts to promote mental health and overall well-being among hostel residents.

Implications and Recommendations

Universities should prioritize safety by implementing comprehensive strategies to address peer aggression, violence, and harassment. This includes training staff and students on conflict resolution, bystander intervention, and campus safety protocols. Increased collaboration between university administrations, student organizations, and community stakeholders is essential. Partnerships can enhance the support network available to students and foster a more supportive and inclusive campus environment. In addition, efforts to improve hostel facilities and amenities should be informed by student feedback. Regular surveys, focus groups, and consultations can help universities identify and address specific needs. Clear policies regarding acceptable behavior, conflict resolution, and disciplinary actions are also essential. Regular training and workshops can reinforce the importance of these policies and encourage compliance. Furthermore, continuous monitoring and evaluation of hostel environments and the effectiveness of interventions are necessary. Regular assessment and feedback mechanisms allow for ongoing improvements and adjustments.

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