

# A Study on the Impact of Hostel Life on Physical and Psychological Well-Being of College Students in Coimbatore City

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2026.13020087>

Received: 15 February 2026; Accepted: 20 February 2026; Published: 05 March 2026

## ABSTRACT

Hostel life plays a significant role in shaping the physical health, emotional stability, and overall well-being of college students. For many students, staying in a hostel is the first experience of living away from family, which brings both independence and challenges. Factors such as food quality, sleep patterns, academic environment, safety, peer interaction, and emotional support directly influence students' physical and psychological health. This study aims to analyse the impact of hostel life on the physical and psychological well-being of college students in Coimbatore City. The research is based on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire from students residing in college and private hostels. Percentage analysis has been used to interpret the collected data. The study highlights key issues faced by hostel students, including stress, health problems, sleep disturbances, and emotional challenges, while also identifying positive aspects such as peer support and independence. The findings of this study may help educational institutions and hostel authorities to improve hostel facilities and create a healthier living environment for students.

**Keywords**-Hostel Life, Physical Health, Psychological Well-Being, College Students, Stress.

## INTRODUCTION

College life marks an important transition period in a student's life, where academic responsibilities increase along with personal and social development. For a large number of students, this phase also includes hostel living, which becomes an integral part of their daily routine. Hostel life offers students exposure to independence, peer interaction, and time management, but at the same time, it may also create physical and psychological challenges.

Living in a hostel involves adapting to shared spaces, fixed routines, unfamiliar food habits, and limited personal privacy. Students often experience changes in sleep patterns, eating habits, and physical activity after joining a hostel. These changes may have a direct impact on their physical health, leading to issues such as fatigue, headaches, and reduced immunity. In addition, emotional factors such as homesickness, academic pressure, loneliness, and lack of family support can affect students' psychological well-being.

Psychological well-being is an essential component of a student's overall development, as it influences academic performance, social relationships, and self-confidence. Hostel environments that lack proper facilities, safety, communication access, and emotional support may increase stress levels among students. On the other hand, a supportive hostel environment with good facilities and healthy peer interaction can positively contribute to students' mental health and personal growth.

In recent years, especially after the COVID-19 period, the importance of physical and mental health among students has gained greater attention. Many students returning to hostels after prolonged home stays faced adjustment difficulties, making hostel life an important area of study. Therefore, understanding the impact of

hostel life on the physical and psychological well-being of college students has become necessary to ensure a balanced and healthy academic environment.

### **Research Objectives**

- To examine how hostel living conditions influence the academic performance of college students.
- To assess students' level of satisfaction with hostel safety, communication facilities, and study-related amenities.
- To analyze the role of family support and peer interactions in shaping students' health, well-being, and college life.
- To analyse how hostel life affects students' physical and psychological well-being.

### **Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study focuses on understanding the physical and psychological well-being of college students residing in hostels within Coimbatore City. The study considers students staying in college hostels, private hostels, and other similar accommodations. It covers various aspects such as food quality, sleep patterns, health issues, emotional stress, safety, communication facilities, peer interaction, and academic influence.

The study is limited to college students and does not include school students or working professionals. The findings of the study are based on the responses provided by the students and are subject to their personal opinions and experiences. Despite these limitations, the study provides useful insights into hostel life and highlights areas that require improvement for better student well-being.

### **Statement of The Problem**

Hostel life is an unavoidable experience for many college students, especially those who pursue higher education away from their hometowns. While hostels provide accommodation and basic facilities, students often face challenges related to physical health, emotional stress, and adjustment issues. Irregular food habits, lack of proper sleep, shared living spaces, academic pressure, and limited personal freedom may negatively affect students' health and mental peace.

Many hostels lack adequate study facilities, proper safety measures, and reliable communication networks, which can further increase stress levels among students. Homesickness, loneliness, and lack of emotional support from family members may also lead to psychological issues such as anxiety and reduced concentration. If these problems are not addressed, they may affect students' academic performance and overall quality of life.

Hence, it becomes necessary to study the impact of hostel life on the physical and psychological well-being of college students. This study attempts to identify the major issues faced by hostel students and analyse how hostel living conditions influence their health and emotional stability.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Several studies have been conducted on student well-being and living conditions in educational institutions. Previous research highlights that hostel environments play a crucial role in shaping students' physical health and mental state. Studies indicate that factors such as food quality, sleep duration, and hygiene have a strong influence on students' physical well-being.

Research on psychological health among hostel students reveals that stress, homesickness, and peer pressure are common challenges faced by students living away from home. Some studies suggest that strong peer support and positive social interaction in hostels can reduce stress levels and improve emotional health. Other studies

emphasize the importance of safety, communication facilities, and counselling support in hostels to promote mental well-being.

The existing literature shows that while hostel life offers independence and social exposure, it also creates physical and psychological challenges that need to be managed effectively. However, limited studies focus specifically on hostel students in Coimbatore City. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by analysing the impact of hostel life on students' physical and psychological well-being in the selected area.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data is collected through a structured questionnaire designed to understand students' physical health, psychological well-being, hostel facilities, and overall living experience. The questionnaire includes multiple-choice questions and opinion-based questions.

Secondary data is collected from journals, articles, research papers, and online sources related to hostel life and student well-being. The sample consists of college students staying in hostels in Coimbatore City. Percentage analysis is used as the main statistical tool for analysing and interpreting the collected data.

### Gender of the Respondents

| Gender | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--------|--------------------|----------------|
| Male   | 68                 | 56.67          |
| Female | 50                 | 41.67          |
| Others | 2                  | 1.66           |
| Total  | 120                | 100            |

### Interpretation

The above table shows that **56.67%** of the respondents are male, **41.67%** are female, and **1.66%** belong to others. This indicates that the majority of hostel residents in the study are male students.

### Age of the Respondents

| Age Group | No.of. Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|-----------|--------------------|----------------|
| Below 18  | 10                 | 8.33           |
| 18 - 20   | 46                 | 38.34          |
| 21-23     | 50                 | 41.67          |
| Above 23  | 14                 | 11.66          |
| Total     | 120                | 100            |

### Interpretation

It is observed that **41.67%** of the respondents belong to the age group of **21–23**, followed by **38.34%** in the age group of **18–20**. This shows that hostel life is more common among students in their early twenties.

### Course of the Respondents

| Course        | No. of. Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Undergraduate | 78                  | 65.00          |
| Postgraduate  | 34                  | 28.33          |
| other         | 8                   | 6.67           |
| Total         | 120                 | 100            |

#### Interpretation

The table reveals that **65%** of the respondents are undergraduate students, while **28.33%** are postgraduates. This indicates that hostel accommodation is widely used by undergraduate students.

### Current Place of Stay

| Place of Stay  | No. of. Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|----------------|---------------------|----------------|
| College hostel | 54                  | 45.00          |
| Private hostel | 42                  | 35.00          |
| Rental Room    | 18                  | 15.00          |
| other          | 6                   | 5.00           |
| Total          | 120                 | 100            |

#### Interpretation

The above table shows that **45%** of the respondents stay in college hostels, followed by **35%** in private hostels. This highlights the preference for institutional hostel facilities among students.

### Duration of Stay in Hostel

| Duration           | No. of. Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Less than 6 months | 20                  | 16.67          |
| 6 months - 1 year  | 34                  | 28.33          |
| 1-2 years          | 38                  | 31.67          |
| More than 2 years  | 28                  | 23.33          |
| Total              | 120                 | 100            |

#### Interpretation

It is clear that **31.67%** of the respondents have stayed in hostels for **1–2 years**, indicating prolonged exposure to hostel life and its effects.

### Effect of Hostel Living Conditions on Academic Work

| Response                     | No. of. Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Helps me study better        | 34                  | 28.33          |
| Sometimes affects my studies | 48                  | 40.00          |
| Makes studying difficult     | 26                  | 21.67          |
| No effect                    | 12                  | 10.00          |
| Total                        | 120                 | 100            |

#### Interpretation

The table indicates that **40%** of the respondents feel that hostel conditions sometimes affect their studies, while **21.67%** find it difficult to study in hostel environments.

### Main Difficulty Faced While Studying in Hostel

| Difficulty              | No. of. Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Noise and Disturbance   | 44                  | 36.67          |
| Lack of study space     | 30                  | 25.00          |
| Poor lighting/furniture | 18                  | 15.00          |
| No major difficulty     | 28                  | 23.33          |
| Total                   | 120                 | 100            |

#### Interpretation

Noise and disturbances are identified as the major difficulty by **36.67%** of the respondents, which negatively affects concentration and academic performance.

### Physical Health After Joining Hostel

| Health status | No. of. Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Improved      | 28                  | 23.33          |
| No change     | 42                  | 35.00          |
| Worsened      | 50                  | 41.67          |
| Total         | 120                 | 100            |

#### Interpretation

It is observed that **41.67%** of the respondents feel their physical health has worsened after joining the hostel, indicating the need for better health-related facilities.

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## FINDINGS

Based on the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from hostel students in Coimbatore City, the following findings have been identified using simple percentage analysis:

- Majority of the respondents are **male students**, indicating higher hostel usage among males.
- Most of the respondents belong to the **age group of 21–23 years**, showing that hostel life is common during the core college period.
- A large proportion of hostel residents are **undergraduate students**, followed by postgraduates.
- Majority of the students are staying in **college hostels**, indicating preference for institutional accommodation.
- Most respondents have stayed in hostels for **more than one year**, indicating long-term exposure to hostel living conditions.
- Hostel living conditions **sometimes affect academic performance** for a significant number of students.
- **Noise and disturbances** are identified as the major difficulty faced while studying in hostels.
- A considerable percentage of students reported that their **physical health has worsened** after joining the hostel.
- Many students experience **stress and emotional pressure**, highlighting psychological challenges associated with hostel life.
- Though most students feel **safe or mostly safe**, some still experience safety concerns within hostel premises.

## Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are offered to improve hostel facilities and enhance students' physical and psychological well-being:

- Hostel authorities should ensure **nutritious and hygienic food**, as food quality directly affects students' health.
- Proper **study facilities**, including silent study areas and adequate lighting, should be provided to improve academic performance.
- Measures should be taken to reduce **noise and disturbances**, especially during study hours.
- Regular **health check-ups and medical support** should be arranged for hostel students.
- Psychological counselling and mentoring programs can help students manage **stress, homesickness, and emotional issues**.
- Improved **safety and security arrangements**, such as surveillance and proper supervision, should be ensured.
- Reliable **Wi-Fi and communication facilities** should be provided to help students stay connected with family and access academic resources.

- Hostel authorities should encourage **positive peer interaction** through cultural and recreational activities to improve emotional well-being.

## CONCLUSION

Hostel life plays a vital role in shaping the physical and psychological well-being of college students. While hostel living offers independence, social exposure, and personal growth, it also presents challenges such as health issues, stress, academic disturbances, and emotional difficulties. The findings of the study reveal that many students experience physical discomfort and psychological stress due to hostel living conditions.

The study highlights the need for improved hostel facilities, better health care, emotional support systems, and a student-friendly environment. By addressing these issues, hostel authorities and educational institutions can create a healthier and more supportive living atmosphere for students. Overall, hostel life can become a positive and enriching experience if adequate attention is given to students' physical and psychological well-being.

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