

Original Article

Students' Feedback on Boarding House Services and Its Policy Implications

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Abstract. This study examined students' satisfaction levels living in boarding houses in a state university in Ifugao, Philippines, to determine whether current student housing conditions meet basic and environmental needs. Using a descriptive-correlational quantitative design, data were collected from 299 student boarders across four sitios via a structured questionnaire adapted from prior research. Guided by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Ecological Psychology, the study explored how socioeconomic and environmental factors influence student satisfaction. Results show that students are moderately satisfied with safety, cleanliness, and the proximity of the boarding houses to the campus. However, they express dissatisfaction with limited internet access, a lack of social activities, and poor fire safety measures. Students living in boarding houses with fire safety features—such as fire exits and fire extinguishers—report higher satisfaction than those without such features. Demographic factors, including age, sex, ethnicity, and income, do not significantly affect satisfaction levels. A limitation of the study is that it was conducted only among student boarders in Barangay Nayon, Lamut, Ifugao, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other universities and geographic settings. Future studies may include multiple institutions and employ mixed-method or longitudinal approaches to gain a deeper understanding of student housing experiences and satisfaction over time. The study concludes that improving housing facilities, especially in fire safety and connectivity, and strengthening collaboration among the university, local government, and boarding house owners are essential for supporting student welfare and creating better living environments.

Keywords: *Student satisfaction; Living conditions; Residential safety; Student housing.*

The demand for accessible and affordable student housing continues to rise globally, making boarding houses an essential part of many students' educational experience. UNESCO (2020) reports that a large share of university students rely on such accommodations, especially those who travel far from home to pursue higher education. Similar patterns are observed in countries such as the United States and Australia, where boarding facilities help meet the growing housing needs of college students (Private School Universe Survey, 2021; Independent Boarding National Perspective, 2020).

In the Philippines, increasing tertiary enrollment has intensified the need for student housing near colleges and universities (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2023). Students who relocate to study often face major adjustments, including living independently, managing finances, and adapting to new social environments. Boarding houses are, therefore, practical options due to their affordability and accessibility. These facilities typically offer shared or private rooms and common spaces that support basic daily needs (Najib et al., 2011). At the same time, students bring with them varied socioeconomic backgrounds, and socioeconomic status (SES) shapes both opportunities and lived experiences (American Psychological Association, 2017).

Several studies emphasize that life in a boarding house exposes students to diverse cultures, values, and SES conditions, which influence their level of comfort and adjustment. Research shows that socioeconomic factors affect satisfaction with student housing, shaping feelings of belonging, access to resources, and their ability to blend into a diverse environment (Najib et al., 2011). Social characteristics, such as gender, social role, and age, also affect residential satisfaction, along with physical factors, such as room quality and building amenities (Lawrence et al., 2018). These findings highlight that housing satisfaction is determined not only by physical attributes but also by social and economic factors.

The quality of student housing has substantial implications for students' well-being, academic performance, and sense of belonging (Blimling, 1999). Adequate facilities and a positive living environment support students' psychological and social development, whereas poor housing conditions can lead to dissatisfaction, stress, and adverse academic outcomes. International studies also show that inadequate facilities—such as poor sanitation, overcrowding, or insufficient security—lead to dissatisfaction among residents (Ajayi et al., 2015). Housing quality is increasingly recognized as a social determinant of health and overall well-being (Morrison et al., 2025).

In the Philippines, however, many boarding houses are privately owned, resulting in inconsistent living standards. Previous reports show that some boarding houses operate without clear rules, policies, or compliance with basic facility requirements (Reyes, 2016). National and local regulations, such as Senate Bill No. 1113 and the National Building Code, aim to set minimum standards, but issues of enforcement and safety remain. Despite efforts by some universities to provide on-campus housing, the supply remains insufficient, leaving many students with no option but to rent off-campus, often choosing affordability over comfort (Velasquez-Garcia&Garcia, 2016; Carroll, 2024).

At Ifugao State University (IFSU), student enrollment continues to rise, increasing the demand for temporary housing in nearby communities. Although the Local Government Unit of Lamut has enacted regulations to oversee boarding houses, concerns persist regarding safety, facility quality, and compliance. A recent local assessment even identified student housing as one of the areas with the lowest satisfaction rating, suggesting that existing accommodations may not fully meet students' social, psychological, and academic needs (Balog et al., 2024). This situation underscores the importance of understanding how socioeconomic and environmental factors shape students' boarding-house experiences, especially in rural settings where resources may differ from those in urban areas.

Previous studies have explored student residential satisfaction, but most focus on physical amenities or urban institutions. Few studies examine how socioeconomic status, environmental conditions, and safety concerns influence student satisfaction in rural universities like IFSU. There is also limited research involving indigenous or minority student populations, who may experience unique challenges. This gap underscores the need for localized, evidence-based insights to guide housing improvements in rural higher education institutions.

This study is anchored on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Ecological Psychology. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs explains that individuals seek to satisfy basic physiological and safety needs before achieving higher levels of well-being and personal development. In the context of student housing, boarding house conditions such as cleanliness, safety, study spaces, and access to basic services directly influence students' comfort, security, and overall satisfaction. Ecological Psychology, on the other hand, emphasizes the interaction between individuals and their physical and social environments. The theory suggests that students' experiences and behaviors are shaped by environmental factors such as neighborhood conditions, social interactions, facility accessibility, and surrounding physical conditions. These theories are complementary in explaining student satisfaction with boarding house services. Maslow's theory provides the motivational basis for students' housing needs, while Ecological Psychology explains how environmental conditions influence students'

perceptions, adjustment, and satisfaction. Together, they support the study's conceptualization by linking students' needs, environmental conditions, and satisfaction with boarding house services.

To address this gap, the present study investigates the level of satisfaction and the problems encountered by student boarders in Barangay Nayon, Lamut, Ifugao. Guided by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Ecological Psychology, the study examines how socioeconomic background and environmental conditions shape students' housing experiences. Specifically, the study examined: the level of students' satisfaction with boarding house services; the challenges encountered by students in boarding houses; and whether demographic factors significantly influence students' satisfaction. The findings aim to help students better understand how their circumstances influence their living conditions, assist boarding house owners in tailoring services to student needs, inform university administrators in designing support programs, guide the Local Government Unit in improving policies, and provide valuable references for future researchers.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational quantitative research design to examine students' satisfaction with student housing in Barangay Nayon, Lamut, Ifugao. The descriptive component was used to summarize and present the students' satisfaction levels and the conditions of their boarding houses. The correlational component was used to examine the relationships among housing services, satisfaction levels, and selected demographic variables. No variables were manipulated, and the design allowed the researchers to assess naturally occurring conditions and perceptions among student boarders.

This research design was considered appropriate because the study sought to describe students' satisfaction with boarding house services and to examine the relationships among satisfaction, housing conditions, and selected demographic variables, without manipulating any factors. The descriptive component enabled the researchers to provide a comprehensive picture of students' boarding house experiences, while the correlational component allowed them to identify possible associations among variables. Thus, the design was well-suited to generating evidence-based insights to inform housing improvements and policy development for student welfare.

Research Participants and Locale

The study was conducted in Barangay Nayon, Lamut, Ifugao, where Ifugao State University–Lamut (Main Campus) is located. IFSU is the only state university in the province and is an ISO 9001:2015–certified institution with six satellite campuses. Barangay Nayon was selected because it contains the highest concentration of student boarding houses. According to the University Registrar's report (IFSU, 2024), there were 5,691 students enrolled during the First Semester of the Academic Year 2024–2025. Respondents were not limited to specific programs but were required to meet the following criteria: (1) currently enrolled at Ifugao State University–Main Campus, (2) residing in a boarding house, (3) belonging to an ethnic group, and (4) living in a boarding house located within Barangay Nayon. Using random sampling across the four sitios—Centro, Lower Halog, Bunog, and Paccu—a sample of 299 students was selected using Slovin's formula to ensure adequate representation.

Research Instruments

A structured survey questionnaire served as the primary data collection instrument. The tool was adapted from Nobis (2022). The questionnaire had three major parts: (1) socio-demographic profile including sex, age, ethnicity, and income; (2) five dimensions of boarding house conditions—Student Living Conditions (15 items), Community Facilities and Services (15 items), Neighboring Physical Surroundings (15 items), Student Social Activities (14 items), and Student Preferences (15 items); and (3) fifteen items on problems encountered in boarding houses. The instrument underwent pilot testing in Lagawe, Ifugao, near the IFSU–Lagawe Campus. Reliability results indicated strong internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.937. The mean ($X = 36.27$), standard deviation ($SD = 7.86$), and variance (61.72) confirmed that the instrument was reliable and suitable for actual data collection.

Data Gathering Procedure

After securing approval from the research adviser and panel, an endorsement signed by the college dean and

the Director of the Department of Student Services and Development was submitted to the Campus Executive Director for permission to conduct the study. Following pilot testing, the researchers obtained formal approval from the Barangay Local Government Unit of Nayon. Because BLGU records were outdated, the researchers conducted house-to-house visits to verify boarding house locations and obtain updated lists from owners and caretakers. Respondent allocation per sitio was computed using Slovin's formula. Data collection began with on-site administration of questionnaires in each sitio and within the university campus. Students were approached, screened based on the inclusion criteria, and invited to participate.

Data Analysis

Data were processed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize respondents' demographic profiles and satisfaction levels. A four-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree to Agree Strongly) was used to interpret responses for satisfaction-related items. Inferential statistics were also employed. Independent-samples t-tests were used to determine differences in satisfaction levels across demographic groups. If the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were not met, the Mann-Whitney U test served as the nonparametric alternative. Pearson's correlation and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to measure relationships between satisfaction levels and problems encountered in boarding houses. The significance level for all tests was set at 0.05.

Ethical Considerations

The researchers upheld all ethical principles throughout the study in accordance with institutional research guidelines. Participants were informed about the purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits of the study, and written informed consent was obtained before data collection. They were assured that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality was strictly maintained by securing completed questionnaires, removing identifying information, and storing data in password-protected files. All collected data will be disposed of properly upon completion of the study.

Results and Discussion

Profile of the Participants

Table 1. Location of Boarding House, Frequency, and Percent Distribution of Respondents' Profile

Profile Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Sitio's		
Centro	224	74.91%
Lower Halog	23	7.69%
Bunog	47	15.72%
Paccu	5	1.67%
Age		
17-19	91	30.40%
20-22	164	54.80%
23-25	42	14.00%
26-28	2	0.70%
Sex		
Male	92	30.80%
Female	207	69.20%
Ethnicity		
Tuwali	174	58.20%
Ayangan	67	22.40%
Kankanaey	9	3.00%
Kalanguya	33	11.00%
Ilokano	10	3.30%
Others	6	2.10%
Family Income (PhP)		
Below 10,957	169	56.50%
10,957 - 21,914	82	27.40%
21,914 - 43,828	39	13.00%
43,828 - 76,669	5	1.70%
76,669 - 131,484	3	1.00%
131,484 - 219,140	0	0.00%
219,140 and above	1	0.30%

Table 1 presents the sociodemographic profile of the student respondents residing in a boarding house near Ifugao State University-Lamut Campus in Barangay Nayon, Ifugao. By understanding their sociodemographic profile, we can contextualize why their satisfaction levels and problems encountered may vary depending on their needs, preferences, and priorities. In this way, the sociodemographic profile offers insight into the shared and differing expectations, which is essential for tailoring services to meet their needs effectively and improve overall satisfaction. The table shows that most students are between 20 and 22, comprising 54.8% of the total respondents, while those aged 26 to 28 account for only 0.7% of the group. In terms of age distribution, most boarders are young adults and undergraduate students, all within the typical college-age range. We can also conclude that, in general, they have similar needs and expectations regarding housing services.

In addition, most respondents are female ($f=207$, 69.2%), indicating a clear predominance of female participation ($f=92$, 30.8%). Various sociocultural, educational, and geographic factors contribute to this unequal representation. In contrast, female students who opt to stay in boarding houses because daily travel is dangerous, while male students commute daily or use motorcycle services to get home. Females tend to participate more actively in academic and survey research, especially in fields such as education, health, and social science. Female students have also been observed to exhibit higher survey participation, possibly due to greater interest in educational settings (Bryman, 2016). Sax et al. (2003) also found similar results in their large-scale survey of over 4,000 college students, in which 72% of female students completed the study compared to only 59% of male students, resulting in a 13% higher participation rate among females. The authors noted that female students are generally more cooperative and more willing to share their research experiences. Moreover, imbalances in research samples, especially on gender, are not uncommon and can reflect broader demographic trends in the population being studied.

Regarding ethnicity, most respondents are from the Tawali tribe, accounting for 58.2% of the overall population, followed by the Ayangan tribe (22.4%), Kalanguya (11.0%), Ilokano (3.3%), and Kankanaey (2.0%). This illustrates the Ifugao community's cultural diversity, in which each ethnic group upholds unique customs while helping to preserve indigenous governance and customary laws. Moreover, most respondents are from the Ayangan and Tawali tribes, as the institution is in the area and attracts the major ethnic groups from nearby municipalities. Including ethnic background is crucial, as cultural values, traditions, and social norms may influence students' expectations and preferences. It is also important to recognize that cultural identity shapes how students define comfort and communal living.

In terms of family income, most respondents (56.5%) fall in the lowest bracket, earning below PhP 10,957 per month, indicating that most respondents' households are economically disadvantaged. Fernald et al. (2012) noted that lower-income families often have less access to high-quality healthcare, education, and nutrition, which can prolong cycles of poverty. In the 2023 reports of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA, 2025), the poverty threshold for the Cordillera Administrative Region was estimated at PhP 13,239.00 per month for a family of five. In the same year, it is also revealed that the indigenous peoples (IPs) rank the highest poverty incidences with 32.4%, followed by fisher folks (27.4%), and farmers (27.0%), which means that the IP sector had the highest percentages of individuals belonging to families living below the official poverty threshold. Including family income in this study is essential for understanding students' satisfaction levels across different family backgrounds, as it directly affects their capacity to afford and access boarding house services. Hence, this often influences the type of accommodation they choose—whether to prioritize affordability over comfort or to pay more for better facilities.

Students' Satisfaction with Boarding House Services

In terms of Living Conditions

Table 2 presents the level of student satisfaction with boarding house services regarding student living conditions. It shows that the item *"I feel safe and secure living in the boarding house"* had the highest mean of 3.05, while the lowest was *"There are no issues with noise levels from other residents or outside the building,"* with a mean of 2.42. The overall mean score of 2.82 reflects a generally positive perception of the conditions; the descriptive equivalent is 'Satisfied.' This indicates that, on average, students would be moderately satisfied with the conditions provided by their boarding houses. The findings support Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, particularly the importance of physiological and safety needs in shaping students' satisfaction. Cleanliness, security, adequate lighting, and comfortable living spaces contribute to students' sense of safety and well-being, which

are essential foundations for academic focus and personal development. It is consistent with the findings of Villanueva (2016), wherein the safety and security measures attained the highest scores; meanwhile, the basic amenities also received high levels, and generally, respondents were satisfied with their living conditions.

Table 2. *Level of Student Satisfaction in Boarding House Services According to Living Conditions*

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. There is cleanliness in my room and common areas, including my boarding house surrounding.	2.96	.67	Satisfied
2. My bedroom is properly furnished, and my bed is comfortable.	3.00	.71	Satisfied
3. My room is a good size for my needs.	2.88	.82	Satisfied
4. I have adequate storage space for my belongings.	2.83	.79	Satisfied
5. My room has adequate lighting for studying and relaxing.	3.01	.74	Satisfied
6. The availability of natural light in my room is adequate.	2.94	.75	Satisfied
7. There are no issues with noise levels from other residents or outside the building.	2.42	.86	Dissatisfied
8. There is a maintenance response time for repairs in my room.	2.60	.78	Satisfied
9. There is a designated quiet study area available for residents.	2.44	.80	Dissatisfied
10. I feel safe and secure living in the boarding house.	3.05	.77	Satisfied
11. There are security measures in place, such as locks on doors and security cameras.	2.79	.81	Satisfied
12. There is a laundry room available for residents.	2.81	.85	Satisfied
13. There is a kitchen with adequate cooking facilities available for residents.	2.87	.84	Satisfied
Column Mean	2.82	.49	Satisfied

Moreover, comfort features-direct lighting, room size, and furnishing-affected their evaluation of the residential environment and their overall experience of going to school (Kaya&Erkip, 2001). Similarly, Abbasi et al. (2015) found that feelings of security and secure facilities enhance the residential experience, resulting in improved focus on studies and emotional well-being. In line with these, Najib et al. (2011) emphasized that safety and security are among the top priorities for satisfaction with boarding houses. In their study, 85% of respondents rated safety features (e.g., CCTV, security guards, locked entrances) as 'very important' in their housing choice and overall satisfaction. Their study concluded that when students feel secure in their residence, they experience higher levels of satisfaction, better academic focus, and lower anxiety. Notably, it also shows that there is no designated study area for student residents; however, it is understandable that most boarding houses do not provide such areas, leading students to use their own rooms and other common areas to study. In this regard, noise issues are among the major concerns that affect students' ability to learn or rest, resulting in poor learning outcomes (Diaco, 2014).

In terms of Facilities and Services

Table 3. *Level of Student Satisfaction in Boarding House Services According to Facilities and Services*

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. There is an availability of internet access (Wi-Fi) in the boarding house.	2.41	1.05	Dissatisfied
2. The internet speed is sufficient for my online classes and studies.	2.60	.84	Satisfied
3. There are common areas available for socializing with other residents.	2.78	.71	Satisfied
4. The cleanliness and maintenance of the common areas are maintained.	2.62	.73	Satisfied
5. There is a designated area for studying or working on group projects.	2.51	.82	Satisfied
6. There are on-site staff (caretaker/landlady/landlord) available to assist residents with questions or problems.	3.11	.82	Satisfied
7. The boarding house offers social events or activities for residents.	2.36	.80	Dissatisfied
8. There is a designated space for waste disposal and recycling.	2.97	.72	Satisfied
9. There are safety procedures in place in case of emergencies (e.g., fire drills).	2.44	.81	Dissatisfied
10. The boarding house has a parking space available for residents/boarders (if needed).	2.67	.91	Satisfied
11. There is a policy for the restrictions on guests visiting the boarding house.	3.23	.76	Very satisfied
Column Mean	2.70	.48	Satisfied

Table 3 shows the level of student satisfaction with community facilities and services. Among the various aspects assessed, the highest satisfaction was recorded for policy enforcement and support services. Specifically, "There is a policy for the restrictions on guests visiting the boarding house" (M = 3.23, SD = 0.76), while the lowest item "The boarding house offers social events or activities for residents" (M=2.36, SD=.80), which are all labeled as "Dissatisfied". Facilities and services obtained a total mean of 2.70, suggesting a moderate level in the aspect of community facilities and services, which is interpreted as "Satisfied". Having responsive boarding house owners and caretakers, along with a well-defined policy, enhances the sense of order and security within boarding houses, aligning with the finding that student satisfaction is strongly influenced by administrative

support and clear housing rules (Blimling, 2015). From the perspective of Ecological Psychology, the availability of facilities and support services influences how students interact with and adapt to their living environment. Boarding houses that provide responsive management, organized facilities, and supportive services create environments that positively shape students' residential experiences and satisfaction.

Moreover, these favorable opinions concerning sanitation and social spaces such as designated locations for waste disposal ($M=2.97$), gathering area for interaction and meetings ($M=2.78$), and maintenance of shared spaces ($M=2.62$) highlights the importance of cleanliness and social infrastructure in improving the residential experience of students, especially in shared housing, where conditions of hygiene and the potential for interaction really determine comfort and well-being (Edwards et al., 2001).

Furthermore, technological and academic support services received moderate satisfaction ratings. At the same time, students agreed that *"The internet speed is sufficient for my online classes and studies"* ($M = 2.60$). However, they disagreed with the statement *"There is an availability of internet access (Wi-Fi) in the boarding house"* ($M = 2.41$, $SD = 1.05$). This shows that while some students can meet their academic needs with stable internet connections, many are still challenged by limited internet access in their boarding houses. Supporting this is Toquero's (2020) study, which shows that internet accessibility significantly affects students' academic performance. The findings show that over 72% of college students reported that having a limited or unstable internet connection hindered their ability to attend online classes, finish assignments, and participate in academic discussions. Many students living in boarding houses were more likely to experience an unstable internet connection than those living in family residences with a stable connection.

Students displayed more than average satisfaction on two end scales: dissatisfaction with neither having emergency preparedness- (*"There are safety procedures in place in case of emergencies"*, $M = 2.44$)- nor having any social programming- (*"The boarding house offers social events or activities,"* $M = 2.36$). Such gaps point to potential areas for improvement and should not be left unaddressed. Safety precautions, such as the availability of fire exits and fire extinguishers, are a notable concern. It was found that 193 (64.5%) of 299 boarding houses have fire exits, while 106 (35.5%) do not. Additionally, 57.9% of respondents (173) have fire extinguishers, while 42.1% (126) do not, suggesting a noticeable difference and raising concerns about readiness and risk management. Safety and maintenance issues are commonly cited as top concerns in student housing evaluations (Thomsen & Eikemo, 2010). Adisa et al. (2019) noted that the lack of fire safety precautions, such as fire exits, in a student's boarding house contributes to students' fear during emergencies and dissatisfaction. She also highlights that student safety must be prioritized, as it also affects their satisfaction and well-being. Hence, the absence of this safety equipment (fire exits and fire extinguishers) directly affects students' sense of insecurity, which in turn leads to their dissatisfaction.

These findings revealed that, in general, students are satisfied with the few key community facilities and services, especially those related to staff presence, cleanliness, and social spaces. However, critical issues remain in internet accessibility, emergency preparedness, and social activities for both residents and boarders who will need them. Attending to these areas will go a long way toward improving the student residence experience and creating a much safer, more welcoming, and more conducive academic environment.

In Terms of Neighborhood Physical Surroundings

Table 4 shows the level of student satisfaction with the neighborhood's physical surroundings. It shows that respondents scored highest in the item *"The distance to campus is convenient, allowing for easy commutes by walking, biking, or public transportation"* ($M=3.24$, $SD=.71$), while scored the lowest in the item *"There are cultural attractions, museums, or historical sites nearby, adding to the neighborhood's appeal"* ($M=2.11$, $SD=.76$). The total mean score of the level of student satisfaction in the aspect of neighborhood physical surroundings is 2.69 ($SD = 0.42$) which lies in the "Satisfied" range, this result suggest that, overall, students are satisfied with their boarding houses physical surrounding. However, specific items had significantly higher mean scores, highlighting the strengths that contribute positively to student satisfaction. Gong et al. (2023) stressed that the location of students' boarding houses, especially their proximity to schools and daily necessities, reduces hassle and supports students' academic performance. Their findings in Stockholm align with this study, showing that physical closeness to services and institutions improves the quality of student life. In addition, Kamugisha and Omedo (2025) found that students living in closer or more convenient housing at Mbarara University of Science and Technology had higher GPAs, better class attendance, and longer study hours than students living farther from

campus. Their findings highlight that proximity to campus and easy access to daily necessities can reduce commuting stress and time constraints, thereby supporting academic engagement. This aligns with the results of this study, which show that accessibility to campus and essential services positively affects student satisfaction and likely contributes to better academic focus. These findings are consistent with Ecological Psychology, which emphasizes that environmental conditions strongly influence human experiences and behaviors. The neighborhood's accessibility, safety, and physical surroundings shape students' comfort, mobility, and overall residential satisfaction.

Table 4. *Level of Student Satisfaction in Boarding House Services According to Neighborhood Physical Surroundings*

	Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1.	I feel safe and secure walking around the neighborhood, day and night.	2.74	.79	Satisfied
2.	There are enough streetlights in the neighborhood at night, with minimal concerns about poor lighting.	2.55	.78	Satisfied
3.	The surrounding area is clean and free from litter and excessive noise pollution.	2.40	.75	Dissatisfied
4.	There are shops, restaurants, cafes, or grocery stores within walking distance, offering convenient access to necessities.	3.04	.68	Satisfied
5.	Public transportation (buses, trains, etc.) is readily available and provides easy access to different areas of the municipality.	2.88	1.38	Satisfied
6.	There is a park or green space nearby for relaxation, exercise, or enjoying nature.	2.60	.82	Satisfied
7.	The noise level in the neighborhood (e.g., traffic noise, construction) is manageable and does not significantly disrupt my studies or sleep.	2.53	.81	Satisfied
8.	There is easy access to laundry services, dry cleaners, or other amenities in the neighborhood (if not offered by the boarding house).	2.72	.72	Satisfied
9.	There are cultural attractions, museums, or historical sites nearby, adding to the neighborhood's appeal.	2.11	.76	Dissatisfied
10.	The neighborhood has a sense of community and offers opportunities to interact with local residents.	2.69	.71	Satisfied
11.	The distance to campus is convenient, allowing for easy commutes by walking, biking, or public transportation.	3.24	.71	Satisfied
12.	The overall accessibility of essential services and amenities in the neighborhood meets my needs.	2.81	.67	Satisfied
13.	The neighborhood has a character that aligns with my preferences (e.g., lively, quiet, historic).	2.61	.69	Satisfied
14.	I feel comfortable spending time outdoors and exploring the surrounding area.	2.71	.71	Satisfied
	Column Mean	2.69	.42	Satisfied

Another item that received a relatively high mean is *"Public transportation is readily available and provides easy access to different areas of the municipality,"* with a mean of 2.88 (SD = 1.38). This shows that the students benefit from mobility options, especially those who commute, positively affecting student well-being and reducing physical and emotional stress (Chen et al., 2023). Furthermore, feelings of safety when walking around the neighborhood day and night (M = 2.74, SD = 0.79), and the ability to spend time outdoors comfortably and to explore the surrounding area (M = 2.71, SD = 0.71) also contributed to students' satisfaction. However, some items received noticeably lower scores, such as *"There are cultural attractions, museums, or historical sites nearby, adding to the neighborhood's appeal"* with a mean of 2.11 (SD = 0.76) and *"The noise level in the neighborhood is manageable and does not significantly disrupt my studies or sleep"* with a mean of 2.40 (SD = 0.75). These indicate that the lack of cultural experiences and concerns about neighborhood noise negatively affect students' satisfaction, especially when the noise interrupts their sleep and study focus, harming their academic performance and well-being. In the study of Lovitos (2019), wherein they surveyed 300 college student boarders from various universities in Davao City reveals that 72% of the respondents living near cultural attractions such as museums, heritage sites, and cultural centers reported being "satisfied" or "highly satisfied" with their neighborhood while in contrast, 47% of the respondents who are living farther from such attractions expressed similar satisfaction levels. These cultural sites act as leisure activities that give students a chance to interact with others, unwind, and learn about other cultures outside of the classroom, all of which enhance their overall boarding experience.

Although not the main issues, the lower ratings for neighborhood character, laundry services, and lighting indicate these areas need improvement. Astin (1999) notes that these may not seem urgent, but small dissatisfactions can build over time, affecting the overall student experience and satisfaction. Hence, boarding house owners should also look into these factors.

In Terms of Social Activities

Table 5 presents the level of student satisfaction regarding students' social activities. Scores indicate that high

levels are present across most items in this subscale. ($M=2.97$, $SD=.64$) for *“The boarding house environment encourages a sense of responsibility and respect for others”*. On the other hand, lowest level is observed in the item *“There are designated quiet areas available for studying or relaxing without being disturbed by noise from other residents”* ($M=2.38$, $SD=.78$). In total, this table had a score of ($M=2.67$, $SD=.48$), indicating a high level of student satisfaction in the aspect of students’ social activities which is interpreted as “Satisfied”.

Table 5. *Level of Student Satisfaction in Boarding House Services According to Social Activities*

	Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1.	The boarding house environment fosters opportunities to socialize and connect with other residents who share similar interests.	2.69	.68	Satisfied
2.	There is a strong sense of community among the residents, with a feeling of belonging and support.	2.72	.66	Satisfied
3.	The boarding house offers opportunities to participate in student organizations or clubs associated with the residence.	2.45	.72	Dissatisfied
4.	The boarding house management actively organizes social events or activities that cater to diverse interests and encourage resident participation.	2.39	.73	Dissatisfied
5.	I feel comfortable inviting friends or guests to the boarding house for social gatherings, adhering to house rules.	2.66	.77	Satisfied
6.	There are designated quiet areas available for studying or relaxing without being disturbed by noise from other residents.	2.38	.78	Dissatisfied
7.	The boarding house has clear and reasonable rules or restrictions on noise levels or social gatherings, ensuring a balance for everyone.	2.81	.73	Satisfied
8.	I feel comfortable expressing myself and celebrating my cultural background in the boarding house environment, fostering cultural exchange.	2.76	.69	Satisfied
9.	The boarding house offers opportunities to participate in volunteer work or community service projects, allowing residents to give back to the community.	2.54	.77	Satisfied
10.	There are opportunities to socialize with residents from different backgrounds, promoting cultural understanding and appreciation.	2.69	.72	Satisfied
11.	The boarding house environment encourages a sense of responsibility and respect for others.	2.97	.64	Satisfied
12.	I feel comfortable approaching other residents and staff with questions or concerns, fostering a supportive atmosphere.	2.84	.65	Satisfied
13.	The boarding house environment contributes positively to my overall well-being and sense of belonging.	2.82	.67	Satisfied
	Column Mean	2.67	.48	Satisfied

In this regard, the study by Gong & Söderberg (2023) on student satisfaction in student housing in Stockholm concluded that community and interpersonal relationships play a significant role in increasing overall student satisfaction. They also emphasized that access to common areas and a friendly environment improve students’ well-being in boarding houses by promoting mental health and preventing feelings of isolation. This directly supports the higher scores observed in the present study for community bonding and respect in the boarding house environment. The findings also reflect Maslow’s belongingness and social needs, as students value supportive relationships, social interaction, and a sense of community within their boarding houses. Positive social environments contribute to students’ emotional well-being and satisfaction.

Similarly, Moore et al. (2019) explored college residential satisfaction, and they emphasized the value of meaningful social engagement. Having a planned activity, shared cultural experiences, and support from the boarding house management significantly influenced students’ satisfaction. Additionally, the lack of formal activities or study spaces, as found in this study, was identified as one of the weaker points in their findings. Finally, he concluded that ‘a balanced environment that supports both social development and academic needs is critical in residential settings.’

In Terms of Student Preferences

Table 6 shows the level of student satisfaction regarding student preferences. Results show that respondents scored the highest in the item: ($M=3.48$, $SD=.68$) for *“Feeling safe and secure in the boarding house and surrounding neighborhood is essential for me”*, while scored the lowest in the item *“Access to on-site laundry facilities is a significant convenience factor I consider when choosing a student boarding house”* ($M=2.99$, $SD=.75$). In total, this table had a score of ($M=3.28$, $SD=.51$) suggesting a very high level in the aspect of student preference. Additionally, an overall satisfaction score of $M=2.83$ ($SD=.36$) was obtained, indicating a high level of student satisfaction with boarding house services, labeled as “Agree”.

Since renters' primary goal in searching for a boarding house is satisfaction, boarding house owners must

provide occupants with the best possible amenities, facilities, and services. In accordance with the situation with the boarding house parameters, there are a few things that compensate for the needs and wants of the paying guests, like the reasonable price the owner/manager has to offer, policies and rules and regulations that will be observed by both parties (Harrington & Keating, 2006; Gordon-Davis, 2010). It is the legal responsibility of boarding house owners to provide accommodation and living services that ensure the welfare of the whole person and property by meeting statutory requirements (National Building Code of the Philippines, 1977).

Table 6. *Level of Student Satisfaction in Boarding House Services According to Student Preference*

	Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1.	When choosing a student boarding house, affordability is the most important factor for me.	3.41	.69	Strongly Agree
2.	A convenient location with easy access to campus is a top priority for me in a student boarding house.	3.45	.69	Strongly Agree
3.	Access to a variety of amenities and services (laundry, kitchen, internet) is crucial for my comfort and well-being in a student boarding house.	3.28	.69	Strongly Agree
4.	Feeling safe and secure in the boarding house and surrounding neighborhood is essential for me.	3.48	.68	Strongly Agree
5.	A strong sense of community and opportunities to connect with other residents are important aspects of a student boarding house for me.	3.22	.65	Agree
6.	Having a comfortable and well-sized room that meets my study and living needs is a priority for me in a student boarding house.	3.38	.69	Strongly Agree
7.	Public transportation access near the boarding house is important for my daily commute and exploration of the municipality.	3.21	.73	Agree
8.	Access to on-site laundry facilities is a significant convenience factor I consider when choosing a student boarding house.	2.99	.75	Agree
9.	The presence of environmentally friendly practices within the boarding house (e.g., recycling programs, energy-saving measures) is important to me.	3.19	.69	Agree
10.	Having opportunities to participate in social events or activities organized by the boarding house would enhance my experience.	3.12	.63	Agree
11.	The availability of study areas with proper resources (e.g., computers, printers) would be a significant advantage for a student boarding house.	3.21	.74	Agree
12.	I would appreciate having access to recreational facilities (gym, game room, etc.) within the boarding house for leisure activities.	3.10	.78	Agree
13.	A sense of privacy and quiet time within my room is essential for my studies and well-being in a student boarding house.	3.42	.71	Strongly Agree
14.	The ability to personalize my room to create a comfortable and inviting space is important to me in a student boarding house.	3.37	.68	Strongly Agree
15.	Knowing that there are staff members (caretakers) readily available to assist with any issues or concerns is a deciding factor for me when choosing a student boarding house.	3.31	.71	Strongly Agree
	Column Mean	3.28	.51	Strongly Agree

Students' Challenges with Boarding House Services

The mean scores and standard deviations for the issues students faced in their boarding houses are shown in Table 7. Although some areas show higher mean scores, indicating specific concerns that warrant attention, the overall mean score of 2.43 (SD = 0.51) falls within the "Disagree" range, indicating that, on average, students do not frequently experience significant issues in their boarding houses. Students' top concerns were that the quiet study spaces they were assigned to were not maintained properly and that other people's noise disrupted their concentration (M = 2.68, SD = .75). This result is supported by current studies, which emphasize the negative impact of noise on student-focused attention and academic achievement. Both Evans & Maxwell (1997) and Swargiary (2023) emphasize that environmental factors, such as noise, have a profound impact on students' concentration, academic performance, and well-being. This primary concern, whether from adjacent neighbors or from outside the residence, prevents students from studying. Furthermore, Edwards et al. (2001) highlighted in their study that clean, hygienic common areas are essential for both physical well-being and mental comfort. The failure of this leads to unhappiness that affects student satisfaction.

Table 7. *Level of Student Challenges in Boarding House Services*

Indicators		Mean	SD	Interpretation
1.	The overall cleanliness of the common areas (bathrooms, kitchens, hallways) is not maintained.	2.65	.77	Agree
2.	My room suffers from issues like noise pollution from other residents or outside the building.	2.68	.77	Agree
3.	There are frequent problems with faulty appliances or plumbing in the boarding house that take a long time to be repaired.	2.52	.76	Agree
4.	The internet connection in the boarding house is unreliable or slow, hindering online studies and entertainment.	2.62	.78	Agree
5.	The designated quiet study areas are not well-maintained or disrupted by noise, making it difficult to concentrate.	2.68	.75	Agree
6.	I feel a lack of security in the boarding house due to concerns about break-ins or limited security measures.	2.49	.85	Disagree
7.	There are restrictions on guests visiting the boarding house that are unreasonable or inconvenient.	2.54	.79	Agree
8.	The laundry facilities (if offered) are inadequate, overcrowded, or malfunctioning frequently.	2.24	.74	Disagree
9.	The kitchen facilities (if offered) are poorly equipped or not maintained properly, making it difficult to cook meals.	2.29	.75	Disagree
10.	The cost of living in the boarding house, including rent and utilities, is higher than expected and exceeds my budget.	2.48	.84	Disagree
11.	There are hidden fees or unexpected charges associated with living in the boarding house.	2.24	.83	Disagree
12.	The staff members are not helpful or responsive when residents have questions or concerns.	2.15	.69	Disagree
13.	The boarding house management does not effectively communicate important information or rule changes to residents.	2.24	.75	Disagree
14.	There is a lack of opportunities to socialize with other residents or build a sense of community within the boarding house.	2.32	.75	Disagree
15.	Living conditions and management practices in the boarding house negatively impact my well-being and student experience.	2.36	.79	Disagree
Total		2.43	.51	Disagree

While internet connectivity is often beyond boarding house owners' control, its impact on students' academic success is undeniable. This study found that an unreliable internet connection ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 0.78$) is one of the major problems students experience, affecting online studies and possible entertainment. Fabito et al. (2020) also underscore the vital role of internet applications in enhancing student satisfaction in higher education institutions, underscoring the importance of reliable internet access for academic purposes. On the contrary, issues on security concerns ($m = 2.49$), living costs ($m = 2.48$), and socialization opportunities ($m = 2.32$) were reported less frequently, with students generally disagreeing that these were significant problems. These concerns might not be urgent, but it is essential to remember that even minor discontent can build over time. Moreover, Astin (1999) noted that cumulative dissatisfaction can affect student satisfaction and well-being, underscoring the need for continuous attention to all aspects of boarding house services.

Comparative Analysis

Table 8 presents the differences in students' satisfaction with boarding house services across age groups. The results indicate no significant difference in satisfaction levels based on age ($p = 1.53$), suggesting that age is not a determining factor in how students assess their boarding house experiences at IFSU. This outcome is consistent with the findings of Radder and Han (2009), who reported that age—along with gender—did not significantly influence students' satisfaction with housing services. Their study, conducted in South Africa, reinforces the results of the present research and supports the conclusion that students' satisfaction with boarding house services is not contingent upon age.

Table 8. *Differences in Student Satisfaction in Boarding House Services When Grouped According to Demographic Profiles*

Variable	p-value	Interpretation
Age	1.53	Not significant
Gender	.094	Not significant
Ethnicity	.443	Not significant
Income	.385	Not significant

Moreover, no significant difference in students' satisfaction levels was observed across gender groups ($p = .094$), indicating that male and female students perceive boarding house services similarly. This finding aligns with the results of Batara and Orpia (2022) at Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College, who employed the same statistical method and similarly reported no significant gender-based differences in satisfaction among boarders. Their

study reinforces the present conclusion that students' evaluations of boarding house services are not influenced by gender. Correspondingly, Nobis (2022) at the University of Eastern Philippines–Laoang Campus found that factors such as living conditions, community amenities, and safety exerted a greater influence on students' satisfaction than gender, further supporting the notion that gender is not a primary determinant of boarding house satisfaction.

Also, there is no significant difference in satisfaction levels among students of different ethnic backgrounds ($p=.443$). The finding suggests that students share similar expectations and concerns regarding safety, cleanliness, facilities, and the conduciveness of their boarding house environment to learning, regardless of their ethnicity. These results are consistent with the study of Batara and Orpia (2022), who emphasized that safety, institutional policies, and available facilities were the primary determinants of student satisfaction. Although their research identified differences based on location, ethnicity itself did not emerge as a significant factor, supporting the conclusions of the present study. Similarly, Khozaei et al. (2010) reported that ethnicity did not have a measurable impact on students' housing satisfaction. Additional studies by Reyes (2018) in Baguio City and Lingbawan (2019) in Ifugao likewise found that boarders from diverse cultural backgrounds shared comparable concerns about noise, maintenance, and safety, further indicating that ethnicity does not influence satisfaction levels. Given these findings, boarding house management should prioritize maintaining consistent quality standards across all accommodations. Student satisfaction is shaped not by cultural background but by universal needs for safe, well-maintained, and supportive living environments that facilitate both comfort and academic performance.

Finally, there is no significant difference in student satisfaction levels across income groups ($p = .385$). The result suggests that living conditions and service quality exert a more substantial influence on students' satisfaction than their socioeconomic status or family income. This finding is consistent with Najib et al. (2011), who emphasized that facilities, cleanliness, and security were the physical characteristics of student housing that had a greater impact on satisfaction than demographic or financial factors. Similarly, Reyes (2018) reported that student boarders in Baguio City prioritized comfort, security, and noise control over financial background, underscoring the central role of the boarding house environment in shaping satisfaction. In the same vein, Lingbawan (2019) at Ifugao State University found that students across income levels shared similar concerns about maintenance, study areas, and cleanliness—factors that were more influential than financial capacity. Additionally, Dumlao and Dacumos (2020) in Nueva Vizcaya identified internet reliability and facility conditions as key indicators of boarding house satisfaction rather than income level.

Collectively, these findings affirm that student satisfaction with boarding house accommodations is driven primarily by the consistency of service quality and the availability of essential amenities. Therefore, housing providers should ensure that all students, regardless of income, have access to equitable and high-quality living conditions. Doing so promotes fairness and helps prevent disparities in students' educational experiences.

Conclusion

The findings reveal that students are generally satisfied with their living conditions, particularly with safety, community services, and the boarding house's location. However, problems such as noise and untidy study areas affect their ability to concentrate on academic work. The results also show that satisfaction does not differ based on age, sex, ethnicity, or income. However, safety features such as fire exits and fire extinguishers significantly affect students' satisfaction levels. Students who live in safer boarding houses tend to be more satisfied with their living experience. In addition, a moderate negative relationship was found between students' satisfaction and the challenges they face. This means that as satisfaction increases, the number of challenges decreases, highlighting the importance of addressing common boarding house issues. Overall, the study emphasizes that improving safety, cleanliness, and study spaces in boarding houses can significantly enhance students' well-being and academic experience. These findings affirm that student satisfaction is shaped by both the fulfillment of basic human needs and the quality of the surrounding social and physical environment, consistent with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Ecological Psychology. Future studies may include additional factors, such as distance to school and accommodation type, and comparisons across campuses to gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing student satisfaction in boarding houses.

Contributions of Authors

All authors have contributed to the conception of the study, writing the proposal, data collection and analysis, interpretation of data, presentation, and revision of the final manuscript.

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