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## Meta-analysis of Studies on Dormitory life in Iran

Somayeh Abbaspour<sup>1</sup>, Ali Asghar Abbasi Asfjir<sup>2\*</sup>, Ali Rahmani Firoozjah<sup>3</sup>

1. PhD Student, Department of Sociology, Babol Branch of Islamic Azad University, Babol, Iran.
2. Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Babol Branch, Islamic Azad University, Babol, Iran.
3. Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Babol Branch, Islamic Azad University, Babol, Iran.

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** Dormitory life faces many challenges and there have been relatively many studies on this topic, therefore, the aim of the present meta-analysis was to review previous studies on dormitory life in Iran.

**Methodology:** This was an applied meta-analysis. The study population included dormitory life studies registered in scientific databases during the years 2004-2007, and a total of twenty studies were selected as a sample based on inclusion criteria and using purposive sampling method. Data were collected by note taking method and analyzed by inverse questionnaire method and frequency and frequency percentage in SPSS ver.23.

**Findings:** All twenty studies were reviewed based on the study method, type of study, data collection tools and techniques, sampling method and data analysis level. According to the results, dormitory life-related problems include homesickness, economic problems, lack of exercise facilities, poor food, lack of extracurricular activities, lack of study space, lack of health facilities, absence of recreational and welfare facilities, lack of recreational, scientific and research camps, absence of counselors and guides, absence of individual and group skills training workshops, lack of planning for students' holidays, dormitory rules, student congestion in rooms and public space, dormitory officials, lack of room space, no dorm assignment program, maladaptation of some students, lack of religious group activities and dormitory supervisors' unfamiliarity with student morale. Also, solutions to reduce the problems of dormitory life include increasing counseling workshops, increasing exercise facilities, increasing the quality of nutrition, holding classes and increasing managers' level of knowledge, increasing the quality of health care, the presence of counselors in dormitories, increase the number of interaction-focused dialogue sessions, increasing the number of study halls, holding recreational, scientific and research camps, increasing students' awareness of social harms, teaching strategies to reduce stress and anxiety, and holding extracurricular classes.

**Conclusion:** Considering dormitory life-related problems and the related solutions, it is possible to provide appropriate conditions to reduce tensions and improve the quality of dormitory life by improving the dormitory conditions.

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\* Corresponding author: [asfajir@hotmail.com](mailto:asfajir@hotmail.com)

## 1. Introduction

Going to university and becoming a student is a big and important event in everyone's life, Because one of the growing needs of today's society is to study at university, and this can greatly affect a person's job, income, social and political relations and future life (Jones, Jackson, Mazzei, Chang, Buxton & Jackson, 2020). The student life is one of the most important and exciting periods in the life of every person that involves new changes and in addition to being ready to start a professional life, they have to face different challenges to learn and adapt to the new environment (university and dormitory) (Huang, Liu, Krigsvoll & Johansen, 2018). Considering the fact that a large number of students have to study at a university outside their current place of residence every year, student dormitories are a substitute for a family environment for many students. If dormitories have suitable conditions, these closed environments and community centers will be considered as desirable environments to improve the learning process. In contrast, if these places have poor conditions, they will disrupt the physical, mental and academic health of students (Jouhari, et al, 2015).

Living away from place of resilience, city and family can cause much harm to students. Dormitory life gives a person a lot of freedom and independence, and responses to this freedom can create a variety of positive and negative functions. People spend many hours together in dormitories and experience many everyday issues together, which makes the person familiar with different people, cultures, ethnicities and temperaments. The friendly relationship and the role of friends is more prominent in the dormitory lifestyle as compared to the family environment. Upon entering the dormitory, students are separated from the environment in which they lived for years and placed in a new and different environment. Communicating with new students leads to the formation of new relationships and experiences and, consequently, various harms (Ghodrati & Maghsodzadeh, 2019). Students feel intense loneliness and homelessness in dormitories. However, in addition to being a shelter for students, a dormitory should provide the appropriate conditions for scientific, social, emotional, psychological and personality development (Pilechi & Taherkhani, 2011). On the one hand, dormitory life can give students opportunity to learn independent living, adapt to roommates and share space and facilities, and, on the other hand, can lead to social and psychological damage (Lin, Lai, Chiu, Hsieh & Chang, 2016).

Dormitory life exists in many countries of the world and can provide many opportunities for social interaction and many concepts can be learned openly and secretly (De Araujo & Murray, 2010). Studying in university is hard and requires enough concentration and relaxation, and is always associated with problems, and dormitory life can exacerbate these problems. Students are always faced with various problems during student life, and one of these most important problems is living in dormitories and being away from home, city and family (Ebrahimi, et al, 2016). There are two general subjective and objective views regarding the quality of dormitory life, based on which three approaches can be discussed. The first is subjective and an American approach in which the dormitory life quality is subjective and means students' perception and evaluation of the objective state of dormitory life and is assessed using subjective indicators such as satisfaction with various cultural, welfare and social dimensions. The second approach is objective and European in which the quality of dormitory life is objective and means satisfaction with the material and environmental dimensions of dormitory life such as welfare facilities of the dormitory as well as cultural facilities and so on. The third approach is a combination of the above two approaches and includes a more comprehensive view of the above concept, avoids a one-dimensional view, and investigates it from both objective and subjective dimensions (Ning & Chen, 2016).

Student dormitories as a physical space are a limited part of the university that is used for accommodation, relaxation and mental health of students. Dormitories also include other cultural and welfare facilities, extracurricular activities, physical education, counseling and guidance, library, nutrition and health domains are governed by all disciplinary and administrative regulations of the university. Also, considering the fact that the dormitory importance is within the social duties of the education system, student dormitories must be monitored based on appropriate rules and have favorable conditions and

characteristics so that the student to be able to play his/her social role effectively. In dormitories, spatial domain control is related to residents' satisfaction, and it is simply not possible to create separate domains for two roommates, because the room furniture is such that makes it uncontrollable to access different areas of the room. Spatial domain of each person is also not clear in this collective life (Ghodrati & Maghsodzadeh, 2019).

There have been relatively many studies on dormitory life and related problems and solutions, each of which has been investigated from a different angle. There has also been no research on summaries and relevant Meta-analyzes. The most important previous researches on dormitory life include the following.

In a study on the dormitory life experience of female students, Ghodrati & Maghsodzadeh (2019) found the following categories: social labels of residence, family control norms, environmental constraints, lack of freedom of action and independence, contradiction between traditions with today's society, different opinions among family members, distancing from the real self, increased independence in the dormitory, cost management, increased mutual understanding and tolerance, improved interactions, normalization of social harms and problems of dormitory life. Goodarzi, Ghasempoor & Etemadifard (2019) stated that challenges facing students living in dormitories include, breaches or of privacy, a shortage of restful periods, lack of choice, unequal facilities for girls and boys, tendency towards lawless behavior, laziness and resistance, experiencing the law as master signifier, space constraint, soulless indoor environment and architecture, dormitory officials in the role of prison guard, missing link health and learned misery.

Serajzadeh & Habibpour Gatabi (2019) concluded that students were dissatisfied with the welfare facilities of the room, building and dormitory, cultural facilities in the dormitory and the physical welfare facilities of the dormitory. In the cultural dimension, on the one hand, the students were dissatisfied with the cultural activities and programs in the dormitory, and on the other hand, they believed that they didn't spent their free time properly. With regard to the social dimension, girls mostly suffered from sex and friendship, and girls from drugs such as hookah, cigarettes, alcohol, drugs and pipes. In addition, many students were dissatisfied with the scope of time spent commuting in the dormitory and overall student satisfaction with the subjective dormitory quality of life was intuitively and logically low.

Abbaszadeh, Piryalghon & Musavi (2017) also referred to the use of online social networks, feeling anonymity, pressure arising from norms of friendship group or impact of group of friends, family factors, communication-emotional dependence and social indifference as the underlying factors for late sleep among dormitory students. Ebrahimi et al. (2016) referred to dormitory facilities, nutrition, behavior of dormitory staff and officials, room space, cultural, recreational and religious activities, low internet speed and impossibility of mobile connection, roommates relationships, health and sanitation facilities, related costs, study hall and library, space and exercise facilities, shuttle service and noise pollution as the dormitory life problems of students. In a study of the importance of environmental factors and its role on physical, mental and educational status of dormitory students, Jouhari, et al (2015) concluded that the most important environmental factors included dormitory security, number of people in a room, general cleanliness, respectively. Also, most dormitory students believed that the dormitory environment increased their mental health and academic achievement.

Jahangiri, et al (2012) also concluded that there is a negative significant relationship between satisfaction with dormitory life with self-alienation and its dimensions including feelings of non-belonging, emptiness and meaninglessness and feel disconnected from the values and anti-socialism. Students have different needs during their studies and housing is one of their most basic needs. The importance of housing in general and student dormitory in particular is attributed to the fact that it can create a sense of security and dormitories are often a safer place than private housing for students. Dormitories should be physically suitable provide opportunities for students' personal and social development, and are important for academic achievement and the establishment of student life; however, if this shelter is not satisfactory enough, it will not be able to sense of success and responsibility in acquiring knowledge (Ghodrati &

Maghsodzadeh, 2019). Another important point is that universities and students of any society play an important role in the cultural, social and political developments of the society as founders of a country's future. Therefore, it is very important to recognize strengths, weaknesses and challenges of the university and especially dormitory life due to being far away from family and previous living environment. Therefore, it is necessary to study the dormitory life problems and provide appropriate solutions in order to provide the ground for the flourishing of students' talents. There have been studiedly on dormitory life problems and solutions. So, on the one hand, dormitory life has always been associated with many challenges, and on the other hand, many studies have investigated this phenomenon from different angles, but one of the gaps is the dispersion of previous studies and absence of a conclusion about them. Therefore, the aim of the present study is to summarize the results of previous studies on dormitory life in the form of a meta-analysis. Considering the foregoing, the aim of the present meta-analysis study was to review previous studies on dormitory life in Iran. Therefore, research questions include: What are the methodological characteristics of studies on dormitory life in Iran? What are the problems of dormitory life based on meta-analysis of studies on dormitory life in Iran? What are the solutions to reduce dormitory life problems based on meta-analysis of previous studies on dormitory life in Iran?

## 2. Methodology

This was an applied meta-analysis. The term meta-analysis was first used to refer to philosophy, not as a statistical technique, and since the publication of the Book *Meta-Analysis in Social Science Research*, statistical methods for meta-analysis have been rapidly adopted in the early 1980s; so that there have been many search results for the word meta-analysis in scientific databases and this word has more than 1000 search results in ERIC Website. In a meta-analysis, the researcher combines the results of previous research and studies and achieves new coherent results. The study population included studies and researches on dormitory life in scientific databases during the years 2004 to 2019. Twenty studies were selected as a sample based on inclusion criteria using purposive sampling method and their general characteristics were presented in Table 1. This type of sampling is selected because the selected samples provide the maximum information to researchers for analysis based on the research aim.

To conduct this research, among all the studies and researches on dormitory life available in the valid scientific databases of "Irandoc", "SID", "Noormags", "Magiran", "Civilica" and the comprehensive portal of humanities between the years 2004-2019, the number of which was 67 after the initial investigation, after examining their titles, 35 cases were found about dormitory life. Then, the abstract and content of all 35 cases were reviewed and 27 documents were selected, of which 7 were excluded from the study and, finally, twenty items were selected for final review and analysis. The above process was fully carried out with the help of professors in order to ensure that it has psychometric properties, especially validity and reliability. Data were collected from relevant studies by taking notes and approved by the professors. Data analysis was also carried out using inverse questionnaire methods (based on basic questions in the field under study including methodology, dormitory life problems and related solutions) and frequency and frequency in SPSS ver. 23.

**Table1.** General characteristics of 20 selected studies on dormitory life

Title	Sample	City	Year	Author/ Authors	Number
Study the problems of student dormitory life	Boy students of Yazd University	Yazd	2019	Foroutan, Abnooshin & Mahdzadeh	1
The challenges of living in dormitories experienced by female students of state universities locating in Tehran	Female students of Governmental Universities	Tehran	2019	Goodarzi, Ghasempoor & Etemadifard	2
A study of students' dormitory life: A case study of Alzahra University	Alzahra University students	Tehran	2019	Mousavi & Beigam Rezazadeh	3

students							
Challenges of living in student dormitories	Students of Arak University	Arak		2019	Rahmati Yasbolaghi, Firoozabadi, Sharahi & Rahmati Firoozabadi	4	
Pathological study of dormitory lifestyle of students of Bu-Ali Sina University	Bu-Ali Sina University	Hamedan		2019	Bahrami Layegh	5	
The belonging sense to dormitory. Case study: The girl's students of universities in Tehran	Female students of Govermental Universities	Tehran		2018	Anvari	6	
Factors underlying the late sleep among female students of the dormitory of Tabriz University Based on grounded theory	Female students of Tabriz Universities	Tabriz		2017	Abbaszadeh, Piryalghon & Musavi	7	
The problems of students' dormitory life; A study by qualitative method	Students of University of Medical Sciences	Tehran		2016	Ebrahimi, Hajebi, Esteghlalian & Hosseini	8	
Pathology of student culture in dormitories	Dormitory University students		Descriptive (Iran)	2016	Ghasempour & Khoshroudi, Ghasempour & Khoshroudi	9	
Attitude of students resident in dormitory on the importance and role of environmental factors on physical, psychological and educational status	Isfahan University of Medical Sciences	Isfahan		2015	Jouhari, Yamani, Omid, Shakour & Bazrafkan	10	
A comparative study on cultural attitudes of on-campus and non-campus students	Students of Misistry of Sciences	6 Provinces		2015	Shalchi & Ziyachi	11	
Investigating youth leisure enrichment strategies	Youth		Descriptive (Iran)	2013	Pirali & Siyadat	12	
Investigation of relationship between satisfaction with dormitory life and self- alienation among girl students (case study: Isfahan University)	Female students of Isfahan Universities	Isfahan		2012	Jahangiri, Zarchi, Aboutorabi Tanha & Aboutorabi Zarchi	13	
Leisure, cultural capital, and women (Case study of Juybar town)	Youth	Mazandaran		2012	Ebrahimi & Moslemi Petroodi	14	
The study on cultural problems in dormitory life among male students of Yazd University	Male students of Yazd University	Yazd		2011	Afshani, Nodoushan & Askari-Sefid	15	
The importance of leisure education in promoting community health	Youth		Descriptive (Iran)	2010	Ardakanian	16	
An image of students cultural lifestyle	Students University		Descriptive (Iran)	2008	Fazeli	17	
Comparison the happiness of dormitory and non-dormitory female students and its relationship with academic achievement in Isfahan University	Female students of Isfahan University	Isfahan		2007	Kajbaf & Shokraneh	18	

The relationship of stress and hopelessness among students residing in dormitories	Students of Tehran University	descriptive cross-sectional	2006	Mesbah & Abedian	19
Student dormitories as learning communities	Students	Descriptive (Iran)	2004	MahmoudiRad & Arasteh	20

### 3. Findings

The present meta-analysis reviewed 20 studies on dormitory life in Iran and sought to answer the following three questions. Question 1: What are the methodological features of selected studies on dormitory life in Iran? To answer this question, the results of meta-analysis of the methodological features of selected studies on dormitory life in Iran were presented in Table 2.

**Table2.** Results of methodological analysis of selected studies on dormitory life in Iran

Methodological features	Types	Number	Frequency percentage
Method	Documentary-historical	1	5
	Survey	16	80
	Combination of the first and second items	1	5
	Participant observational	1	5
	Content analysis	1	5
	Total	20	100
type of study	Descriptive	2	10
	Descriptive and explanatory	18	90
	Total	20	100
Data collection tools and techniques	Questionnaire	15	75
	Interview	1	5
	Inverse questionnaire	0	0
	Combined	3	15
	Interviews and documents	1	5
	Total	20	100
Sampling technique	Simple random	1	5
	Systematic randomization	16	80
	Multi-stage random	1	5
	Total	1	5
Level of data analysis	Descriptive statistics	1	5
	Descriptive and inferential statistics	20	100
	Advanced inferential statistics	2	10
	Total	18	90

With regard to the stud methodology, study type, data collection tools and techniques, sampling method, and the level of data analysis, most of the selected studies are survey (80%), descriptive and explanatory (90%), questionnaire (75%), simple random (50%), and descriptive and inferential statistics (85%), respectively (Table 2). Question 2: What are the problems of dormitory life based on meta-analysis of selected studies on dormitory life in Iran? To answer this question, the results of meta-analysis of dormitory life problems of selected studies were presented in Table 3.

**Table3.** Results of meta-analysis of selected studies on dormitory life problems

Dormitory life problems	Number	Frequency percentage
Homesickness	15	75
Financial problems	12	60
Lack of exercise facilities	10	50
Poor food	10	50
Lack of extracurricular activities	7	35
Lack of study space	6	30
Lack of health facilities	6	30
Lack of recreational and welfare facilities	6	30
Lack of recreational, scientific and research camps	4	20
Lack of consultants and guides	4	20
Lack of individual and group skills training workshops	4	20
Lack of planning for student holidays	4	20
Dormitory rules	3	15
Crowded dorms and public spaces	3	15
Dormitory officials	2	10
Lack of dorm space	2	10
Lack of dorm assignment program	2	10
Maladaptation of some students	2	10
Lack of religious group activities	2	10
Unfamiliarity of dormitory supervisors with the students' morale	1	5

The most abundant dormitory life problems of the selected studies included homesickness (75%), economic problems (60%), lack of exercise facilities (50%), poor food (50%), lack of extracurricular activities (35%), and others (Table 3). Question 3: What are the solutions to reduce dormitory life problems based on meta-analysis of selected studies on dormitory life in Iran? To answer this question, the results of meta-analysis of solutions to reduce dormitory life problems of selected studies were presented in Table 4.

**Table4.** Results of meta-analysis of solutions to reduce dormitory life problems of selected studies

Dormitory life problems	Number	Frequency percentage
Increasing counseling workshops	12	60
Increasing exercise facilities	12	60
Increasing the nutrition quality	11	55
Holding classes and increasing managers' level of knowledge	10	50
Increasing the quality of healthcare services	10	50
Presence of consultants in dormitories	10	50
Increasing the number of interaction-focused dialogue sessions	9	45
Increasing the number of study halls	8	40
Holding recreational, scientific and research camps	8	40
Increasing students' awareness of social harms	8	40
Teaching stress and anxiety coping strategies	8	40
Holding extracurricular classes	7	35

The most abundant solutions to reduce dormitory life problems in the selected studies included increasing the number of counseling workshops (60%), increasing the number of exercise facilities (60%), increasing the nutrition quality (55%) and others, respectively (Table 4).

#### 4. Discussion

On the one hand, the university community and students are among the most influential group on social and cultural issues. In this regard, one of the most important welfare issues of students is related dormitories. On the other hand, dormitory life is a very important and vital period for students due to being away from family and previous place of residence and the need for adaptation to new environment. Because the quality of this life will affect the success and academic performance of students as well as their future careers, According to previous researches on dormitory life of students, the aim of the present meta-analysis study was to review studies on dormitory life in Iran.

The selected studies were investigated in terms of study method, type of study, data collection tools and techniques, sampling method and level of data analysis. In addition, the findings of the present meta-analysis of studies on dormitory life in Iran showed that dormitory life problems include homesickness, economic problems, lack of exercise facilities, poor food, lack of extracurricular activities, lack of space, respectively, lack of health facilities, lack of recreational and welfare facilities, lack of recreational, scientific and research camp, lack of counselors and guides, lack of individual and group skills training workshops, lack of planning for students' holidays, dormitory rules, student congestion in the room and public space, dormitory officials, lack of room space, lack of dorm assignment program, maladaptation of some students, lack of religious group activities and unfamiliarity of dormitory supervisors with students' morale. The results also revealed that solutions to reduce dormitory life problems include increasing counseling workshops, increasing exercise facilities, increasing the quality of nutrition, holding classes and increasing the level of knowledge of managers, increasing the quality of health care, the presence of counselors in dormitories, increase the number of interaction-focused dialogue sessions, increasing the number of study halls, holding recreational, scientific and research camps, increasing students' awareness of social harms, teaching stress and anxiety coping strategies, and holding extracurricular classes. To interpret and explain these results, it should be stated that proper dormitory and desirable dormitory life play an important role in academic achievement and improving the quality of life of students. It is also very essential to pay attention to the material and spiritual needs of students in dormitories.

Therefore, providing a suitable cultural environment to enhance quality of dormitory life is one of the priorities, and since students are the major contributors to the development and progress of society, and the fact that if they study under appropriate and high- quality conditions, the future of each country is largely guaranteed, therefore, if the quality of dormitory life is enhanced, it will become one of the most memorable periods of life for students. Also, dormitory life should be a safe and quiet environment in order to reduce social tensions and thus to ensure academic progress, study and academic promotion as well as student rest and leisure. As students are the founder of each country in the future and are considered as strong and powerful potential each country, therefore, it is very important to address their problems and harms. In the present study, important dormitory life problems were identified and related solutions were also presented. Since many problems occurs during this period, there are also many and various solutions, among which appropriate and scientific solutions should be selected based on proper planning in order to solve and reduce their problems.

The problems of dormitory life and its solutions were mentioned in the present study, but it should be noted that dormitory and even non-dormitory life has many dimensions, including spiritual, educational, health, physical activity, personal and environmental health, smoking, nutrition dimension, sleep-rest pattern, social, social interaction, leisure, online and economic, which are much more important in dormitory life than non-dormitory life and family life. Since it is stressful to enter a new environment and adapt to it, therefore, being aware of ideas, beliefs, plans and norms of this generation can be very helpful in providing a model and lifestyle for dormitory students. Therefore, providing suitable conditions in dormitories and simulating them with non-dormitory or family environment as much as possible, maximizing health facilities, more rigorous monitoring of nutrition, health and exercise, as well as addressing study-related matters can make universities a safe environment for the young generation of the society and especially dormitory students. In addition, reducing dormitory life-related harms requires



thinking about and plan for things like students' leisure time, and proposes solutions to reduce possible harms to dormitory students by counselors and psychologists at the university or dormitory. To improve dormitory living conditions, university dormitories should be equipped with a minimum of basic facilities so that they are environments in which students have access to the Internet, green space, exercises, health and medical facilities, study places and a quiet environment. Another important point is that these environments and places should not be themselves places for teaching abnormal social behaviors, delinquency, smoking, alcohol consumption and drug abuse.

Also, one of the solutions to reduce dormitory life-related harms is to create exercise halls and increase the mobility of students and encourage them to such activities. The latest practical suggestion or solution is to provide appropriate conditions for attracting dormitory students to social, exercises and cultural activities by holding various workshops such as life skills, communication with the opposite sex, creating a learning environment and improving interaction and participation.

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