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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENT PREFERENCES AND SATISFACTION IN PAYING GUEST (PG) ACCOMMODATIONS IN DELHI/NCR

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ABSTRACT

This study addresses the level of PG popularity among urban students living in paying guest accommodations in terms of affordability, convenience, and flexibility. It centres on the mapping of the socio-demographic profile of PG residents, the options of factors that play a role in decision-making, and satisfaction related to financial aspects. Through a mixed-methods approach, the study collects information from students in Raipur Khadar, Sector 126, Noida. The results prove that affordability, comfort, proximity to educational institutions, amenities, and the social environment are the most important factors in determining students' accommodation choices. While students are mostly satisfied, some level of dissatisfaction with rental costs can be seen as a problem of expenses. The study points to areas for improvement like food quality, room size, maintenance services, and rent' usage for students. PG accommodations receive a high recommendation, which shows students' perception of their value compared to other options, thus highlighting the need for offerings of better quality for people in need. The study presses for the cooperation of policy decision-makers, developing companies, and educational institutions in solving the housing problems of students and in increasing the quality of student housing.

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INTRODUCTION

The increased demand for higher education has resulted in an increase in the number of students looking for suitable living accommodations, particularly in urban regions where educational institutions are concentrated. Among the available options for residency, paying guest (PG) accommodations have taken the lead since they are more popular due to their reasonable pricing, ease, and flexibility. PG accommodations often comprise renting a room or a shared living area in a private host's home, which gives students a sense of familiarity even when they are far away from home. With the rise of PG accommodations and their dimensions of students' reported contentment with their rents as a topic to be studied, the satisfaction of students living in these settings became one of the most important topics, particularly in terms of rent costs. A student's contentment with their quality of life, academic achievement, health, and retention rates is the most important element influencing their outcomes. Knowing the essential characteristics that students are satisfied with, such as rental costs, will assist providers, colleges and universities, and authorities in making students' lives more pleasant and meeting their diverse needs more efficiently. The sharing economy is forcing the world to alter in unexpected ways, keeping up with such radical features of the workplace and personal lifestyles.

One of the most notable instances is the extremely successful co-living sector, in which PG accommodations play an enormous part. In recent years, the student housing market in India has witnessed remarkable growth due to several factors, such as an ever-increasing number of students opting for higher education, besides a rising number of international students. The market size was determined to be approximately 24 billion Indian rupees in 2020, which rose from about 12.67 billion rupees in 2018 (Statista, 2020). Big metros like Bengaluru Mumbai Delhi Pune Hyderabad and Chennai have a strong PG market because they attract students or job seekers or both. Northern cities, comprising New Delhi, Noida, Greater Noida, and Gurugram, together contributed 24% of total demand for accommodations and 25% of the supply. Bengaluru is in second place with 23% demand and 17% supply. Mumbai Metro Region (Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, and Thane): 16% demand, 16% supply. Chennai captured 10% of the overall demand and 12% from the supply side, while Pune exhibited a 9% share across both demand and supply metrics. Hyderabad had a 10% share in supply and 7% in demand (Magicbricks, 2023). With rising rental prices in major cities, PG lodgings have become a more affordable option than standard apartments. PGs are typically located near educational institutes or corporate establishments, making them suitable for students and young professionals looking to save on rent and amenities. Double and triple-sharing PG rooms are becoming more popular due to their

affordable costs and social opportunities. 68.5% of Indian tenants choose double or triple-sharing PG apartments. Greater Noida, a portion of NCR, has different PG tendencies. For single-occupancy PGs, supply declined by 11.6%, while demand increased by 10.4% for double-occupancy PGs (Magicbricks, 2023). This study seeks to examine the various factors influencing individuals' decisions to choose PG accommodation and assess their satisfaction levels. Du Plessis and Amoah's (2022) research at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein, South Africa, examined accommodation selection criteria for tertiary students. The quantitative research used closed and open-ended questionnaires and found that safety was the most important worry for students when choosing off-campus lodging, possibly reflecting the growing need for security in student housing. Students' financial concerns were a significant element in determining rental value. Basic furniture, such as desks, beds, and cupboards, greatly enhances ease and comfort in the living space. Other factors influencing housing choices included closeness to campus lecture halls, facility availability, and privacy. New trends in student housing include Wi-Fi access, water and electricity included in rent, gender-specific housing, and pet-friendly living options (Du Plessis and Amoah, 2022). Arora and Sharma (2020) studied students' perceptions of campus bazaars, focusing on paying for guest accommodations and booking services. A study of 111 Rukmini Devi Institute of Advanced Studies students found that proximity to institutions is the most important factor, followed by rental prices. Students sought affordable options with basic conveniences, including air conditioning and power backup. Security was also one of the features that students sought. The survey concluded that females were more satisfied than males with building access, cleanliness, and maintenance. The findings stress the necessity for gender-sensitive university accommodation services that respond to varied demands (Arora and Sharma, 2020). According to the detailed research of Le Anh Tuan, the accommodation options of newly admitted university students have considerable influences on their places and capabilities of being affected and the learning process. These decisions are primarily based on pricing, location, facilities, living conditions, security, and service quality. Research by Le Anh Tuan has shown that accommodations significantly influence the affectability and learning capacity of first-year university students. Pricing, location, amenities, habitability, safety, and level of service are some of the main considerations when making these decisions (Le Anh Tuan, 2018).

According to Simon Gyasi Nimako and Francis Kwesi Bondinuba, tertiary enrolment witnessed a remarkable increase, estimated at 160% worldwide. Even with this increase, student accommodation needs are still unmet (Centre for Global Education, 2002). Governments in developed and developing nations have frequently resorted to involving private capital in housing to address housing shortages. Tertiary enrolment in Ghana has risen by 9.7% (Ghana Education Performance Report, 2010), causing the government to seek private sector help to provide accommodation for students (GSGDA, 2010). This student housing is operated by higher education institutions in Ghana; however, policies differ from one higher institution to another. Challenges related to accommodation have become acute, for example, due to swelling enrolment at the Kumasi Campus of the University of Education, Winneba (COLTEK) and Kumasi Polytechnic (K-POLY). The need for examining the quality of student accommodation (SAQ) in Ghana is underscored by two major reasons: First, there are few studies of SAQ in developing nations, and second, student feedback will enable improved housing conditions. Some key SAQ indicators are access to power and water utilities, proximity to academic facilities, and proper maintenance of essentials such as bathrooms, security, and recreation areas. Nevertheless, the cost of living, cost of accommodation, and cost of housing searching are still serious issues confronting students (Simon Gyasi Nimako and Francis Kwesi Bondinuba, 2013). Comparative analysis of SAQ in COLTEK and K-POLY showed most differences in the experience of the students. One should note that of all of the above-mentioned areas, students rated most favourably on electricity supply, proximity to their lectures, quality of the accommodation, and enjoyment of the hostel

life. Issues raised: Facilities (bad bathrooms and toilet facilities), poor security, accommodation too expensive, and lack of basics (reading rooms, entertainment area, etc.). Institutional Variations: COLTEK students graded bedroom, bathroom, and toilet facilities better than K-POLY students, who graded electricity supply, security, and affordability better (Simon Gyasi Nimako and Francis Kwesi Bondinuba, 2013). As the WHO observes, housing is a fundamental component of well-being. As university enrolments soar, demand for student accommodation has skyrocketed, especially across developing nations. Whether they rely on privately developed off-campus options on the apparent lack of on-campus housing in many institutions. That has raised alarms over the costs, quality, and availability of care. The phrase "studentification" describes the social, economic, and environmental impacts of large student populations living near universities. Location has always been an important aspect of students choosing accommodation to live in—quality, cleanliness, and maintenance are also critical. With students increasingly dependent on digital resources, access to amenities such as Wi-Fi, laundry, and gyms has become increasingly important. Recent trends indicate increasing demand for gender-specific housing due to safety concerns and a preference for rent-inclusive utilities. Furthermore, students care more about aspects such as a spacious yard, pet-friendly policies, and new designs—particularly when they are paying higher rents (Janine du Plessis and Christopher Amoah, 2021).

"Indian education hubs such as Kota, Pune, Gwalior, Bangalore, etc. are sought after by students who are looking for quality coaching and higher studies for student rental housing in these places; we see a growing demand," said Anshul Agarwal and Madhu Bharti. The study picks Kota's booming business market, where more than 130 teaching institutes have generated demand. Students value affordability (41%) and proximity to coaching centres (38%) more as compared to comforts and security. Preferred are single rooms, but many end up sharing accommodation to cut costs. Termed as "PG accommodations," these promises to fulfil all needs make it feel like it has been taken from an advertisement, but as treasured as they are, they come with heavy deposits and poorly maintained facilities. Students face challenges in finding affordable housing closer to the coaching centres, such as unsanitary conditions, predatory leases, and the threat of eviction. Evictions also result from disputes with neighbours over noise. The study proposes that urban bodies, coaching institutes, developers, and landlords come together to develop safe, affordable housing through public-private partnerships. Formal rent regulations and tenant protections, along with a digital rental platform, can increase access to secure housing while providing property owners with tax benefits (Anshul Agarwal and Madhu Bharti, 2021). In light of the increasing amount of evidence produced on student housing related to the cost of housing and its association with academic performance and well-being, Dr. Nnenna Ike converses with Prof. Claudia Baldwin and Dr. Athena Lathouras. Even though student enrolments in Australia have been steadily increasing, student housing studies are relatively undersaturated. The rise in international students has brought with it its own pressures, especially in terms of affordability and accommodation facilities. While UPH is linked to improved retention and academic outcomes, supply issues exist, especially in more regional settings where public transport is less accessible. Cost and parking tend to score higher for international students aware of factors affecting their choice of regional university (i.e., travel further to university and pay higher fees than domestic students) than for their domestic peers, while those factors that score lower than for their domestic peers include proximity and rent. (Dr. Nnenna Ike et al., 2016)

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study is conducted in Raipur Khadar, Gautam Bodh Nagar District, Uttar Pradesh. The region is selected because of the high concentration of PG accommodations and ease of access. Data was collected from 120 subjects using a structured questionnaire to gauge participants satisfaction regarding the rental price, amenities,

cleanliness, and landlord responsiveness. Data was collected in the presence of an enumerator to ensure the proper data collection process, authenticity of the data, and answering of any confusions. Additionally, qualitative data was collected using a semi-structured schedule to explore students' lived experiences, perceptions, and suggestions for improvement. The subjects from whom the data are collected are primarily students, and a few are working.

FINDINGS

This study collected data on 120 respondents (30 men, 90 women) who are unmarried and living as paying guests. From October 2023 onwards, the respondents were inquired about this matter in the face-to-face exploratory phase based on structured questionnaires to explore satisfaction with the price of rent, amenities, cleanliness, and responsiveness of landlords. Additionally, a semi-structured timetable was used to gather students' experiences, perceptions, and recommendations for improvement. A structured questionnaire with open and closed-ended questions was created to collect data for the study objectives. After collecting data, a coding scheme was created to help compile tables. The respondents are divided into four categories, i.e., undergraduate students, postgraduate students, Ph.D. students, and working professionals—to learn more about the lives of paying guests. Key findings of the present study, though, suggest that the respondents who stay as paying guests in Noida are from multiple states and represent a diversity of socio-economic backgrounds. They had picked their place based on a budget, as well as what they considered liveable. Before we go into the details of the study, we must take a look at some crucial variables of the respondent's socio-demographic characteristics. Of the participants, 75% of respondents are female and 25% are male. This could indicate the female from migrated students for studies or work are preferring PG over male as PG provides extra security. The obtained data reveals financial levels, as well as the frequency and percentage of students who live in PG lodgings. 94.2% of students fell into the highest income band ($\geq 20,482$), with no pupils identified in the lower income category ($\leq 10,240$). There is a significant economic discrepancy among students seeking PGs, indicating that those with greater incomes may be better able to pay them. This could be due to their ability to buy higher-quality housing or their choice for additional amenities. However, metropolitan and packed PG lodgings often exclude students from lower income levels, raising concerns about their affordability and accessibility for economically disadvantaged students. Some students may struggle to locate paying guest lodgings, thereby limiting their housing options and exacerbating socioeconomic inequities. The individuals opting for PG accommodation cited several reasons for their decision, with the most of them choosing PG because of the apparent freedom, food-providing options, distance from their university or workplace, and comfortable environment with little disturbance. The minority cited reasons such as Wi-Fi and helping facilities such as laundry, and even more minorities had no choice due to no place left for staying in the PG because there were no other places that were vacant or they were assigned to them by their parents or superiors. Table 1 displays the religious profile of the participants. Hindu: 74.2% Islam: 10% Other 8.3 percent Sikh (1.7%), Buddhist (2.5%), and Christian (3.3%) pupils receive smaller shares. Hindu students are overrepresented in the survey compared to students from other religions. Out of 120 responders, 44.2% were 18-20, and 45% were 21-23 years old. The sample primarily includes young folks in their early undergraduate years. Only 6.7% are 24-26, whereas 4.1% are 27-29. This suggests that the study area includes both older students with advanced academic expertise and younger working members of society. People stay as paid guests for a variety of purposes, including education, professions, convenience internships, and coaching. Many people want PGs near their educational institution or workplace for ease and accessibility, students account for 97% of those living in PG lodgings. These include 55% undergraduates, 41% postgraduates, and 1% Ph.D. experts. The remaining 3% of respondents are working professionals.

These statistics reveal that the most of PG residents are students, highlighting the high demand for affordable and accessible housing alternatives tailored to their specific needs. Located near their educational institutions or workplaces for Not everyone enjoys the prospect of living away from home and catering to residents in PG; hence, the satisfaction rate may vary.

Table 1. Socio-Demographic Profile of the Participants

Category	Subcategory	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	30	25.0
	Female	90	75.0
Age Range	18–20	53	44.2
	21–23	54	45.0
	24–26	8	6.7
	27–29	5	4.1
Family Income	7681–10,240	3	2.5
	10,241–20,481	4	3.3
	$\geq 20,482$	113	94.2
Religious Affiliation	Hindu	89	74.2
	Islam	12	10.0
	Sikh	2	1.7
	Buddhist	3	2.5
	Christian	4	3.3
Programs	Other	10	8.3
	undergraduate	66	55%
	postgraduate	49	41%
	Ph.D. Scholar	1	1%
	Working	4	3%

Table 2. Satisfaction Rating of the Participant

Satisfaction Rating	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	3	2.5%
2	20	16.7%
3	59	49.1%
4	32	26.7%
5	6	5%
Total	120	100%

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of the PG Rent Paid by the Participants

Rent Amount	Frequency	Percentage
4000 – 6000	11	9.1%
6001 – 8000	16	13.3%
8001 – 10000	32	26.6%
10001 – 12000	16	13.3%
12001 – 14000	11	9.1%
14001 - 16000	11	9.1%
16001 – 18000	11	9.1%
18001 – 20000	4	3.3%
20001 – 22000	2	1.6%
22001 – 24000	3	2.5%
24001 – 26000	0	0
26001 – 28000	2	1.6%
28001 - 30000	1	0.8%
30001 - 32000	1	0.8%
Total	120	100%

On the one hand, PGs are the only alternative available to students, and on the other, students use PGs because they are enjoying the sort of campus lifestyles provided in PGs. When asked to rate from 1 to 5 most of respondents (75.8%) gave scores of 3 or higher, indicating they are content with their PG. 49.1% of respondents ranked a 3 as neutral to slightly positive, while 26.7% rated a 4 as really satisfied. Additionally, 16.7% of respondents reported a satisfaction level of 2, while 2.5% reported a satisfaction level of 1, indicating the lowest level of satisfaction. Only 5% of respondents stated they were completely satisfied, even at the top of the scale (5). On one hand, this only serves to highlight that nearly 60% of residents have a positive or neutral view of their PG accommodations, but there is still an opportunity to improve their overall experience with PGs as indicated by the number of users who reported moderate dissatisfaction.

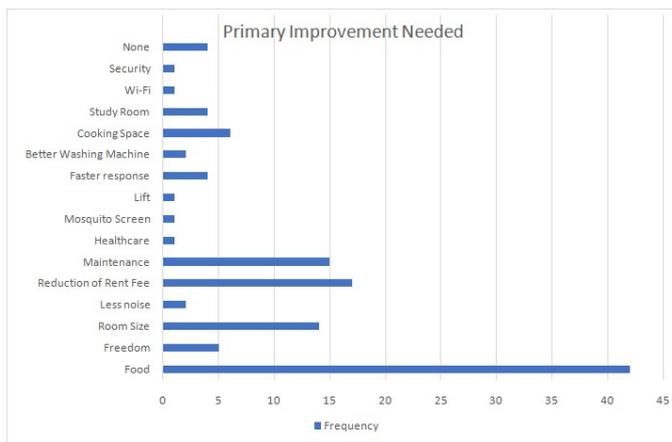


Figure 1. Suggestions provided by the Participants for the improvement of the PG Accommodations

The most of the people dissatisfied with their PG cited problems with the food provided, including not being nutritious, not being enough, and sometimes not being sanitary. They also cited problems in the rent payment, describing them as excessive and not worth the facilities they are provided. These problems are most found in PGs with lower rents; meanwhile, the people staying in more expensive PGs are most satisfied with their residence. The amount paid for PG accommodations represents another important variable that is closely related to the socioeconomic status of the respondents, as the type of PG selected by the individual is closely associated with the financial capacity of the individual along with the distance to their college or workplace. Since some PG accommodations may be a bit costlier due to the proximity to such locations, it is essential to prioritize which is more important. The data shows that the most of respondents, 26.6%, lived in the 8001 to 10000 rent group. The survey found that a most of men and women are willing to spend within this price range for rentals, which is consistent with the demographic. The second most represented category is the rent range of 6001 to 8000, accounting for 13.3% of the sample. Many respondents pick lower rental payments, indicating a preference for affordable housing or less financial freedom compared to those in higher rent ranges. Furthermore, the rent range from 10001 to 12000 accounts for 13.3% of the total variable, as does the range from 12001 to 14000. This suggests that responses are evenly dispersed throughout rent ranges, indicating a diverse range of financial capabilities and housing preferences among the population. Compared to the 4000-6000 and 14001-16000 rent categories, which account for 9% of the overall sample, higher rent ranges had fewer responders. As prices rise, rental options become scarcer, making it impossible to afford higher-priced residences. Surveying 120 residents and analysing the responses yielded a range of areas for recommended improvement, along with their respective frequencies and percentages.

At the top of the list was the need for improved food options or quality, which approximately 35% (42 people) cited as a concern. Second, 14.2% (17 people) said they wanted to pay lower rent. Moreover, 12.5% of respondents (15 individuals) pointed out to the necessity of better maintenance services, whereas 11.7% (14 individuals) desired bigger/spacious rooms. Another noted area for improvement was cooking space (5%), personal freedom within the complexity (4.2%), and being given a dedicated study room (3.3%). Even fewer respondents (less than 2% overall), expressed concerns related to more rapid responses by Management of issues, noise mitigation, and improved laundry facilities. 3.3% responded none needed improvement. Besides the primary suggestions provided by the participants there were other suggestions (Figure 2), they cited the need for more or better food choices—particularly, 9 respondents named food choice or quality as a concern. 1 of the respondents stated a desire for lower rental prices. 5 participants suggested a better Maintenance service, 12 cited wanting a Bigger / spacious rooms Other key things the participants would like to see improved include a cooking space (3.3%) and to be given a dedicated

study room (3.3%). Far fewer respondents expressed concerns about faster management response to issues, noise reduction measures, or laundry facilities, each accounting for less than 2.5% of the entire population surveyed. After reviewing the data, the residents are found to have recommend staying in PG with as compared to not recommending it. Due to the facilities and opportunities provided by them.

DISCUSSION

The present study on PG accommodation satisfaction among the residents in Gautam Bodh Nagar District, Uttar Pradesh, provides valuable insights into student preferences and the factors influencing their housing choices, the study underscores the critical role that PG accommodations play in providing accessible and convenient housing near educational institutions. Affordability, proximity to academic institutions, and a conducive social environment emerge as key determinants in students' decisions to opt for PG accommodations. There is an overall satisfaction reported by respondents, moderate dissatisfaction with rental prices highlights the central role of affordability in housing decisions. The most pressing concerns among students include the quality and variety of food, rental costs, maintenance services, and room size. There is a high recommendation rate for PG accommodations suggests their perceived value, it also indicates a need for continuous improvements to align with students' evolving expectation. Similar to the current study, several other research studies have found important factors affecting the choice of student accommodation. Affordability, social integration, and proximity to educational institutions were primary considerations in Du Plessis and Amoah (2022), consistent with this study's findings. Both studies highlight the importance of features, such as internet and electricity, that are often bundled with rent, though while Du Plessis and Amoah were concerned with basics, this research looked into additional features that increasingly top most people's lists of desired amenities, such as meals and laundry. But Kaur et al. (2018), which resonates with this study, stated that rent is very much a factor when people select PG accommodation. Both studies called out preferences for services such as Wi-Fi, food, and housekeeping; this study added a preference for larger rooms and improved cleaning services. Gendered differences in satisfaction were retained in the two, with female students being more preoccupied with the security features like CCTV in the accommodation and reporting more satisfaction about cleaning and maintenance standards.

Research by Le Anh Tuan (2018) showed similar conclusions, reinforcing proximity to universities and basic amenities as high-priority factors. Both studies highlight how modern conveniences such as internet, airconditioning, and well-maintained environments can boost student satisfaction, a growing concern at many post-secondary institutions. Tuan also highlighted compromises made in quality under budget constraints, but this study found that higher-income students traded money for better amenities, while lower-income groups struggled with both affordability and upkeep. As noted, by Nimako and Bondinuba (2013), this study underscored the increasing demand for student housing as a result of rising enrolment figures and urbanization. Both studies highlight issues of rent control, poor food quality, and inadequate maintenance services offered in low-cost PG establishments. Shared rooms were identified as a preferred option in both studies because they are economical. Building on these insights, Agarwal and Bharti (2021) indicated affordability, maintenance, and regulatory processes as important challenges within the student housing sector. What their study observed about wealthier students accessing better-quality housing and lower-income students struggling with affordability mirrors this study. Both studies laud public-private partnerships and technology-driven solutions as ways to improve housing conditions. Dr. Nnenna Ike et al. (2016), especially affordability, accessibility, and well-being as important factors. Both studies noted the unique obstacles facing regional universities in obtaining affordable student housing, especially in the face of limited public transport access and high rental prices. This study is also in accordance with Ike et al.'s

recognition that university-provided housing can be valuable but is frequently out of reach for many students. Unlike this study, which adopts a qualitative method, the research of Zairina Ibrahim (2019) did a quantitative analysis of the market trends and other economic aspects influencing the demand of PG. However, affordability, convenience, and sociability remain major attractions of PG accommodations, both studies show. Likewise, they both pointed out that food quality and rental prices are big concerns for PG residents, particularly among lower-income groups. Finally, according to the research of Dr. Salma Begum & Vineeth Matta (2024), money can be a considerable influence on student satisfaction until a certain point. Prior research confirms the findings of this study that students and young professionals favour PG accommodations because of added services such as Wi-Fi, meals, and housekeeping. The two studies also pointed to a preference among strata of moderately priced accommodations that balance economic with comfort. Both highlights on crowding, violence, and loss of privacy issues were regularly raised as concerns from the students, thereby furthering a call for policy measures that address affordability, quality, and inclusivity in housing.

Recommendations

How PGs can serve better to improve student living standards Even though a PG can indirectly act towards improving the living standards of students, there are rules PG should abide by, such as quality of food, availability of space in a room, maintenance, and other such initiatives. Increasing nutritional value, taste, and variety in meals—while providing customized options for dietary preferences—can enhance people's well-being. Access to fresh ingredients and balanced meal plans, in turn, will facilitate healthier lifestyles. Above all, optimizing layouts, introducing multi-functional furniture, or reducing room occupancy can increase available space and reduce overcrowding. Timely maintenance plays a huge role; having systems in place, either through staff to relay to utilities or online request systems, helps guarantee prompt repairs, thus potentially aiding the academic performance of students. A wrapping up of policymakers with both accommodation and schooling is key. Policymakers can set quality standards, providers can provide options, and institutions can interpret student needs. Furthermore, personal amenities, recreation areas, and custom study places can be included to have the students enjoy their stay. And finally, an assessment of the sustainability of these initiatives will reveal the most lasting changes that ensure PG residents remain comfortable and healthy for years to come.

CONCLUSION

The present study is the first in-depth study exploring PG accommodation satisfaction parameters in Raipur Khadar, Gautam Bodh Nagar, and Uttar Pradesh. PGs are favoured by the bachelor students and master's students due to their low cost, location from where they can reach their university, and also the social environment. With the majority of students happy, some voice concerns over rental prices, feeling that affordability is key. The focus on food quality is one of the four areas of improvement, along with lower rents, better maintenance, and improved room conditions. Seventy-two percent of PGs will recommend or have recommended their PG, and while this reflects the good value of PGs, it should naturally be reviewed constantly for improvements to meet the evolving nature of PGs.

Biography: Nongthombam Nongpoknganbi Chanu, Luwangcha Jetlee Mayengbam, and Reshmeengariyambam are master's students at Amity University, Noida. They are currently pursuing their studies in the Department of Anthropology. They have a good academic background and had a Bachelor of Anthropology degree from Dhanamanjuri University, Imphal. Their education has been enriched by theoretical and applied anthropology, including fieldwork, research, and support in the field and communities. The three of them have done a significant amount of practical fieldwork in their academic careers, working in various fields of anthropological

studies. Having undertaken their field placements in the Indian hinterlands, they have gotten to witness and live through this diverse culture and better understand India's rich cultural variety. They have pursued academics and also worked with NGOs across India for community work. An important example was their partnership with the NGO SADRAG, in which they collaborated with in informing the local community children, and to ensure they developed both academically and as individuals. While they were involved in SADRAG, they exposed the children to many educational and wellness programs. This entailed teaching yoga to promote physical health and focus, as well as introducing the children to the foreign concept of Tai Chi for balance, mindfulness, and stress reduction. They also facilitated workshops that introduced the children to the real-world uses of artificial intelligence (AI) during their everyday lives. It armed the children with contemporary technological knowledge and guided the students on how AI tools could help you in language translation from English to Hindi as well as improve your learning process. The three also organized basic computer literacy training sessions that provided the children with initial instruction in software applications commonly used today, such as Microsoft Word, Excel, PPT, and using the internet. They also gave a basic idea about computer hardware and how it works so that children are curious about the digital world and its processes. All three wrote dissertations on a community of people in the past, called the Kabui people residing in the area of Lamdan, as part of their academic work. Analysing the Kabui tribal community case study, their research provides significant points for anthropological understanding about the surrounding society. In addition to their shared successes, each student has focused on individual academic interests. Nongpoknganbi plans to pursue a career in social work and community engagement. Jetlee's academic interest is in the sociocultural practice of various communities of India, especially the tribes of Northeast India, where he wants to do further research on them. Reshmeengariyambam's main interest here was biological anthropology, which includes genetics and all studies relevant to that, and she hopes to further her experience in that endeavour. Each of these students is dedicated to continuing their academic careers, now working towards their doctoral research in their fields. They have a track record of research, fieldwork, and community engagement that highlights their commitment to the field of anthropology and social betterment.

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