

A Study of Hostel Facilities and Student Satisfaction in Army Public School Dagshai

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Abstract: Hostel facilities play a significant role in shaping students' academic engagement, discipline, and overall well-being, particularly in residential school settings such as Army Public Schools. The present study examines the quality of hostel facilities and their relationship with student satisfaction at Army Public School, Dagshai. The study focuses on key dimensions of hostel life, including accommodation, cleanliness, safety and security, food services, health care, recreational facilities, study environment, and the role of hostel staff. A descriptive survey method was employed, and data were collected from hostel-residing students using a structured student satisfaction questionnaire developed by the researcher. Appropriate statistical techniques such as percentage analysis, mean, standard deviation, and correlation were used for data analysis. The findings reveal that students generally expressed moderate to high levels of satisfaction with hostel facilities, particularly in terms of discipline, safety, and staff support. However, areas such as food variety, recreational resources, and infrastructure maintenance were identified as requiring improvement. The study highlights a significant positive relationship between the adequacy of hostel facilities and overall student satisfaction. The results of the study may assist school administrators and policymakers in enhancing hostel management practices and creating a more supportive residential environment that promotes students' holistic development.

Key Words: Hostel facilities, Student satisfaction, Residential schools, Army Public School, School hostel management, Student well-being.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The Ministry of Defence opened certain schools to provide education to illiterate personnel who had joined the Armed Forces and to further the education of those who were already literate. These schools are known as Army Schools and are run by the Army Education Corps. Since their inception, Army Public Schools have been established, and many more such institutions will be opened in the future wherever required. Admission to Kendriya Vidyalayas for service children is not guaranteed and has, in fact, become increasingly difficult. To address this problem, the Army has established its own schools using welfare funds. To ease the educational difficulties faced by service personnel, a chain of Army Schools is being set up at various military stations under the support of the Army Welfare Education Society (AWES). These schools are affiliated with the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), New Delhi. The broad aim of all Army Schools is to provide wholesome educational facilities to children of service personnel who are of school-going age. These schools focus on the academic, physical, and mental development of students, preparing them for potential entry into institutions such as the National Defence Academy (NDA). However, unlike Sainik Schools, Army Schools do not compel students to join the Armed Forces, whereas Sainik schools encourage and guide students specifically towards a career in the Armed Forces. The Army Public School (APS) system in India represents a unique model of military-linked education aimed at providing quality schooling for the children of Army personnel while promoting discipline, academic excellence, and holistic development. Established under the Army Welfare Education Society (AWES), APS institutions operate across the country with a focus on offering Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)-aligned curricula within a residential or day-school framework (Wikipedia; turn0search22). Literature on Army Public Schools highlights their commitment to academic performance, co-curricular engagement, and structured environments that foster personal growth.

Research on school outcomes in India indicates that school type—including public, private, and welfare-oriented institutions like APS—plays a significant role in shaping educational experiences and learning outcomes.

1.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF DAGSHAI:

Dagshai is an old cantonment established in 1847. It is believed that the name *Dagshai* originated from “*Daag-e-Shahi*”, as during the Mughal rule, prisoners were branded on the forehead and kept here. Some historians attribute

the name to Dakshai, a mythological king of Himachal Pradesh, or to his daughter Sati, who was otherwise known as **Dakshi**. Before the construction of National Highway-22, Dagshai served as an important business centre. It is situated on the upper portion of a ridge, the highest point of which, according to a survey conducted in 1880, was 6,087 feet (1,855 metres) above sea level. Dagshai was once connected by bridle paths to Shimla, Kasauli, Nahan, and Kalka. In 1847, the Maharaja of Patiala transferred five villages—Dabli, Baghtials, Dagshai, Chunag, and Jawag—to the British Government for the establishment of a cantonment. The British constructed accommodation primarily for European infantry or cavalry regiments, along with a small convalescent depot.

While moving around the area, one can observe the remnants of European regiments that once served here. Several regiments installed plaques displaying their crests and the years of service. Some of the European regiments that served at Dagshai are listed below:

- (a) Ross-shire Buffs – 1872–78
- (b) The King's Hussars – 1876
- (c) H.M. 39th Regiment – 1878
- (d) 1st Northamptonshire Regiment – 1907
- (e) Royal Scots Fusiliers
- (f) 115th B.T. Som L.T.T.F. (Jalalabad)
- (g) 9th Worcester Regiment – 1916
- (h) Royal Sikh Pioneers – 1926
- (i) 2nd Seaforth Highlanders – 1927–28
- (j) Lancashire Fusiliers – 1931
- (k) East Surrey Regiment – 1931–34

The Fitzroy Gram quarters, built in 1876 for the families of British cavalry soldiers serving in India, now form a part of the present girls' hostel of DPS Dagshai. The present MES offices were earlier used as a detention barrack for British soldiers.

Military Hospital, Dagshai

The Military Hospital at Dagshai was established in 1848 to provide medical cover to the troops stationed here. The hospital is still functional and has a capacity of 49 beds.

Military Farm

The Military Farm was established in 1907 to meet the local demand for dairy products. Its present production capacity is approximately 1,200 litres of milk per day. The cows maintained here are a crossbreed of Sahiwal and Friesian. The milk is supplied to local military units, Army Public School, and Military School, Chail. After the partition of India in 1947, some Punjab Government offices were shifted to Dagshai Cantonment. Refugees from West Pakistan were also settled here and occupied abandoned Muslim properties. In 1951, the Punjab Government offices were relocated to Chandigarh and other plains, and many refugees also moved out in search of employment. During this period, two regiments were stationed here. The abandoned properties were not properly maintained and gradually deteriorated over time. Besides the Army Public School, established in 1986, Dagshai has Dagshai Public School, established in 1956, two Government schools, and one Army Primary School attached to the local battalion. Water supply in Dagshai is managed by the Military Engineering Services (MES) under a bulk water supply agreement for distribution to the civil population. Dagshai remains largely virgin and unexploited, surrounded by dense forests of Chir pine trees. It is especially famous for its wildflowers during and after the rainy season, when the entire area becomes vibrant with natural floral growth. Another major attraction is the presence of a large population of monkeys and langurs.

1.2 BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL

In 1984, Lt. Gen. K. Sunderji, PVSM, GOC-in-C, Western Command, and Lt. Gen. Ranjit Singh Dayal, PVSM, MVC, COS, Western Command, conceived the idea of establishing a residential school on the public school pattern for the wards of Army personnel. Dagshai was selected for this purpose due to its strategic and convenient location between Shimla and Chandigarh.

The Western Command Army Public School Society was registered on 07 March 1986. The school was formally inaugurated by Lt. Gen. Hridaya Kaul, PVSM, AVSM, ADC, on 01 June 1986. The first batch of students comprised 78 boys and 11 girls.

(a) Location

Nestled amidst the sylvan splendours of the Shivalik foothills, lies the quiet hamlet of Dagshai. Ideally located about 50 kilometres from Chandigarh on the Kalka–Shimla Highway (NH-22), Dagshai is one of the oldest British cantonments, known for its unique old-world charm.

The campus is situated at an altitude of approximately 6,000 feet above sea level. The imposing buildings on the campus were originally constructed around 1876.

(b) The School Motto

In addition to imparting education in accordance with the educational policy of the Army Welfare Education Society, the school aims to provide opportunities for the holistic development of students. Students are encouraged to strive for academic excellence, uphold honesty and integrity, develop self-confidence, and above all, take pride in their nation. They are expected to love their country and ceaselessly strive for its progress and betterment.

In keeping with these ideals, the school motto is “DEDICATION TO THE NATION.”

(c) Aims and Scope

The Army Public School, Dagshai is a residential, co-educational, English-medium public school, established to provide modern and progressive educational facilities at a reasonable cost to the children of Army personnel. The school is conceived and maintained as a happy and harmonious blend of the best traditions of public schools. The aims and scope of the institution are codified as follows:

- (a) To provide a broad-based and relevant education—spiritual, social, and vocational—culminating in the fullest natural development of the individual, leading to a balanced, harmonious, useful, and meaningful life.
- (b) To nurture conscientious and responsible citizens with a healthy spirit of creativity, adventure, and exploration.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW: The review of related literature is a vital component of any research project. In the field of education, as in other disciplines, the researcher needs to acquire comprehensive knowledge of the work that has already been carried out in the specific area in which the problem is to be undertaken. Such a review enables the researcher to understand the nature, scope, and direction of earlier studies related to the chosen topic. As stated by Scott and Wertheimer, a review of related literature helps to avoid unnecessary repetition of work on problems that have already been investigated and assists in making progress toward solutions by identifying new issues. The review also helps the investigator determine whether the existing evidence adequately addresses the research problem, thereby saving time and effort if further investigation is not required.

Soman, N.B. (1990) conducted a survey on the problems faced by secondary school students residing in hostels and the administrative issues of these hostels in the state of Maharashtra. The major findings of the study revealed that hostels were better than home for those students who could continue their education only by staying in hostels. In certain exceptional cases, hostels provided security and regular meals that were not adequately available at home. The study further indicated that hostel life created a lasting impact on the later life of students. However, the majority of students preferred to stay at home rather than in hostels during vacation periods. The influence of peer groups in hostels was found to encourage regularity in studies, though it also led to the development of some undesirable habits such as chewing tobacco and smoking. All students opposed friendships based on caste and religion, and hostellers did not experience difficulty in their behavior towards elders or parents. The findings also showed that students preferred school teachers over hostel wardens when seeking solutions to their personal or academic problems. **Kumar, R. (1998)** Conducted a study of academic problems of Army public school, Dagshai. From his study he concluded the problems regarding co-educational system and M.E.S, students have good relationship with their teachers/warden and they are getting proper hostel facilities. But there are problems regarding water supply and food in the hostel. **Ghai, N. (2006)** conducted a study on the organization and administration, with special reference to the problems of administration in Military School, Chail. From the study, she concluded that students faced several problems related to their studies, hostel life, and maintenance facilities. The major findings of the study highlighted the need to create educational facilities at military stations to meet the requirements of children of defence personnel and to impart a high standard of education to them without any distinction based on status. The study also emphasized the importance of promoting sports and co-curricular activities, providing adequate hostel facilities within the school, and developing an all-round personality among students by creating a stimulating educational environment.

3. OBJECTIVES:

- (1)** To study the hostel facility available in Army Public School, Dagshai.

HYPOTHESES

- (H₁)** Facilities available in hostel facilitate the learning of students.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Present study was delimited to only one Army School i.e., Army Public School, Dagshai. Only army school students considered as sample. The study was limited to the teachers of army public school, Dagshai.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM: "A STUDY OF ORGANIZATION, ADMINISTRATION AND PROBLEM OF ADMINISTRATION IN ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL DAGSHAI".

4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

"The present study aims to find out the strengths and weaknesses of Army Public School, Dagshai. The Army Public School, Dagshai was established with the objective of providing quality education to the children of army personnel, who have to face frequent transfers due to the nature of their service. The purpose of this study is not to criticize any individual or institution, but to assess whether the aims laid down by the Army Welfare Education Society (AWES) are being achieved and to what extent.

In recent years, a large number of government and privately owned institutions have come into existence to impart education under different organizations. To cater to the educational needs of defence personnel and to reduce the mismatch between demand and supply, the Ministry of Defence has established Sainik Schools for young learners aspiring to join the defence services of the country. These objectives can be achieved only if such institutions function sincerely and effectively. Therefore, evaluation of these institutions with regard to their administration and the problems faced by them is essential for analysing their overall functioning. This study will help in highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the institution and will further enable the researcher to make valuable suggestions to the administrators.

❖ OPERATIONAL DEFINITION;

Organization

Organization is the structure, frame arrangement with in which teachers, pupils, supervisors, and others operate to carry on the activities in the school.

Administration

The word administration has taken from Latin words 'Ad + ministrare' which means to manage; 'to care for', 'carry out', 'to attend', 'serve', 'and accomplish'.

According to Good's dictionary, all those techniques and procedures employed in operating the educational organization in accordance with established policies.

5. METHODOLOGY: A method is the way of doing or achieving something a systematic manner. The descriptive survey method used in present study. Data was collected by the investigator himself by descriptive questionnaire survey method. A questionnaire method has many advantages. Interview conducted administrator officer personally.

TOOL TO BE USED : Self made questionnaire for students

SAMPLING

Questionnaire for students:

The questionnaire have 15 items are related to hostel life. All items are of 'yes/no' type items.

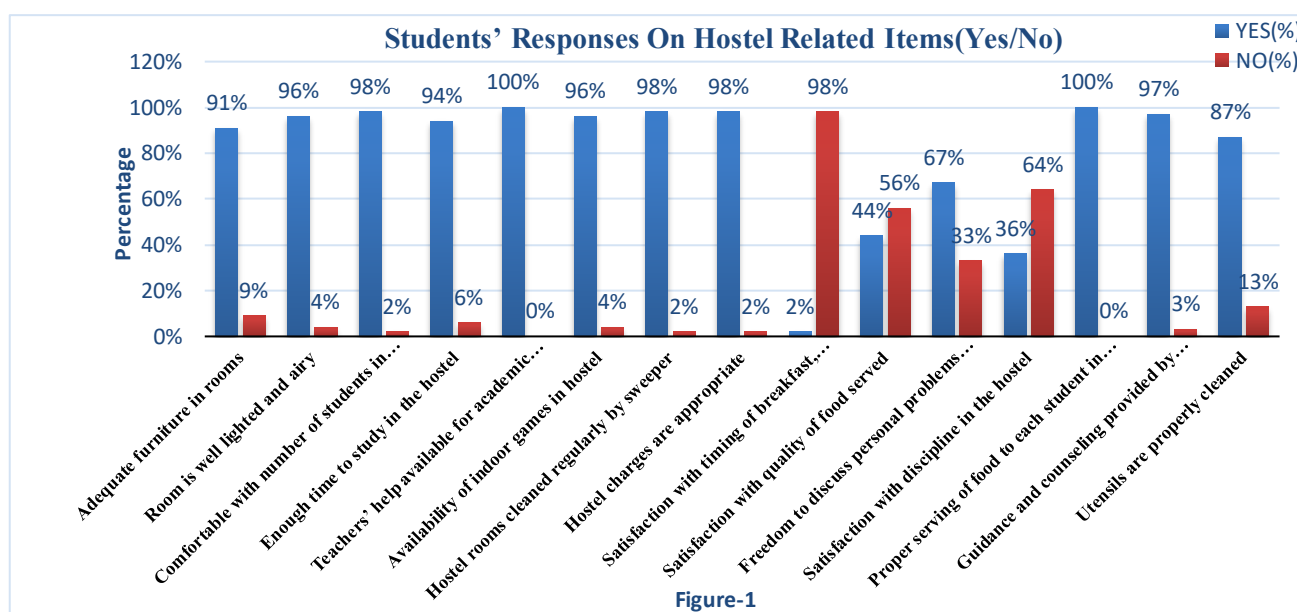
ANALYSIS: On the basis of the responses given in the questionnaire, the data has been tabulated, analyzed and interpreted.

Table-1

Students' Responses On Hostel Related Items			
Sr.No.	Hostel Related Items	Yes (%)	No (%)
1	Adequate furniture in rooms	91%	9%
2	Room is well lighted and airy	96%	4%
3	Comfortable with number of students in the room	98%	2%
4	Enough time to study in the hostel	94%	6%
5	Teachers' help available for academic problems	100%	0%
6	Availability of indoor games in hostel	96%	4%
7	Hostel rooms cleaned regularly by sweeper	98%	2%
8	Hostel charges are appropriate	2%	98%
9	Satisfaction with timing of breakfast, lunch and dinner	44%	56%
10	Satisfaction with quality of food served	4%	96%
11	Freedom to discuss personal problems with warden	67%	33%
12	Satisfaction with discipline in the hostel	36%	64%
13	Proper serving of food to each student in dining hall	100%	0%
14	Guidance and counseling provided by warden	97%	3%
15	Utensils are properly cleaned	87%	13%

The above table-1 analysis of students' responses indicates that most of the hostel facilities are functioning satisfactorily. a very high percentage of students expressed positive opinions regarding adequate furniture (91%), well-lighted and

airy rooms (96%), comfort with room occupancy (98%), sufficient study time (94%), availability of teachers' help (100%), indoor games (96%), regular cleaning (98%), proper serving of food (100%), guidance and counselling by the warden (97%), and cleanliness of utensils (87%). since the majority responses are above 75%, the related objectives are achieved and the null hypotheses (that students are not satisfied) are rejected for these items. However, certain areas show dissatisfaction. only 2% students found hostel charges appropriate (98% negative response), 44% were satisfied with meal timings (56% dissatisfied), 4% were satisfied with food quality (96% dissatisfied), and only 36% were satisfied with hostel discipline (64% dissatisfied). in these cases, as the majority responses are negative, the null hypotheses are accepted and the research hypotheses are rejected. Moderate satisfaction was observed regarding freedom to discuss personal problems with the warden (67%), which indicates partial acceptance of the objective. Overall, it can be concluded that while infrastructural and academic support facilities are satisfactory, improvement is required in food quality, charges, discipline, and meal timings in the hostel.



6. FINDINGS: As our findings related to hostel, All facilities are given to them. But investigator find that solvedifficulties face for them.

- Their hostel charges are not appropriate.
- They are not happy with the timing of breakfast, launch, dinner.
- They are not satisfied with the quality of food.
- They do not satisfy with the discipline in the hostel.
- They do not feel free to discuss their personal problem with the warden.

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