

## Presenting a Model for Promoting Quality Of Life among Dormitory Students

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**Abstract:** Goal of the present research is to give a model for promoting quality of life of the dormitory students in district 12 of Islamic Azad University.

The population of this research included all students of different educational levels in dormitories of District 12 of Islamic Azad University in academic year of 2013-2014. The sample included 350 students in dormitories who were selected with multistage cluster sampling method. The research method was applied in terms of goal and fact-finding method was used. Information collection instruments in this research was researcher-made questionnaire which measured factors affecting quality of life of the dormitory students in the present and ideal situation. Frequency distribution tables, bar chart, mean and standard deviation were used to describe data and Kolmogorov–Smirnov test was used to answer the research questions and exploratory factor analysis was used to identify components with principle component analysis method and structural equation modeling method was used to present the model. The obtained results included technology, sociocultural, psychological, human force, physical and hygienic factors as the principle components of quality of life among the dormitory students. Technology is effective on quality of life directly and through sociocultural components and human force is also effective on quality of life directly or through sociocultural component. Psychological factor is also effective directly on quality of life and also plays intermediary role and hygienic, technology and physical factors are also related to quality of life. Sociocultural factor is also effective directly on quality of life and plays intermediary role and relates all components to quality of life. Hygienic factor is not directly effective on quality of life and is effective on quality of life through sociocultural and psychological components. Physical factor is not directly effective on quality of life but is effective on quality of life through sociocultural and psychological components.

**Key words:** quality of dormitory life, students, Islamic Azad University.

### Introduction

No comprehensive framework has been presented for studying quality of life coherently and holistically based on physical, spatial and social indices (Kamp et al., 2009). Today, quality of life is a complex concept and many scientists cannot give a comprehensive definition for it because understanding of this concept by different classes of society clarifies different meaning (George & Bearon, 1980). The obtained scientific results in the field of quality of life indicate that its terms are hardly definable showing disagreement in this field (Morris and Kamanho, 2010). Some factors such as health, physical environment, individual growth and safety have been mentioned in some methods such as the method proposed by Michel et al and even researchers have regarded economy as one of the three main elements of quality (Kamp et al., 2003) but efforts to reach a common definition indicate that the absence of general framework for quality of life prevents from progress in this field (Pacione, 2003). The above facts led some researchers to regard quality of life as subjective concept, for example, the definition given by who-qol group in 1993 which regards quality of life as person's perception of his/her situation in the cultural fields and evaluation systems which depend on goals, expectations, standards etc. (Kamp et al., 2003). Some other researchers define quality of life as satisfaction with life as the degree to which a person enjoys the provided facilities (Kamp et al. 2003 and Seifoddini, 2010). Quality of life is defined as a concept which has multiple dimensions and included different fields in two micro level (individual level as objective –subjective) and macro level (social, objective and semantic) (aesthetic). Micro level includes some indices such as perceptions of individual quality of life which is directly dependent on person and his/her minds and macro level includes income, employment, house, education and other living conditions and environment. In the practical approach, quality of life is defined as a general concept which encompasses all biological dimensions including material satisfaction, vital needs in addition to transitional aspects of life such as individual development, self-knowledge and ecosystem health (Baldwin et al., 1994).

In fact, quality of life is a personal feeling which originates from personal values or is the cause of objective conditions. It means economic –social-political-cultural situation of the society in which person lives or both of them. Therefore, the models and techniques which measure objective and subjective aspects of quality of life should be used. In recent years, some studies have been conducted on quality of life of the dormitories and each one of them has studied different dimensions of student life, for example, anxiety and quality of life (Salehi and Nayeri, 2010), stress and quality of life (Nayeri and Haj Bagheri, 2006), stress with hopelessness in students of dormitory, Mesbah and Abedian(2004), mental health condition of the students in overcrowded and under-crowded rooms (Rahimi, 2006), deviant behaviors in dormitories (Mathnavi et al., 2005), physical activities, resistance against stress, smoking , nutrition (Bakhtiari et al., 2007), economic and social factors of students in

dormitory (Navabi Nejad, 2006), emotional issues (Karimi, 2008), physical and environmental issues of dormitory (Tavangar, 2010), health issues and inattention to health and cleaning standards of the kitchens, toilets, type of drinking water (Hashemi, 2009), behavioral problems, cursing, short messages and long Bluetooth playing (Red et al., 2007; Abedi et al., 2008), safety, mental and emotional issues and the absence of recreational and cultural facilities (Saber, 2004), comparison of depression, anxiety, stress and quality of life of male and female students of dormitories (Rezaei and Azadi (2007), studying relationship between welfare and educational performance of native and nonnative students of Dehdasht and Ahankoob Nejad (2010), studying attitude of dormitory students toward deviant behaviors (Mathnavi and Sam Aram) (2005), studying stress and compatibility in students of girls dormitories (Yavarian and Golshan, 2006), effect of settlement conditions of the students on problem solving skills (Osella and Gorgin, 2010).

Rostami in charge of consultation center of Tehran University of Medical Sciences has regarded the absence of recreational and sport facilities, the absence of enough facilities for study by the students etc. as the major problems of dormitory students and mentions that mobility and happiness in dormitory students, increase of responsibility, activation and responsibility for the student gatherings, promotion of public sports and expansion of student consultation services in dormitories can reduce problems of students in student's dormitories. On the other hand, student dormitory is the living place of students who have gathered with cultural differences, social class, culture, tradition and different beliefs, high income to low income and the people who are highly interested in science and knowledge and research and self-training or the indifferent people who only want to receive degree have gathered. Naturally, these differences can cause growth, excellence and dynamism and also lead to friction and unreasonable behavior in dormitory environment (Hakimia, 2002; Mathnavi, 2004; Vakili Zadeh, 2001). Therefore, loss of happy, exultant, sensitive and responsible force will result in large damage for the country in future. Considering the mentioned cases and failure to identify main components of promotion of quality of dormitory life, this research intends to identify dormitory lifestyle of students in dormitories and present a model for promoting quality of life of students in dormitory. Considering goals of the research, Frequency distribution tables, bar chart, mean and standard deviation were used to describe data and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to study normality of the variables and exploratory factor analysis was used to identify components with principle component analysis method and structural equation modeling method was used to present the model.

#### **Method**

The research method was applied in terms of goal and fact-finding method was used. The population of this research included all students of different educational levels in dormitories of District 12 of Islamic Azad University in academic year of 2013-2014. The sample size was specified 350 students considering KREJCIE and MORGAN Table who were selected with multistage cluster sampling method among the students studying the technical fields, basic sciences, management, accounting, biomedical engineering, physical education, agronomy and food industries. After participation of the students, the researcher-made questionnaire which measured factors affecting quality of dormitory life in the present and ideal situation was performed in the group. The researcher-made questionnaire considered quality of life in human resources, psychological, physical, sociocultural, technology and health dimensions. Cronbach's alpha coefficient obtained reliability of components as 0.788 for hygienic dimension to 0.935 for the entire questionnaire in the present situation and 0.775 for the human resources to 0.842 for the entire questionnaire in the ideal situation. All coefficients are acceptable and significant. To study validity of the questionnaire, content validity was used. Agreement of 5 professors on the question that if six components mentioned above encompass quality of life and how the mentioned items for each component reflect that component was measured from very high to very low. The professors agreed that firstly, six mentioned components encompass quality of life and secondly, the mentioned items for each component can be effective in measurement of that component. Validity coefficient was 0.81 for cultural and social dimension to 0.89 for psychological dimension.

#### **Findings**

- 1- Mean age of the students in this research was 23.01 years with standard deviation of 3.42, the minimum age was 18 years and the maximum age was 38 years. Mean term of residence of dormitory is 3.1 terms with standard deviation of 2.40, the minimum term of residence in dormitory is 1 term and the maximum term was 10 terms. 32% were men and 68% were women.
- 2- 44.85% of the respondents studied technical fields, 22.85% studied basic sciences and 32.86% studied biomedical engineering, physical education and food industries.
- 3- What are the main dimensions of quality of life of dormitories? To answer this question, Principle component (pc) analysis was used. To recognize the factors which form infrastructure of 31 items of the researcher for quality of life and also its simple structure, varimax rotation method with the minimum factor loading of 0.40 was used. The performed calculations showed that Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of

Sampling Adequacy is equal to 0.918 and significance level of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is also lower than 0.001. Therefore, based on both criteria, it can be concluded that execution of factor analysis was justifiable based on the resulting correlation matrix in the studied sample group. To determine that quality of life was studied from some saturated factors, three indices of special value, variance explanation percent and screen special values rotated diagram. Based on three indices, 6 factors which had special value of above 1 and explained 66.35% of total variance were extracted from the data relating to quality of life. The first factor with special value of 11.57 explains 37.31% of total variance and sixth factor explains 1.13% of total variance of quality of life. Table 1 shows factor loading of items on factor 1 to 6 after varimax rotation.

Table 1: factor loading of items on factor 1 to 6 after varimax rotation

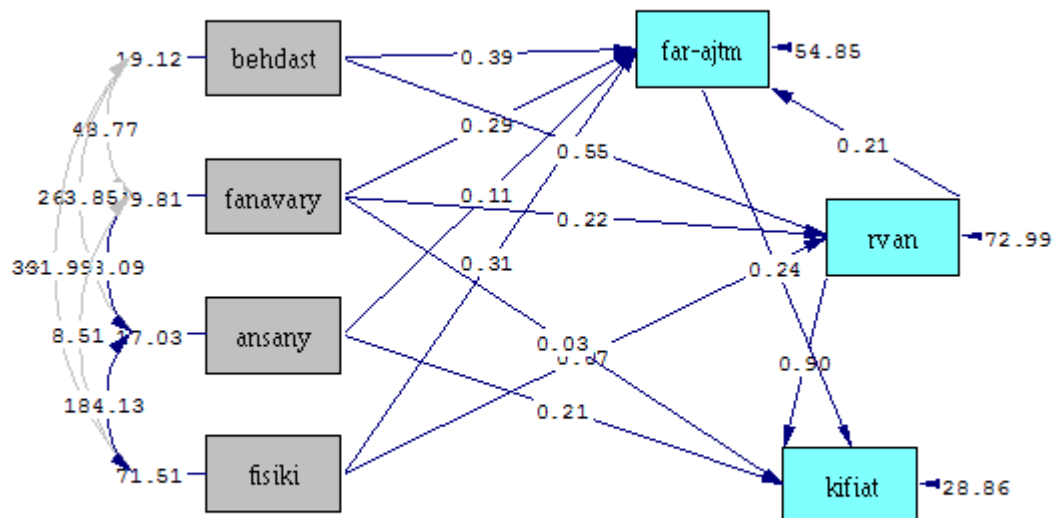
Alpha	Factor loading	Factors and items
0.918		First factor: technology
	.824	1- Conditions of free access to reliable scientific sites
	.820	2- Supplying enough number of computer in dormitory
	.817	3- Increasing bandwidth and wireless equipment
	.546	4- Considering leisure time space inside dormitory (coffee net, Cafeteria, Café game etc.)
	.511	5- Educational presentation of sound sexual relations skills (pathology of unsound sexual relations)
	.465	6- Holding student sessions in dormitory for studying political , social and economic issues
	.416	7- Holding gatherings by supervisor of dormitory for interaction of the people from different tribes and groups in dormitory
	.406	8- Procurement of food(breakfast, lunch and dinner )
		Second factor: sociocultural
0.905	.703	1- Considering suitable green space for recreation and study
	.687	2- Considering sport space (football field , pool, sport club )
	.640	3- Considering parking space for each person
	.594	4- Creating conditions for broadcasting film and criticism sessions
	.508	4- Holding sport , scientific –cultural competitions among dormitory students
		Third factor: psychological
0.830	.746	1- The presence of consultant for solving personal problems of the student
	.609	2- The presence of medical-therapeutic team

	.600	3- Forming dormitory supervision group comprising of students in dormitory for self-regulation of dormitory
	.481	4- Presenting brochures and trainings for learning independent life far from family
	.466	5- Collecting and recording important and special experiences of students in dormitory life and presenting it to others
	.449	6- Training social life skills(such as group interaction, forgiveness , cooperation ,collective life skills)
	.433	7- Formulation of formal manual and bylaw of order in dormitory life(entrance and exist, sleep and eating hours)
		Fourth factor: human force
0.758	.762	11- Continual attendance of the dormitory supervisor
	.755	2- Sincere and respectful communication of the supervisor and personnel of the dormitory
	.590	3- the presence of cleaner and service force
	.565	5- Supervision on transportation and accurate record of the presence and absence of the dormitory students
		fifth factor: physical
0.747	.608	1- Creation of conditions for right of selecting roommates by the students (field , level, tribe)
	.578	2- Possibility of selecting space of rooms with different expenses (private , 2-bed, 4-bed rooms etc.)
	.570	33- Considering study saloon without time limitation
	.529	3- Prevention of sound pollution ((noise, transportation of cars , installations etc.)
		fifth factor: hygienic
0.691	.843	1- cleaning the dormitory by students (to strengthen personal responsibility feeling)
	.551	2- providing hygiene and refinement quality standard (color, ceramic, cleaning)
	.402	4- Providing quantitative standards (number of kitchen, stove, refrigerator , bathroom , WC)

Results of the above Table show that technology, sociocultural, psychological, human force, physical and hygienic factors were the main factors of quality of life of dormitory students and effect of technology on quality of life of students was 37.31%, sociocultural effect was 10.78%, psychological factor was 6.20%, human force effect was 4.38% , physical effect was 4.10% and hygienic factor was 3.6%.

5- Presenting a model for promotion of quality of life level among dormitory students:

To study the model, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used. To fit the said model, LISREL, version 8/7 was used. The obtained conceptual model plus path coefficients are shown in Figure 1.



Chi-Square=13.89, df=7, P-value=0.05309, RMSEA=0.053

Figure 1: Conceptual model plus path coefficients

Fitting indices are shown in Table 2 where chi square is equal to 13.89 and significance level is more than 0.05 indicating good fitness of the model with data. Normalized chi square for the measurement model in this research is 1.98 and most theorists believe that the normalized chi square smaller than 3 indicates good fitness of the model (Giles, 2002). Comparative fitting index (CFI) was above 0.9 and fitting index (GFI) was equal to 0.99 and the adjusted fitting index (AGFI) was also 0.98 and also RMSEA was equal to 0.053. Based on the obtained values, it can be said that the present study model has good fitting with data.

Table 2- Model fitting indices

CFI	AGFI	GFI	RMSEA	$\chi^2/df$	sig	$\chi^2$	Fitting indices
0.96	0.98	0.99	0.053	1.98	0.053	13.89	Value of indices

Coefficients in all paths were positive and significant. The results obtained from the model include:

- Technology is effective on quality of life directly and through sociocultural and Psychological components.
- Human force is also effective on quality of life directly or through sociocultural component.
- Psychological factor is also effective directly on quality of life and also plays intermediary role and hygienic, technology and physical factors are also related to quality of life.
- Sociocultural factor is also effective directly on quality of life and plays intermediary role and relates all components to quality of life.
- Hygienic factor is not directly effective on quality of life but is effective on quality of life through sociocultural and psychological components.
- Physical factor is not directly effective on quality of life but is effective on quality of life through sociocultural and psychological components.
- Hygienic, technology, human force, physical and psychological factors explain 70% of variance of the sociocultural component of quality of life in students.
- Hygienic, technology and physical factors explain 56% of variance of the psychological component of quality of life in students.
- Sociocultural, technology, human force and psychological factors explain 93% of variance of quality of life in students.

### Discussion and conclusion

Considering that limited and dispersed researches have been conducted on quality of life of dormitory students in Iran, goal of the present study is to identify main components of quality of life of dormitory students and present a model for promotion of quality of life of students in dormitory. Results of exploratory factor with principle component analysis method (Table 1) showed that quality of life of dormitory students was multi-factor. On this basis, six technology, sociocultural, psychological, human force, physical and hygienic factors were extracted.

The obtained results were in line with findings of Abedi et al. (2008), Hashemi(2009), Red et al. (2007), Nohi(2004), Rahimi(2006), Mesbah and Abedian(2004), Dehghani and Khodapanahi(2009), Omidian and Sayad(2010), Rastgar Khaled(2010), Khozaei(2010), Ghoorchain and Tansaz(1995), Valizadeh(2004), Mathnavi et al.(2005), Mahmoudi Rad (2004), Moradian(2012) and Bakers (2007).

Baldwin et al. mention that quality of life is regarded as a concept with multiple dimensions which included different fields.

In the practical approaches, quality of life is defined as a general concept which encompasses all biological dimensions including material satisfaction, vital needs in addition to transitional aspects of life such as individual development, self-knowledge and ecosystem health. In fact, quality of life is a personal feeling which originates from personal values and objective conditions i.e. economic –social-political-cultural situation of the society in which person lives.

Researches show that farness from house and family and loss of support by the family, friends and relatives for the students who are in special age condition and developmental and growth changes cause emotional problems. Relatively different conditions of the dormitory and native students are effective on their evaluation.

The students who live with their family not only have more proper condition and feel few limitations in terms of fulfilling financial needs and living expenses but also they are supported more and separation from family, separation from friends and social communication network and coming from university to home, access to faculty, university, self-service and public library and important city centers , compatibility with sociocultural condition of new city and effort to manage an independent living are of the factors which have negative effect on nonnative students. On the other hand, unawareness with collective living conditions in dormitories at the beginning of separation from family and long-term residence in dormitory cause emergence or acceptance of deviant behaviors contradictory with social norms. Osella and Gorgin (2010) also showed that settlement conditions of students are effective on their problem solving skills and if the conditions are suitable, the effort which the students make to cook, clean, heat their living place and their social life helps them promote their problem solving skills and may have positive effect on them.

Lee et al. (2007) also showed that students want a dormitory which are suitable in terms of strategic position, nearness of classrooms to dormitory and suitable access to internet, dormitory expense, distance to facilities of the university, safety of rooms, safety of dormitory size of rooms and other main facilities in camp. In fact, not only goal of establishing dormitory is to accommodate nonnative students but also provision of dormitory is the state's commitment to provide house to people. In fact, it aims to train human resources.

Since major training activities such as living training, loving training etc. are performed in a space which is out of the conventional educational spaces and the most suitable locations of these spaces are adjacent to spaces for leisure time of students and naturally adjacent to the dormitories in which students spend their leisure time, space planning of a dormitory is not possible without considering general goals and educational policies and manpower training in the country is not possible without clarifying functional and applied functions or recognizing behavioral and social behaviors of the young.

To conclude the question that what model can be presented for promoting quality of life of the students in dormitories of the university, Table 2 and Figure 1 show that sociocultural technology, human force and psychological factors are effective on quality of life and explain 93% of the variance of quality of life of the dormitory students. Sociocultural component is affected by hygienic, technology, human force, physical and psychological factors by 70%. Psychological component is affected by hygienic, technology and physical factors by 56%. Technology is effective on quality of life directly and through sociocultural components and sociocultural and psychological component. Attention to extensive and deep effect of digital revolution on all individual and collective living fields such as leisure time , education , social relations , research and learning and all social activities , it can be said that there is no condition for dormitory life in the present era which is based on dignity of the student without gifts of information society . In other words, quality of life cannot be promoted without utilizing scientific –technological gifts. It is not possible for the students to feel enjoyment of life without concordance with these scientific and technological progresses. Therefore, it is natural that students prefer to have computer in dormitory in suitable number, create conditions for free access to scientific reliable sites, increase bandwidth and wireless equipment, consider leisure time space inside dormitory (net cafe, Cafeteria, game Café etc.), organize student meetings in dormitory to study political , social and economic issues. There should be condition in the dormitory which students feel that they live in a safe and secure place while enjoying gifts of scientific and technological progresses and feel comfortable. It is right of the dormitory

students to make comment and participate in economic, social, political, cultural processes, human development, continual progress, assume responsibility which is sensitive to cultural, attitudinal and behavioral variety of student and regard it as capital. Vaez et al. (2004) also mention in a study that quality of life of the students is lower than their non-student peers with significant difference.

Bakers (2007) also mentions that the conducted studies have shown that condition of the good dormitories and its equipment in university camps have positive effect on role of students. Therefore, higher education should make serious effort in this field. To design the ideal dormitory environment and spaces, training planning should be done based on the curriculum actions.

Performance of the students training efforts requires training of knowledgeable team which has proper knowledge and understanding of the duty while it requires construction of suitable spaces. This team may be more vital and crucial than educational team. If a homogenous condition cannot be considered for residents of a room, a privacy can be selected for each student. Design and organization of spaces can be done considering functions and general determining indices of each person's privacy so that the student feels that he/she can find him/her to some extent and feel more comfortable in small social environments and this will not be possible unless all theorists, planners and authorities of dormitory affairs make continual efforts.

Vakil Zadeh(2001) also mentions that planners and managers of student dormitories can play effective role through proper planning in coordination of student coexistence environments. Eskandari (2007) mentions that one of the major frustration of living in dormitories and crowded situations is that the person is not able to regulate or control time and type of communication under such conditions. This hypothesis is rooted in Learned Helplessness theory. According to this theory, ability of person to control his/her environment leads to feeling of hopelessness and feeling of hopelessness causes the person to give up and regard effort useless even in other situations.

Applied recommendations of this research

Results of the present research indicate that current situation of dormitories is lower than the medium level in most cases and reaching ideal situation requires serious effort of the universities' authorities. Therefore, the following recommendations are given to improve the current situation level in all components until reaching the ideal situation:

Applied recommendations of this research

Results of the present research indicate that current situation of dormitories is lower than the medium level in most cases and reaching ideal situation requires serious effort of the universities' authorities. Therefore, the following recommendations are given to improve the current situation level in all components until reaching the ideal situation:

Human dimension:

To increase quality of life level in human dimension, the following cases are recommended: Human dimension

- 1- The dormitory authorities should be constantly present to respond to needs of students in their working fields and are ready to provide services.
- 2- There should be sincere and respectful relation between students and dormitory authorities.
- 3- Employing and increasing the number of obliged consultants and physicians in dormitory to solve problems of students.
- 4- Observing proportion between the number of servicing personnel and students in dormitories

Psychological dimension

To increase quality of life level in psychological dimension, the following recommendations are mentioned:

- 1- Establishing dormitory supervision self-regulating groups comprised of resident students
- 2- Organizing classes, workshops and presenting book and written and verbal guides to increase independent living skills far from family
- 3- Recording storage and sharing dormitory life experiences among the students
- 4- Providing opportunity for selection of roommates optionally and based on field and level of education
- 5- Organizing workshop, classes and meetings for training of living skills in collective communication skills

Physical dimension

To increase quality of life level in physical dimension, the following recommendations are mentioned:

- 1- Preparing and procuring special rooms (private , suite etc.) with different payments at option of the student
- 2- Creating suitable green space for recreation and study
- 3- Providing suitable sport equipment for filling leisure time in dormitory
- 4- Establishing study saloons without time limitation

- 5- Reducing sound pollution in dormitory by constructing dormitory in non-crowded environments , standardizing installations , insulating wall and windows
- 6- Creating suitable space for parking students' cars

#### Sociocultural

To increase quality of life level in sociocultural dimension, the following recommendations are mentioned:

- 1- Creating necessary conditions for holding sessions and meetings for broadcasting and criticizing film
- 2- Organizing sport and scientific-cultural competitions inside dormitory
- 3- Sociability of students by organizing dormitory meetings to increase interaction and get familiar with traditions of different tribes
- 4- Organizing different exhibits and festivals about familiarity with tribal-local achievements inside dormitory
- 5- Creating suitable space such as net café, Cafeteria, game Café etc.)
- 6- Organizing political and social meetings by inviting political and social theorists and authorities inside student dormitories

#### Technology

To improve quality of life in technology dimension, the following cases are suggested:

- 1- Increasing the number of computer to accelerate use of computer services
- 2- Creating user accounts for access to electronic sources and digital library
- 3- Increasing and providing suitable bandwidth and access to wireless internet with suitable speed

#### Hygiene

To improve quality of life in hygienic dimension, the following cases are suggested:

- 1- Encouraging the authorities to make students interfere and participate in cleaning of dormitory
- 2- Formulating manual , regulations and instructions relating to hygiene and cleanness of dormitory space and supervising on their good performance
- 3- Observing the proportion between number of students and number of WC services and kitchen
- 4- Creating and providing suitable dining saloons in student dormitories
- 5- Presenting educational workshop and speeches for making students familiar with sound sexual relations skills and aware with damages resulting from failure to observe it

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