



National
College *of*
Ireland

**Determinants of international students' choice of accommodation in Ireland:
A study of National College of Ireland.**

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ABSTRACT

Accommodation is an essential part of tertiary student's life. The residences' of students play a critical part in the student's experience while on the campus of the institution. Individuals from different backgrounds have different preferences when it comes to choosing a place of accommodation especially the environmental conditions around the residency such as security, room size and recreational facilities. All students both international and local are observed to have different adjustments problems as they move from one place of residence to another. The increase in the number of international students seeking higher education has created problems that include finding an accommodation to reside on-campus as one of the biggest challenges.

The objective of the study is to determine the factors that international students' base when they choose accommodation in Ireland. The study was grouped into seven chapters. A Descriptive research approach was used for the study. A questionnaire was the main data collection instrument as the study was quantitative in nature. The population for the study was international students in the National College of Ireland, Dublin. A sample size of one hundred first year international students was used for the study. The sampling techniques for the study were convenience and purposive sampling techniques. Both primary and secondary data were the main source of data for the study. Data collected was analysed by the use of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Results from the findings revealed that most international students were residing outside the campus. Their housing type includes shared flats or houses, property own by relative or friends, lodging with the landlord in own room and shared rooms. Findings further revealed that some international students travelled more than three miles to their faculty for lectures. Again, the findings revealed that international students when looking for accommodation considers cleanliness and sanitation, accommodation cost, privacy, security, space for learning, space of bathroom and toilet, size of room size, proximity to faculty or lectures and proximity to recreation centres. In addition, findings revealed that international students' academic performance is significantly impacted by accommodation factors such as privacy, proximity to lecture or faculty, cleanliness and sanitation, space for learning, size of the room, recreational facilities, good security, and proximity to restaurant or eating place. The study concluded that students are willing to stay on-campus if the cost of on-campus accommodation was moderate and within their means. The study recommends that the National College of

Ireland work in collaboration with the Ministry of Higher Education to build hostels purposely meant for international students at an affordable price which will reduce the ratio between on-campus and outside campus residence. Likewise, National College of Ireland should work hand in hand with the bursary committee to reduce the cost of accommodation for on-campus for international students to make on-campus residency attractive to international students.

DECLARATION

Submission of Thesis and Dissertation

National College of Ireland

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

The goal of each student is to graduate, and not only to graduate but preferably graduate with the highest grades. The increase in the attendance of global higher education has led to higher education funding organizations to focus more on creating and maintain environments that will improve learning conditions and achievement (Masrek & Zainol, 2015). One of the essential components of tertiary institutions has been to identify by various peer reviewed literature students' accommodation experiences and determinants. Institutions all over the world are able to attract large number of students from different backgrounds, ethnicity and nationalities when there is accommodation for all students to pursue higher education (Kolawole & Boluwatife, 2016).

Student accommodation has been a major concern in the area of education globally as there has been an increase in student populations compared to the increase in infrastructure (Molutsi, 2013). The residences of students play a critical role in the student's experience while on the campus of the institution (Kobue et al., 2017). Over the years, students' mobility has increased due to the effects of globalization of higher education (Beine, 2014). The number of students enrolled exceeds the number of campus accommodation provided by universities (Khozaei et al, 2012, Thuraiya et al, 2014 and Hilmy et al, 2013) as the results many students have to rent private spaces nearer to their campus (University of Maryland, 2012).

Accommodation can be provided to students in the form of campus-based residences as they pursue their education in the institution (Botha et al., 2013). In the facilitation of a conducive environment to encourage maximum learning, the qualities of the accommodation coupled with the environment are key factors in its selection (Botah et al., 2013). Accommodation is an important part of the students' life since it affects the physiological needs, and it is seen to be important for the quality of life of the student (Alias et al., 2014).

Individuals from different backgrounds have different preferences when it comes to choosing accommodation especially the environmental conditions such peaceful environment, security, access to recreational facilities and many more around the residency is considered. All students both international and local are observed to have different feelings and adjustment problems as

they move from their homes to their new residency (Saare et al., 2018). According to Kobue et al., (2017), a study carried out in the United States shows that current students have changed their preferences for selecting accommodation by demanding quality and convenient residence including the searching residences with access to facilities such as gymnasium, internet services, and laundry.

The accommodation for students brings about an all-new lifestyle in terms of its location which has been observed to be the most important factor in choosing an accommodation (McCann et al., 2019). The environment of the residences of the students is observed to affect their comforts, convenience, and academic performance (Khozei, 2010). According to Kolawole and Boluwatife (2010), the conditions found in the environment helps in a meaningful tertiary experience, and also there is a link between the accommodation the students live in and their academic performance. Again, living on campus is observed to lessen the dropout of students because the students are noticed to do well academically (de Araujo and Murray, 2010).

Furthermore, living on the university's campus is deemed to be safer than staying outside the campus (Paltridge et al., 2010), as it comes with challenges such as theft. Student residences that are decent, affordable, and maintained well allow students to pay attention to their academic activities which in the end increases their chances of academic success. The understanding of choices and decision-making of the students will aid in better qualifying the institutional position strategy through an open identification of the purchase (Petruzzellis and Romanazzi, 2010). This study, therefore, searches for the factors that international students choose when they are in search of accommodation during their stay in the institution.

1.1 Problem Statement

According to Wu and Hammond (2010), there is a massive increase in the number of international students seeking higher education; approximately 4.3 million students are enrolled in universities outside their home countries. According to Wu and Hammond (2010) Australia, The United Kingdom, Switzerland, New Zealand and Austria have the highest percentage of international students. Leaving their various home comes with problems which includes finding accommodation to reside in on-campus is one of the biggest challenges (Duangpracht, 2012).

Also, it has been observed that these international students from various countries face challenges with language, social interaction including acquiring accommodation of their choice. Every

international student coming to the institution has a preferred set of choices when it comes to choosing accommodation or what type of student residence or hostel he or she is interested in. The different choices of the variables are the determining factors in choosing a hostel or residence to occupy during his or her stay on campus. Students' expectation about the quality of education offered in an institution proves to be strategic in a university's strategy because service quality and the satisfaction of the student are the essential determinant factors in retaining a student in an institution (Petruzzellis and Romanazzi, 2010).

However, little empirical research has been done to identify the factors that determine the choice of selecting an accommodation by international students in Ireland. There has been a massive growth in the number of people wanting to study in higher education in recent years and this is set to continue based on projections for the full-time demand for education developed by the Department of Education and Skills. This increase in number of people to further their education according to the projections by Gormley (2015) is estimates to increase by 168,000 from 2014 to over 193,000 in 2024. The reason for this increment according to Gormley (2015) is the benefits higher education brings to the individual, society and the economy. However, it also places pressure on existing infrastructure including an increasing demand for suitable student accommodation. However, little empirical research has been done to identify the factors that determine the choice of selecting accommodation by international students in Ireland which recent research mostly pertaining to other countries.

Most recent studies was done by Gormley (2015) on the difference in student engagement and living conditions between resident and non-resident students ignoring that of international students. Others included a report by Higher education authority on student accommodation demand and supply. Another research report completed in this field was a report by National Economic and Social Council (NESC) which pointed to the fact that supply is a key determinant of the availability and affordability of rental housing. Adriaanse (2007) pinpointed in his studies that students residing on campuses perform better than those residing outside campuses as campus residents are closer to classrooms of learning, have easy access to libraries, quick laundry services, have social interaction with fellow hall mates, participate in university social activities, have greater bonding opportunities and sporting arenas for relaxing and many more which off campus residents might not have these privileges.

Most first year university students are most vulnerable in terms of academic failure. The pressure of university life and transition to university life becomes difficult for them to cope with especially with international students (McInnis, 2001). With this in mind first year experience for international students is heavily influenced by a large variety of factors that this study focuses on to fill the literature gap on international student's choice of accommodation in Ireland.

1.2 Significance of the study

The findings from this study will go a long way to assist management in charge of students' residence in the institution to know the preferences of international students in choosing a students' residence. It will also enlighten hostel managers about how they can structure their buildings and have knowledge about what facilities and services they will need to provide in their hostels to attract the international students to patronize their services.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This study deals with the various determinants of international students on the choice of a residence. The location of the study is the National College of Ireland, Dublin.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the theoretical and empirical literature on the determining factors that assist international students in choosing accommodation. The chapter examines several peer reviewed articles and other related literature. This aided extensively in understanding the factors that determine the choice of accommodation for international students.

2.1 Selection of choice of University

Many hundreds of international universities offer numerous qualifications and also have different requirements for entry making students around the world choose their schools based on circumstances and the constraints placed on them through socio-economic and personal factors. Such as the economic level of a student will determine if he/she will be able to afford the accommodation cost available. Some personal factors include academic performance, gender, financial constraints, parental involvement and ethnic group which are observed to affect the student's choice. The provision of adequate and comfortable means of education in the terms of facilities in the school and accommodation has been linked to success in academics, rates of retention, and satisfaction by students (Onclin, 2014).

Also, another role is played by the institutions; the activities that involve the student's recruitment and marketing strategies that are used by the university will attract different students with different backgrounds. Again, students evaluate institutions' attributes such as locations and reputation, teaching facilities, or student support systems. The members of the family, school teachers, counselors, and friends affect the student's choices and motivation. Students when selecting their choice of school contacts Academic Accreditation Agencies such as AMBA, Equis, Athena Swan, ANECA, Ofqual, ASIC and BAC to verify if these selected schools are accredited.

Furthermore, one critical factor that is choosing an institution for higher education by international students is reputation (Braumah, 2014). According to Fernandez et al., (2010), the university's reputation has a major influence on the students' mode of selection of a particular university in a study conducted in Malaysia concerning the student's choice of selecting a university. International students during their selection of schools look at the different international university rankings, world university Rankings, and reputation ranking, subject rankings, impact Ranking and regional rankings (Braumah, 2014).

Again, graduate career prospects were also seen to have an important role in the mind of a student choosing a tertiary institution of his/her choice. The expectations in the graduate career drive the student to select the University of Study due to the perception held by some employers on the quality of students produced by that specific university (Braumah, 2014). Students tend to think about ways their career prospects will lead them when they choose a particular university of study. Moreover, the image of the country is also taken into consideration when selecting a location for their universities of choice (Braumah, 2014). Every country and the way of life its citizen live, this will, in turn, affect the lives of international students thereby critical decision is taken to avoid any situation which may not favor the student.

Personal values are one of the major factors that influence university selection. They are also relevant in understanding and effectively predicting behavior across different settings (Braumah, 2014). Desiderato et al. (2002) as cited in Braumah (2014) reported that students hold values about colleges and universities that significantly affect values impact how they approach their educational experience and that academic values influence students' selection of universities.

Students choose universities based on their perceived social advantage relative. Nigel et al. (2011) argue that the perception of social class and other reference groups can influence a student's decision to attend a university

Also one of the major determinants that influence students' choice of selecting a university is promotion. The increase in number of competition between universities for students has led to universities around the globe to employ promotional and marketing communication tools such as advertisement, school fairs, sponsorships and scholarship and direct marketing such as e-mail, telephone and Facebook ad (Braumah (2014). Braumah (2014) further posited that one of the

factors that determine international students' choice of selecting university to study is the image of the host university country. According to Barimah (2014) country's image of where the university is located is always the first source of information students consider before selecting a university.

Students generally make decisions about their choice of institutions in their final year of study in secondary school. The existence of various stakeholders, which starts from the individual student as the primary consumer to the whole of society (students, parents, staff, employers, business and legislation) and their multiple and different interests, both social and economic, require continuous improvement strategies with particular regard to quality (Petruzzellis and Romanazzi, 2010). The multistage processes involved with the choice of schools involve successive decisions that come together with registration in the university. Hossler et al., (1989) as cited by Ivy (2010), stated that it is made up of two stages. These are

- Deciding to enter higher education
- Selecting a particular institution

2.2 Students choice models

Three student choice models describe how students make decisions concerning how to further their higher education through the selection of Higher Education Institutions (Petruzzellis and Romanazzi, 2010 and Braimah, 2014).

- Sociological Models of student choices

This includes aspects like the student's personal background in deciding on further studies. Student's family background, friends, counselors, self-fulfillment, and motivation have a huge impact on the further education decision in a specific institution. The family also influences the decisions that the students make when it comes to choosing university and process by which they apply.

- Economic models of student's choice

The economic models used by prospective students take into account various factors such as the cost of living, cost in relation to their studies and the opportunity cost they will incur after completing their study. The economic model is all about cost-benefits analysis.

That is the benefits for pursuing education must outweigh the cost incurred for pursuing education.

- Information processing models

The information processing model is a combination of the economic model and sociocultural model of student's choice. This model combines two previous models to try and determine how students go about choosing their university based on information made available to students.

2.3 The Ireland approach to internationalizing higher education

The higher education system in Ireland is composed of Universities, Colleges of education, Institutes of Technology, Higher Education Authority colleges, private colleges, state-aided third-level institutions, and colleges that are recognized by the National University of Ireland (Findlay, 2011). The Institutes of Technology, Colleges of Education, and Higher Education Authority Colleges are all autonomous and self-governing; however, they are state-funded substantially. The private independent colleges depend greatly on the fees of their students. All other courses which are found at the tertiary level but outside the higher education system are grouped as further education.

According to EMN (2013), the Irish government launched a strategy for internationalization for the sector of education known as Investing in Global Relationship. This strategy was targeted at increasing the international student body in higher institutions in Ireland by 12000 to 38000. This development shows a global trend in the drive to attract international students to higher education. The number of students attending universities significantly increased from 4184 in the year 2000/2001 to 10,981 in the 2012/2013 academic year. The number of students in the institutes of technology also increased from 1082 to 2181 within the same period (Gorgoshidzie, 2010). According to UNESCO (2019) in 2017 over 5.3 million students were enrolled for educational programs in six countries: United State of America, the United Kingdom, Australia, France, Germany and Russia.

2.4 Student Accommodation

Accommodation according to the Oxford advance learners' dictionary means a place to stay, live or work which is rented either temporary or permanent and may be furnished or not furnished. According to Jennifer (2011) accommodation involves an individual freedom of choice in a given physical setting where the individual has the freedom of what happens in it during the person stay. One of the most important factors that influence the perception of first year student experience in every university is accommodation as majority of university students commute to university (Kuh, Gonyea & Palmer, 2001).

Students who live in off-campus or outside campus are referred to as commuter students. They are viewed as less committed to their studies and are usually considered as less academic attractive compared to those living on campus (Jacoby, 2000a). According to Kuh et al (2001) student living out-side campus do not have the necessary opportunities to engage with peers, professors and the university. Molutsi (2013) is of the view that adequate accommodation is an essential student personnel service that enables students to achieve their educational objectives in any educational institution. Jenifer (2011) pinpointed in her studies that student accommodation is a place where students dwell, lives and should be normally be situated within College such as hotels or hall of residence. The student resident apart from been a resting place for students represents a learning environment which provides comfort, safety and enhanced academic performance of students (Jenifer, 2011, Kolawole & Boluwatife, 2016). Student accommodation is regarded as a hostel built with some formal or institutional features with the purpose of providing a resting place for students and to enable students to access recreational facilities (Khozaei et al, 2010). An on-campus hostel provides students with high security and safety compared to off-campus housing (Jennifer, 2011).

The goals of any tertiary institution are defined by the development and inculcation of proper values into students and development of students' intellectual capacities to enable them to comprehend and appreciate their environment, these goals cannot be achieved by tertiary institution unless students are adequately accommodated for (Jennifer, 2011). Students' satisfaction with their accommodation varies depending on the quality of facilities and services provided in their various hostels and hall of residents. The context of students' satisfaction on accommodation varies across literatures; students are less satisfied with overall accommodation

quality (Nimako & Bondinuba). Studies conducted by Khozaei et al (2010), Matthew (2014) revealed that students are less satisfied with their room size, bathroom space, kitchen and cost of their hotels and halls. Findings of Neema (2003), Yusuff (2011), Najib et al (2012) and Ekejiuba (2015) all revealed that students were less satisfied with the hostels security, electricity and water supply.

2.5 Studentification

Studentification occurs when changes are observed in university towns as it does not occur in vacuums but urban spaces (Boersma et al., 2013). Students move from their hometown to new places for education thereby requiring accommodation for the duration of their study and the majority of the students are observed to stay away from their homes to further and concentrate on their studies (Ackermann and Visser, 2016). With this occurrence, two main events may occur which are to stay in an accommodation provided by the university or may locate themselves in privately owned residences that are located near the campus. According to Kenna (2011), student housing near campus neighborhoods is in two parts namely; housing in multiple occupations and purpose-built student housing.

Due to the increasing number of international students in Higher Education Institutions, most universities around the globe cannot provide accommodation for everyone. This has resulted in the growth of private owned student accommodation (Kenna, 2011). Students tend to live close to their schools to reduce transportation fees. This has resulted in the rise of private residence districts near the schools (Miessner, 2020 & Kinton et al., 2018).

Smith and Hubbard (2014) noted that the typical residential life path of British students is first moving into the university's hall of residence, then into shared, private residence. Shenjing He (2015) stated that students living in off-campus residences are escaping the constraints of university living. Due to the high demand for student accommodation, the rent gap has increased in some towns around the university. This issue is a critical factor in attracting investment in student accommodation (Miessner, 2020).

2.6 Student Accommodation and Academic Performance

The measuring of a student capacity in subject, course, discipline or registered program is called academic performance. Academic performance represents the outcome of a student in achieving a specific goal which is in line with intuitional activities Steinmayr, Meibner, Weidinger & Wirthwein, 2015). In measuring the academic performance of a student for an entire program the cumulative grade point (CGPA) at the end of a semester is often used to measure students' achievements. Various studies have attempted to identify and measure factors that influence the academic performance of students in many contexts. This study focuses on the type of students' accommodation and their impact on academic performance.

The average student according to Araujo and Murray (2010a) in United States revealed that student GPA increases between 0.19-0.97 when students are living on campus. Owolabi (2015) findings were also in line with that of Araujo and Murray (2010) using University of Ibadan in Nigeria as a case study. Owolabi (2015) findings posited that the average student residing on campus was relatively better than those residing off campus. Findings from Omar, Abdullah, Yusof, Hamdan & Nasrudin (2011) differed as their studies revealed that academic performance of off campus students in Malaysia were not influenced by the type of student accommodation although living off campus was more challenging than staying on campus.

Studies conducted by (Yusuff, 2011; Ekejiuba, 2015 and Modebelu & Agommouh, 2014) revealed that there is positive relationship between academic performance and students residing on campus. Their findings revealed that there was a negative relationship between off-campus students and academic performance. Studies conducted by Baharin el al in 2015, findings revealed that there is a significant correlation between academic performances using UiTM in Malaysia for their studies. Inadequate student accommodation is a factor affecting 82.5% of the undergraduate students at the University of Zambia according to Nchungo (2013).

2.7 Factors affecting the selection of students' occupancy

In every institution, the residences of the students are commonly regarded and carried out as a mere physical shelter to cozily accommodate students. The cause of the shortage of accommodation has become a problem due to the rise in the population of students. The increase

in property prices and rental accommodation and its availability has also become a factor in tertiary institutions. This has led to the increase in prices of hostels available hence those who can afford these hostels are less. In order to recruit and retain students in the universities, student satisfaction in terms of accommodation should be improved. According to Kolawole and Boluwaite (2010), the environmental conditions that are present increase a meaningful tertiary experience and also has been found to correlate between the living accommodation and the performances of the students academically. The situations of living of Higher Education Institutions, student's experiences vary which is due to the variety of housing options and their responding environments that are available. Students residing two to five kilometers from the National College of Ireland University spend much time money on transportation. Also, minutes spent commuting increases the average time a student must spend to reach the lecture hall.

The different environments that are available help in the creation of a feeling of security and belongingness. With this knowledge, it is deemed that the environmental attributes are observed to be key in the selection of choice of occupancy/accommodation. It also determines the level of satisfaction of the students/ occupants (Kobue et al., 2017). According to Delvin (1994), as cited by Kobue et al., 2017, some parts of the student body prefer off-campus i.e. privately owned residences than on-campus residences. This is because of lack of privacy, high noise level, and also the situation of sharing a bed space. Again, some students select privately owned residences because it is seen to be affordable, decent, and offers facilities that are of interest to them. Also, students who request such hostels look out for the important differences such as gender, mix – ethnicity, economic status, and previous home experience

The living environment can be identified from different angles which are the architectural detail, cultural, social, and economic perspectives (Muslim et al., 2010). However, the physical environment is seen to be the highest predictor when it involves the satisfaction of the residences. This influences the choice of occupancy because as the environment attracts the students, there is more chance for more students to occupy the residence.

Khozaei et al., (2010) identified some factors that affect the selection of a residence by students. These are the safety of the housing that is security-wise, cleanliness of the housing, the programs, and activities provided by the residences. Physical factors which are both internal and external are as follows:

- Water supply

- Gym Facility
- Security
- Size of the room
- Laundry room
- Access to the internet
- Location of the residence
- Study rooms or areas

All these factors are predicted to influence the choice of residence by the students however the key factor in choosing the accommodation is location. The location of the accommodation residence determines how close the student is to his school.

Magni et al., (2019) studied the factors that influence university student's choice of accommodation: risk perception, safety, and vulnerability. The research was aimed at acquiring a better understanding of factors that influence students' decision on renting an accommodation during their study period. A survey was conducted through the administration of questionnaires to participants in the Università Politecnica Delle Marche to gather data. Parametric tests were conducted to determine the pattern to be used in the computation of scales. The exploratory component analysis was also done to explore the relationship between the categories. The findings indicated that safety was not the main factor identified by the students when choosing accommodation and not all the students were able to define the risk level of the cities they live in.

Tuan, (2018) studies focused on the factors that affect the selection of accommodation for new Students in Da Nang City, Vietnam. 500 students from Universities and Colleges in Da Nang were surveyed with the administration of questionnaires. A research model was created for the analysis of the data received. The results of the survey indicated that six factors influenced the decision of the new students concerning the acquisition of an accommodation. These are location, quality of service, facilities, living environment, price, and security.

Awua-Imande et al., (2019) studied Student Housing Requirements in near Campus Neighborhoods: A Case Study of Samaru Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria. The study was aimed at highlighting the housing needs of students in Samaru, near-campus neighborhoods (North-West Nigeria) employing the use of Student Accommodation Preference Index (SAPI) instrument. A survey was conducted using questionnaires and 118 students to gather data. The data were analyzed using SPSS. A reliability test was done. The findings showed that the housing need of

students was varied depending on the distance they travelled and the facilities they needed within their vicinity such as private room, bath, fridge, kitchen, laundry, dry area, fire protection system, gated house and common room. The findings also indicated that the availability of Automated Teller Machine (ATM) points, hospital, places of worship, recreation areas, and Bus Station will make the students enjoy quality life within near-campus neighborhoods.

2.8 Accommodation challenges of international students

There are several issues that come up concerning accommodation that influences the international student's experience.

The increasing prices of properties and the shortage of housing have caused many schools to stop accommodating international students. A lot of international students are not able to find suitable housing based on the scarcity of residential hall accommodation and lack of housing in the private sector (Duangpracha, 2012). Due to the shortage of accommodation on campus, students end up searching for accommodation close to the university and others end up having poor performance due to the lack of resources like the internet for research work and assignments.

Also, the international students are provided with limited information in education packs which often only list the on-campus options of accommodation. With this problem at hand, some providers of accommodation take advantage of these situations which leaves the students with a bad experience. These difficulties and dissatisfactions are tough challenges for the management of current and future accommodation of international students (Duangpracha, 2012 & Jennifer, 2011)

Poverty which is the condition or state in which a community or person lacks financial resources for at least a minimum standard of living may be a driving force while people expect migration as a profitable move. This is ambiguous, the reason for migrating is centered on economic motives therefore student migrants lookout for accommodations they can afford. Sponsors are sometimes not able to confirm the challenges accommodation; this makes a lot of international students not aware of the cost involved in rents, their housing rights, and obligations.

In view of this issue some international students are not sure that they are permitted to either rent privately or stay in student housing accommodation. Most of the times due to lack of knowledge, inexperience and unfamiliarity with living abroad, students end up living in less satisfactory

accommodation, alienated and feeling lonely and with a high chance of becoming physiologically distressed. (Duangpracha, 2012).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the study is to determine the factors that influence international students' in the National College of Ireland choice of accommodation both on-campus and off-campus.

3.0 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives are:

- To determine the accommodation types preferred by the international students in Dublin
- To determine the factors that are considered by international students in choosing their accommodation
- To assess students' views on the impact of the various types of accommodation on their academic performance.

3.1 Research Question

The research questions of this study are:

- What are the accommodation types that are preferred by international students in Ireland?
- What are the factors that are considered by international students when choosing accommodation?
- What are the impacts of students' accommodation on students' academic performance?

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter will discuss in detail the methods and approaches adopted to enable the researcher to achieve the objectives of the study. Research methodology is relevant for each piece of research and covers the study design, population of the study, sampling technique used for the study, data collection tools, data analyzing technique, ethical considerations and validity and reliability of the study. The researcher explains the following in detail in this chapter.

4.1 Research Rational

After an explicit and implicit review of literature on international students experiencing in selecting their choice of accommodation it came to the notice of the researcher that there was a huge gap on factors that determines international students' choice of accommodation other than recent research by Gormley (2015) on commuting versus resident students: Difference in Irish Student Engagement, Social and living conditions based on place of residence ignored that of international students. In other to address the gap the researcher decided to research to examine the factors that determine international students' choice of accommodation using students attending National College of Ireland for the study.

4.1.1 Research Aim

This research aims to assess factors that influence international students' choice of accommodation in Ireland and to find out how their various accommodation choices affect their academic performance.

4.2 Research Philosophy

According to Saunder et al. (2016) research philosophy gives a clear view on how the world is looked at based on establishing beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge. Research philosophy according to Saunder involves research approaches, methodologies, and data collection procedures that enable a researcher to obtained knowledge to answer research questions with the motive of achieving the research goal. In a nutshell research philosophy is the pathway for conducting research.

4.2.1 Philosophical Underpinnings

No research is done without reference to existing research (Corbetta, 2003). This section looks into how academic research, experiments, and investigation are carried out. Ontology and epistemology are the two main assumptions that can be derived from the philosophical framework. The understanding of reality, existence, beliefs, beings, and becoming according to Quinlan et al. (2011) and Moon and Blackman (2014) is called Ontology. According to Quinlan et al. (2011) ontology is the study of what there is. According to Brynard and Bell (2015), epistemology involves the acquiring of knowledge in a research area that is acceptable. Quinlan et al (2012) are of the view that epistemologist acquires knowledge through methods, scope, opinions, and assumptions. There are two broad areas under the epistemology approach which are positivism and interpretivism paradigms.

The interpretive approach under epistemology uses a qualitative research approach for research and focuses much on narrations and interpretation of social life, beliefs, assumptions, and reality (Saunders et al. 2016). Thompson (2015) is of the view that the interpretive approach is used by research to obtain in-depth knowledge on human behavior and nature and what contributes to the change of human behavior. The interpretive approach furthermore focuses also on social theories, beliefs, and perception. On the other hand, the positivism approach is of the view that human actions, reality, beliefs, and actions can be statistically measured, and as such quantitative research approach is used for data collections. According to Saunders et al. (2016) positivist approach is the use of scientific methods in the form of research, experiments, and statistics to understand the actions and behavior of humans, society, and the globe as large.

The positivism approach was used in this study as the research methods for the study is quantitative. The researcher used quantitative research tools to collect data on factors that influence international students' choice of accommodation in Ireland, using students of the National College of Ireland.

4.3 Research Method

Three research methodologies can be used to achieve any research aim, these research methodologies are quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method approach. Research conducted around the world uses one of these three research approaches. The mixed approach involves the use of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. This is deemed fit for the research as

the qualitative aspect gives an insight to problems while the quantitative aspect measures or quantifies opinions, attitudes, and beliefs relating to a problem (Burns et al., 2013). This approach best suits this study but cannot be used due to the huge number sampling size, time constraints and the COVID 19 pandemic restrictions, as such this research method is not deemed feasible for this study.

Qualitative research methods according to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) are the interpretation of natural phenomena, human behavior through narration, and interpretation in the form of non-statistical methods through interviews, observation, and listening. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), most qualitative research involves verbal interaction with participants either through a semi or structured interview guide and is most appropriate when the sampling size is small and the study area uses a descriptive research approach. The qualitative research method is not deemed feasible for the study due to a large sampling size and the restriction put in place due to the COVID 19 pandemic such as partial lockdown and protocols to observe during gatherings.

The study adopted a descriptive approach and as such a quantitative research method was used for the study. The study adopted inferential statistics where linear regression and correlation was used to measure the effects of individual data or groups of data points derived from a questionnaire. The regression analysis enabled the study to find out what factors influences students choice of accommodation most. The quantitative method was adopted because international students' opinions on what influences their decisions on their choice for accommodation were quantified into statistical and quantifiable data for discussions.

This approach was also adopted as research conducted by Magni et al., (2019) on the factors that influence university student's choice of accommodation used a survey through the administration of questionnaires to participants in the Università Politecnica Delle Marche to gather data. The approach by Gormley (2015) was not deemed fit for the study as Gormley used secondary data from NESG. The study seeks to find out what factors influence the 100 international student respondents in their choice of accommodation. Descriptive research was used as it gives a clear picture of the situations as it happens (Burn and Grove, 2013).

4.4 STUDY POPULATION

The population of a study comprises of all individuals with the same characteristics which makes them distinct from other subjects or groups. The population can also be defined as the sampling unit from which samples are selected from. The population for the study is all first year students in the National College of Ireland.

4.5 Sampling

Sampling is the process of choosing from the population a given numbers of units. Sampling can be done in two ways namely probability sampling techniques where all elements in the population have equal chances of be selected and non-probability sampling where all elements or members in a population do not have equal chances of be selected. Non-probability sampling technique was adopted for the study.

4.5.1 Sampling size and sampling technique for the study

One hundred respondents was selected to participate in this research due to the time limitation of the study which was less than that of Magni et al (2009) who used 338 students for their studies. Participants were selected using the non-probability sampling technique. The non-probability sampling technique used was convenience and purposive sampling technique which was used in similar work by Magni et al., (2019) in the Università Politecnica Delle Marche and Tuan, (2018). The criteria for inclusion were all first-year undergraduate and postgraduate international students studying in the National College of Ireland which was adopted by Tuan (2018) in her studies.

This group was selected because they were the best people to give a true reflection on what factors influenced their choice of during their time of getting their admission into National College of Ireland and how their choice of accommodation had an impact on their academic life. Purposive sampling technique was employed in selecting international students for the research as they have the specific characteristics which are important in helping the researcher to achieve the research aims and they have some knowledge on the research topic through life experience. The convenience sampling technique was used in selecting the 100 respondents to answer the questions for the study. Due to the COVID 19 restrictions, the online survey questionnaires were sent through individual student emails for them to respond to the questions relating to the topic.

4.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Each research method has various ways of obtaining data. Choosing a research tool or instrument is influenced by the research design, research methods, research objective, and research questions. The most common research tools used in social research are observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Observation is a qualitative research instrument where data is collected through observing participants' actions, behavior, and outcomes in a natural situation over some time. Observation is not appropriate for this study as this study is quantitative research. Interviews on the other hand is also a qualitative research instrument used in acquiring data through an interaction or communication between the researcher and the participant guided by a structured or semi-structured interview guide. This approach is not suitable for the study as the sampling for the study is large and interviewing them would be prohibitively time consuming

Questionnaires, on the other hand, involve the asking of series of questions in a structured way either open or close-ended with the motive of obtaining information efficiently from respondents. Questionnaires are the most suitable for quantitative research as it provides a cheaper, quicker and effective way of obtaining large information from a large number of respondents (sampling size). The study adopts the use of questionnaires in the form of an online survey. The use of online survey questionnaires enabled the researcher to obtain all relevant information from the large sampling size in this study.

4.6.1 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The study adopted questionnaires from Kobue et al. (2017) , Magni et al. (2017), Douglas (2018) and Joy and Joshua (2017) who conducted similar research in Vietnam, France, Bostwana and Nigeria respectively. An online survey questionnaire was the main data collection tool. Kobue et al. (2017) posited adopting questionnaires from similar previous studies saves time and also improves the validity and consistency of the research. The online survey questionnaires were closed-ended questions with multiple selections and scales. The online survey questionnaire was grouped according to the study objectives. There were four sections under the questionnaires that is demographics, accommodation types available to international students, factors international

students considers when selecting accommodation and the impact of the choice of accommodation on students life. The data collection period is estimated to take two weeks.

4.7 Sources of data

Every researcher obtains data through two sources. These sources are primary and secondary data. Primary data is data created by the researcher through the research first hand through observation, interviews, experiments, and administering of questionnaires. Primary data was obtained for the research through an online survey questionnaire. Secondary data on the other hand was obtained for this study through relevant peer reviewed publications, articles, and journals on the subject area.

4.8 Data analysis techniques

Data collected was first checked if they are complete for analysis. Data was first decoded according to the themes of the research. The data was grouped into themes where Cronbach alpha was used to check the reliability of the variables before analyzing. Themes with Cronbach alpha less than 0.60 will be rejected. SPSS version 20.0 and Microsoft Excel 2010 was used in analyzing data into descriptive statistics such as percentages, means score, standard deviation, and regression analysis. These numerical statistics were presented in tables, charts, and figures for discussion, the researcher plans to use one week in keying two hundred questionnaires and an additional one week will be used in generating descriptive statistics for discussion this was deemed fit as similar studies by Magni et al (2019) used this approach.

4.9 Ethical consideration in this study

Ethics is very important in every research; the researcher has the responsibility of acknowledging, protecting the welfare and privacy of subjects under study and keeping the participants informed. This study is meant for the approval of the National College of Ireland as such the researcher has read through the research guide and ensured that all ethical protocols involving this research was adhered to. The researcher sought permission from all respondents before involving them in the research work; participation of students in the research was made voluntary as respondents was made aware that this study is solely made known for academic purposes. Ethical courtesies and moral values concerning respect for protocol, organizational culture, and human rights of the participants in the research were strictly adhered to. Other ideas of scholars used in this research work have been properly cited and referenced.

4.10 Reliability and Validity

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) in order to assess the validity of content a professional or expert should be made to review the study. The researcher adhered to all instructions and recommendations of his supervisor, also an expert on the field of the study area was conducted to look through during each stage of the work. Mustafa (2011) posited that validity measures the truthfulness of the results obtained. The researcher ensured that the quality of information is not compromised by using secondary data that are related to the research topic, objectives, and questions.

The reliability of this work was measured by the use of Cronbachs' coefficient. According to Sekaran (2003), the Cronbach coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, the general rule states that variables greater than 0.60 are acceptable and variables greater than 0.7 have strong reliability. SPSS was used to measure the Cronbach alpha of all variables under each objective of the study. The study was undertaken with due professional competence to ensure that findings are true, valid, and reliable.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter analysis data collected through an online survey. The data collected was first converted to excel and was then keyed into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The keyed data was then processed into tables, descriptive statistics, and regression tables. The

analysis is grouped under five themes namely demographics, reliability, students accommodation preference, accommodation factors that influence students' choice of accommodation, and the students views on the effects of accommodation on their academic life. This chapter discusses in detail respondents' answers to the research questions and research objectives.

5.1 Demographics

The demographics section on the online survey focused on students' age, nationality, marital status, level of education and gender. All respondents answered all questions under this section.

5.1.2 Gender

Out of the 100 respondents, 48 respondents were male, while the remaining 52 respondents were female.

Table 1: Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	48	48.0	48.0
Female	52	52.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	

5.1.3 Age

In other to obtain the age category of students respondents a scale of 1 to 4 was used to present the age ranges from 18-30years to 51-60years. The majority of the respondents 61 students were between the ages of 18-30 years. 27 students out of 100 falls within the age range of 31-40years. 10 students' respondents were within the age range of 41-50years. The remaining respondents (2) indicated that their age range was between 51-60years.

Table 2: Respondent Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 18-30	61	61.0	61.0	61.0
31-40	27	27.0	27.0	88.0
41 -50	10	10.0	10.0	98.0
51-60	2	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

5.1.4 Marital Status

78 respondents out of 100 respondents revealed that they were single and yet to tie the knot. 21 respondents out of 100 respondents revealed that they were married. One student respondent indicated that he/she is divorced.

Table 3: Marital Status

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Married	21	21.0	21.0	21.0
Single	78	78.0	78.0	99.0
Divorce	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

5.1.5 Level of education

On students' level of education, the majority of the respondents been 51 students were first year undergraduate students. The remaining 49 students' respondents were first-year postgraduate students.

Table 4: Level of studies

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Undergraduate	51	51.0	51.0	51.0
Valid Postgraduate	49	49.0	49.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

5.1.6 Students Nationality

The nationalities of students were curial for the study as the study focused on international students' choice of accommodation. Students who answered the online survey were from thirty nationalities excluding Ireland. 29 respondents were from Nigeria, 10 respondents were from India, 6 students' respondents were from Spain, 9 respondents from Brazil, five respondents from Italy and South Korea each, those from Ghana and Lithuanian had four respondents each. Two respondents were from each of France, Columbia, Romania, Latvia, and the Philippines. Countries such as Croatia, Hong Kong, Malawi, Taiwan, Russia, Belgium, America, Portugal, Somalia, Congo, Poland, Vietnam, Kuwait, and Bulgaria had one respondent each.

5.2 Reliability

Reliability is key to every research, as such the researcher adopted questionnaires from similar studies (Magni et al.,2019). The adopted questionnaire consisted of 25 variables which was grouped into themes namely students preferred accommodation, accommodation factors and the views of students on how their accommodation affect their academic performance. In other to measure the reliability of the data SPSS was used to measure the reliability of questions under each theme. The general range for Cronbach's coefficient is 0 to 1. The rule states that a coefficient greater or equal to 0.7 is acceptable and reliable. Sekeran (2003) posited that the lower acceptable range of Cronbach's alpha is 0.6. The overall Cronbach alpha for the study was .834 which is greater than the acceptable range of 0.7. The data is therefore reliable and acceptable.

Table 5: Reliability

VARIABLES	Cronbach Alpha	Number of Items
Students preferred accommodation	.60	8
Accommodation factors	.949	9
Effects of accommodation on academic performance	.954	8
Total all variables	2.503	25
Average	0.834	

5.3 Accommodation Preference

Section B of the online survey focused on international students' choice of accommodation where international students were staying and where international students may prefer to stay if there was a chance for them to choose new accommodation. The findings from the section B of the online survey are discussed below,

5.3.1 Where do you reside

Out of the 100 respondents, 98 respondents were residing off-campus, with only two international students residing on campus. Respondents were given the chance to select their preferred place to reside. The next follow up question was to find out where international students prefer to reside. Twelve international students preferred to reside on campus. The remaining 88 international students still preferred to reside off-campus.

Table 6: Where do you reside

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
On-campus	2	2.0	2.0	2.0
Valid Off-campus	98	98.0	98.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 7: Where would you prefer to reside

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
On-campus	12	12.0	12.0	12.0
Valid Off-campus	88	88.0	88.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

5.3.2 How did you obtain your on-campus or off-campus accommodation?

The next follow-up question was to find out how international students obtained their on-campus or off-campus accommodation. 59 respondents out of 100 students' respondents revealed that they acquired their accommodation themselves through direct contact with a property agent or landlord. The next majority of respondents 32 out of 100 respondents revealed that they acquired their accommodation through friends and family. 5 respondents out of 100 respondents revealed that they acquired their accommodation through an agent. Two international students' respondents revealed that they acquired their place of the resident by renting from National College of Ireland staff. One respondent revealed that their place of residence was reserved for them by the school, with another respondent revealing that they acquired their place of residence from a student through rent.

Table 8: How did you acquire your on-campus or off-campus accommodation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Reserved by school	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
Through an Agent	5	5.0	5.0	6.0
Rented from a student	1	1.0	1.0	7.0
Rented from staff	2	2.0	2.0	9.0
Through Family and friends	32	32.0	32.0	41.0
Myself directly with a property agent or landlord	59	59.0	59.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

5.3.3 Is location a major factor in selecting accommodation?

Respondents were asked if in selecting their choice of accommodation if the location is a major factor they look for. 85% of international students’ respondents revealed that location is a major factor that they look for when selecting accommodation that is they preferred residency nearly to their institution of faculty. 15% of respondents had a different view from the 85 respondents by indicating that location is not a major factor they consider when selecting a place to reside.

Table 9: Is location a major factor in selecting accommodation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	85	85.0	85.0	85.0
No	15	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

5.3.4 Which type of housing are you using now?

The next follow-up question was to identify the type of housing international students were using and if they were given the chance to choose the type of housing they will prefer. 67% of respondents revealed that they were residing in a shared flat or house during their first year. 13% of international students' respondents revealed that they were residing in property owned by a relative. 7% of respondents revealed that they were residing in a studio or one bed flat. 5 respondents out of 100 respondents revealed that they were residing on-campus residency. 4 respondents out of 100 respondents revealed that they are lodging with a landlord in a shared room. 3 respondents out of 100 respondents revealed that they were lodging with a landlord in their own room. One respondent revealed that he/she resides in the hall of residence.

The following questions revealed students preferences to the various place of residence if the cost of housing was the same. The majority of respondents been 49% would have preferred a studio or one bed flat if the prices of housing were the same. 19 international students' respondents would have preferred to reside in a shared flat or house if the prices of housing were the same. 15 students respondents will have preferred to reside on campus if the cost of housing were the same. 7% of respondents would have preferred lodging with a landlord in their room if the cost of housing was equal. 10 students' respondents out of 100 surprisingly would have preferred to reside in their own homes if the cost of housing was the same.

Table 10: Which type of housing are you using now

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
On-campus residency	5	5.0	5.0	5.0
Shared flat or house	67	67.0	67.0	72.0
Hall of residence	1	1.0	1.0	73.0
Studio or one bed flat	7	7.0	7.0	80.0
Lodging with Landlord in own room	3	3.0	3.0	83.0
Lodging with Landlord in a shared room	4	4.0	4.0	87.0
Property owned by a relative	13	13.0	13.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 11: if the cost of housing for students were the same which type of housing would you have preferred?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
On-campus residency	15	15.0	15.0	15.0
Shared flat or house	19	19.0	19.0	34.0
Studio or one bed flat	49	49.0	49.0	83.0
Lodging with Landlord in own room	7	7.0	7.0	90.0
Own home	10	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

5.3.5 How far do travel from your term-time accommodation to your university or faculty?

The next follow-up question focused on how the number of time students travels from their residence to the university faculty. 43 respondents out of 100 been majority of respondents revealed that they travel between two to three miles in other to attend lectures. The next majority been 22% of respondents revealed that they travel more than three miles to attend lectures. 20% of respondents revealed that they travel one mile to attend lectures while the remaining 15% of respondents revealed that they travel less than a mile to attend lectures. The majority of respondents 27 respondents out of 100 respondents revealed that they spend 30 minutes to 60 minutes traveling from their residence to their faculty. 25 respondents revealed that they travel more than thirty minutes to attend the lecture. 22 respondents indicated that they spend between 10-20minutes of traveling time to attend lectures. 13 respondents revealed that they spend less than 10 minutes to get to lectures or faculty. The same 13 respondents indicated that they spend more than an hour to get to their faculty or to attend lectures. Findings revealed that with a mean of 2.72 that on average international students travel two miles to their faculty or lecture hall. Findings also revealed with a mean score of 3.05 that on average international students travels 30 minutes from their accommodation to their various faculty or lecture hall.

Table 12: How far do travel from your term-time accommodation to your university or faculty

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Less than a mile	15	15.0	15.0	15.0
One mile	20	20.0	20.0	35.0
Two to three miles	43	43.0	43.0	78.0
More than three miles	22	22.0	22.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	
Mean	2.72			

Table 13: What is the total amount of time it takes for you to travel from your term-time accommodation to your first class of the week

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Less than 10 minutes	13	13.0	13.0	13.0
Between 10-20 minutes	22	22.0	22.0	35.0
More than 30 minutes	25	25.0	25.0	60.0
Between 30 minutes to 60 minutes	27	27.0	27.0	87.0
More than an hour	13	13.0	13.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	
Mean	3.05			

5.4 Factors That Are Considered By International Students When Choosing Accommodation

Section c of the online survey focused on nine factors that are considered when choosing accommodation. A scale of 1-5 was used to rate these factors with 1 standing for very high, two standing high, three moderate, four low, and five very low. All 100 respondents answered all questions.

Table 14: Descriptive statistic on factors considered by international students when choosing accommodation

Factors	VH	H	M	L	VL	Mean	STD Dev
1. Proximity to faculty or lecture	37 37%	37 37%	13 13%	8 8%	5 5%	2.07	1.13
2. Size of room	25 25%	56 56.0%	14 14%	5 5%		1.99	0.77
3. Accommodation cost	73 73%	14 14%	10 10%	3 3%		1.43	0.79
4. Security	42 42%	42 42%	14 14%	2 2%		1.76	0.77
5. Privacy	59 59%	25 25%	13 13%	2 2%	1 1%	1.61	0.86
6. Space for learning	40 40%	40 40%	11 11%	8 8%	1 1%	1.9	0.96
7. Proximity to recreational facilities	13 13%	37 37%	32 32%	14 14%	4 4%	2.59	1.01
8. Cleanliness and sanitation	71 71%	20 20%	9 9%	2 1.0%		1.38	0.65
9. Space of bathroom and toilet	39 39%	36 36%	20 20%	5 5%		1.91	0.89

VH=Very high, H= High, M= Moderate, L= Low, and VL= Very low.

5.4.1 Proximity to faculty or lecture

Out of the 100 respondents, 37% of the respondents revealed that the proximity to faculty was a high factor that they consider when selecting accommodation, also 37% of the respondent were of the view that proximity to faculty is a high factor they consider when choosing accommodation, 13% of respondents indicated that the proximity to the lecture hall was a moderate factor they consider when choosing accommodation or a place to reside, 8% of the respondents said the proximity to the lecture hall was a low factor they consider when selecting their choice of accommodation, 5% of the respondents were of the view that proximity to faculty or lecture were the least accommodation factors they consider when choosing a place to reside. With a mean score of 2.07 and standard deviation of 1.13, it can be posited majority of the students agreed to the statement that proximity to faculty or lecture hall is a key determinant in their selection of accommodation.

5.4.2 Size of room

56 respondents been majority of respondents revealed that the size of the room was a high factor that influence their selection of their choice of accommodation. 25 respondents revealed that the size of room is a very high factor they consider in selecting a place to reside at. 14 respondent and 5 respondents revealed that the size of a room moderately and lowly affects their choice of selecting a place to reside respectively. With a mean score of 1.99 and a standard deviation of 0.77, it can be deducted that size of a room is a high factor international students' considers when selecting a place to reside.

5.4.3 Accommodation cost

The majority of the respondents representing 73% indicated that the cost of accommodation was a very high factor they consider when selecting a place to reside, 14% of the respondents indicated that accommodation cost was high factor they consider in determining their choice of accommodation, 10% of the respondents posited accommodation cost was moderate a factor they consider when selecting their choice of accommodation and 3% of the remaining respondents revealed that the cost of accommodation was a less factor they consider when selecting their

choice of accommodation . A mean score of 1.43 and a standard deviation of 0.79 shows that the majority of respondents testified that the cost of accommodation was a very high factor they consider when selecting their choice of accommodation.

5.4.4 Security

The majority of the respondents representing 42% indicated that the security was a very high factor they consider when selecting a place to reside. The same percentage (42%) of the respondents indicated that security was high factor they consider in determining their choice of accommodation, 14% of the respondents posited security was moderate a factor they consider when selecting their choice of accommodation and 2% of the remaining respondents revealed that the security was a less factor they consider when selecting their choice of accommodation . A mean score of 1.76 and a standard deviation of 0.77 shows that the majority of respondents testified that security was a high factor they consider when selecting their choice of accommodation.

5.4.5 Privacy

59% of the respondent posited privacy is a very high factor they consider when selecting a place of residence, 25% of the respondents revealed that privacy is a high factor they consider in terms of their selection of accommodation, 13% of the respondents revealed that privacy was a moderate factor that determine their choice of accommodation, 2% of the respondent revealed that privacy was a low factor they consider when selecting their choice of accommodation and 1% of the respondent revealed that they consider privacy as very low factor when selecting their choice of accommodation.

5.4.6 Space for learning

A mean score of 1.9 and a standard deviation of 0.96 indicated that the majority of the students were of the view that space for learning was a high factor they consider when selecting a place to reside at. 40 respondents revealed that privacy was a very high factor they consider when selecting their choice of accommodation. The same number of respondents (40 respondents) was of the view that privacy is a high factor they consider when choosing a place to reside at.

5.4.7 Proximity to recreational facilities

13 % of the respondents revealed that proximity to recreational activities is a very high factor consider when choosing a place to reside. 37% of the respondents was of the view that proximity to recreational facilities was a high determinant in the choice of accommodation, 32% of the respondents indicated that proximity to recreational facilities was a moderate factor they considered when selecting a place to reside, 14% of the respondents and 4 respondents revealed that proximate to recreational facilities influence their choice of accommodation at a low and lower rate respectively. A mean score of 2.59 and a standard deviation of 1.01 show that proximity to recreation facilities influence international students choice of accommodation by a moderate extent.

5.4.8 Cleanliness and sanitation

Out of the 100%, 71% of the respondents revealed that sanitation and cleanliness are a very high factor considered when selecting a place to reside. 20% of the respondents also revealed that sanitation and cleanliness of facility was a high factor considered when selecting a place to reside. The remaining 9% respondents revealed that the above factor influence their selection of a place to reside by a moderate extent. With a mean score of 1.38 and a standard deviation of 0.65 indicates that majority of respondents considers cleanliness and sanitation as a highest determinant in their selection of a place to reside.

5.4.9 Space of bathroom and toilet

39% of the respondents revealed that the space of bathrooms and toilet at places of residence were very high factors they consider in selecting a place to reside, 36% of the respondents also revealed that space of bathroom and toilet was a high determinant when selecting a place to stay, 20% of the respondents indicated that the above statement was a moderate factor they consider when selecting a place to reside. The remaining 5% of the respondents indicated that bathroom and toilet space was a low factor they consider when selecting a place to reside. A mean of 1.91 and a standard deviation of 0.89 shows that majority of students' considers toilet and bathroom space as a high determinant when selecting a place to reside.

5.5 IMPACT OF STUDENTS ACCOMMODATION FACTORS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Section d of the online survey focused on the impact of accommodation factors on academic performance. A scale of 1-5 was used to rate these factors with 1 standing for strongly agree, two agree, three undecided, four disagree and five strongly disagree. All 100 respondents answered all questions.

Table 15: Descriptive statistic on the view that accommodation has an impact of students' accommodation factors on academic performance

Factors	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mean	STD Dev
1. Proximity to lecture or faculty will have a positive impact on my academic performance.	50 50%	35 35%	11 11%	4 4%		1.73	0.95
2. Proximity to recreational facilities will improve my academic performance.	18 18%	55 55%	16 16%	10 10%	1 1%	2.21	0.89
3. Proximity to space for learning will improve my academic performance.	41 41%	40 40%	14 14%	5 5%		1.83	0.85
4. The size of the room has an impact on my academic performance.	22 22%	55 55%	9 9%	11 11%	3 3%	2.18	0.99
5. Good security checks in my housing facility will improve my academic performance.	25 25%	47 47%	13 13%	13 13%	2 2%	2.22	1.02
6. Cleanliness and good sanitation of the place of residence will improve my academic performance.	50 50%	33 33%	11 11%	4 4%	2 2%	1.75	0.95
7. The proximity of restaurants or eateries will improve my	13 13%	27 27%	40 40%	15 15%	5 5%	2.72	1.04

academic performance.							
8. Having privacy in my housing facility will improve my academic performance.	60	29	11			1.51	0.69
	60%	29%	11%				

SA= strongly agree, A=Agree, UD= Undecided D= Disagree SD= Strongly disagree

5.5.1 Proximity to lecture or faculty will have a positive impact on my academic performance

50% of the respondents strongly agreed that the proximity to lectures have a positive impact on their academics, 35% of the respondents also agreed that the above statement had a positive impact on their academics, 11% of the respondent were uncertain whether it had any impact on their academics, 4% of respondents strongly disagreed with the above statement. A mean score of 1.73 and a standard deviation of 0.95 shows that the majority strongly agreed that proximity to faculties had a positive impact on academics.

5.5.2 Proximity to recreational facilities will improve my academic performance.

18% of the respondents strongly agreed that the closeness to recreational facilities will improve academic performances, 55% of the respondents also agreed to the above statement, 16% of the respondents were uncertain on the proximity to recreation facilities have a positive impact on academics, 10% of the respondents disagree to the above statement. Only one strongly disagreed with the above statement. A mean score of 2.21 and a standard deviation of 0.85 indicate that the majority agreed that the proximity to recreational facilities improves academic performance.

5.5.3 Proximity to space for learning will improve my academic performance.

41% of the respondents strongly agreed that proximity to space for learning will improve their academic performance, 40% of the respondents also Proximity to space for learning will improve my academic performance agreed to the above statement. 14% of the respondents were neutral, 5% of the respondent disagreed that proximity to space for learning will improve my academic performance. A mean score of 1.83 and a standard deviation of 0.85 indicates that the majority strongly agreed with the above statement.

5.5.4 The size of the room has an impact on my academic performance.

Out of the 100%, 22% of the respondents strongly agreed that the size of the room has an impact on my academic performance, 55% of the respondents also agreed to the above statement, 9% of the respondents were neutral, 11% of the respondents disagreed and 3 % of the respondent also strongly disagreed that the size of the room has an impact on my academic performance. A mean score of 2.18 and a standard deviation of 0.99 indicates that the majority of the respondents agreed that the size of the room has an impact on my academic performance.

5.5.5 Good security checks in my housing facility will improve my academic performance.

25% of the respondent strongly agreed that good security checks in their housing facility will improve their academic performance, 47% also agreed to the above statement. 13% of the respondents were uncertain, 13% of the respondents also disagreed that good security checks in my housing facility will improve my academic performance. 2% of the respondent strongly disagreed with the above statement. A mean score of 2.22 and a standard deviation of 1.02 explain that the majority of the respondents representing the students' populace agreed with the above statement.

5.5.6 Cleanliness and good sanitation of the place of residence will improve my academic performance.

50% of the respondents strongly agree that cleanliness and good sanitation of the place of residence will improve my academic performance, also, 33% of the respondents agreed to the above statement. 11% of the respondents were neutral, 4% of the respondent disagreed with the above statement and 2% of the respondents also disagreed strongly that cleanliness and good sanitation of the place of residence will improve their academic performance. A mean score of 1.75 and a standard deviation of 0.95 show that the majority strongly agreed with the above statement.

5.5.7 The proximity of restaurants or eateries will improve my academic performance.

13 % of the strongly agree that the proximity of restaurants or eateries will improve academic performance, 27% of the respondents also agreed to the above statement, 40% of the respondents were neutral, 15% of the respondents disagreed and 5% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the proximity of restaurants or eateries will improve academic performance. A mean score of 2.72 and a standard deviation of 1.04 explain that the majority agreed that the proximity of restaurants or eateries will improve their academic performance.

5.5.8 Having privacy in my housing facility will improve my academic performance.

Out of the 100%, 60% of the respondents which contributes the majority strongly agreed that having privacy in their housing facility will improve academic performance, 29% of the respondents also agreed to the above statement, 11% of the respondents were neutral. A mean score of 1.51 and a standard deviation of 0.69 indicate that the majority of the respondent which represents the student populace strongly agreed that having privacy in their housing facility will improve academic performance.

5.6 IMPACT OF STUDENTS ACCOMMODATION FACTORS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE (Regression)

The various accommodation factors cleanliness and sanitation, accommodation cost, privacy, security, space for learning, space of bathroom and toilet, size of room size, proximity to faculty or lectures, and proximity to recreation centers was used to measure the impact they have on academic performance using multiple linear regression analysis. Findings revealed that the various accommodations factors under study significantly impact academic performance by 96.4% which is illustrated with an r-square of .964. This means that other elements that were not studied impact academic performance by 3.6%.

Table 16: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. An error of the Estimate
1	.982 ^a	.964	.964	1.18194

a. Predictors: (Constant), Impact

The significance value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the model is statistically significant in predicting that accommodation factors impact students' academic performance. At a 5% level of significance, the F statistic calculated was 2658.353, which explains that the overall model was significant with a mean square of 3713.675 this can be found in table 5.13 below.

Table 17: ANOVA ^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3713.675	1	3713.675	2658.353	.000 ^b
	Residual	136.904	98	1.397		
	Total	3850.580	99			

a. Dependent Variable: factor

b. Predictors: (Constant), Impact

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION

Findings revealed that the majority of international students, 98 respondents out of 100 respondents were residing off-campus. Findings were in line with Molutsi (2013) who revealed student accommodation has been a major concern in the area of education globally as there has been an increase in student populations compared to an increase in infrastructure. Findings further revealed that 15% of international students were willing to reside on-campus if rooms were made available to them at the same price as their off-campus residence. The majority of

respondents revealed that they acquired their place of residence by themselves through property agents or landlords. Findings further revealed that most international students were able to acquire their accommodation through friends. Also, findings revealed first-year international students choice of accommodation is mostly influenced by location as students prefer accommodation closer to their faculty or institution, these findings did not differ from (Khozaei et al, 2012, Thuraiya et al, 2014, University of Maryland, 2012 and Hilmy et al, 2013) who posited in their various studies students have to rent private spaces nearer to their campus to enable them to meet their academic and lectures schedule. In addition to the majority of respondents revealed that they are using a shared flat or house now and others preferred studio and one bed flat, lodging with a landlord in their room and lodging with a landlord with share room, others were residing on property owned by relative or friends. This finding was in line with Saare et al., (2018) who pinpointed that individuals from different backgrounds have different preferences when it comes to choosing accommodation, especially the environmental conditions such as security, access to recreational facilities, a peaceful environment, and many more around the residency is considered. Furthermore, findings revealed that if the cost of accommodation was the same most internal students will have preferred to reside in a studio or one bed flat, followed by a shared flat or house and campus residence respectively. Moreover, findings further indicated that the majority of international students travel more than three miles for lectures or to their faculty findings were in line with McCann et al., (2019) who pinpointed that location is the most important factor in choosing accommodation for international students. McCann et al (2019) revealed that in order, location, privacy, cost of accommodation and security were the factors students use to determine their choice of accommodation.

Also, findings on the factors that international students look for when selecting their place of the residence revealed so that these factors affected international student choice of accommodation most cleanliness and sanitation, accommodation cost, privacy, security, space for learning, space of bathroom and toilet, size of room size, proximity to faculty or lectures and proximity to recreation centers. Findings differed mostly from that of McCann et al., (2019) who pinpointed that location is the most important factor in choosing accommodation for international students.

Moreover, findings from the study revealed that the following accommodation factors impact international students' academic performance in this order privacy, proximity to lecture or faculty, cleanliness and sanitation, space for learning, size of the room, recreational facilities,

good security, and proximity to a restaurant or eating place. Findings were in line with Kolawole and Boluwatife (2010) who posited that the conditions found in the environment help in a meaningful tertiary experience, and also there is a link between the accommodation the students live in and their academic performance.

Lastly, findings revealed students believed that accommodation impacts academic performance significantly with an r-square of .964. This means that students' academic performance is positively influenced by their type of accommodation and various accommodation factors.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

7.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the study and gives a summary of the research findings, the chapter also focuses on the conclusion of the study, recommendations, and limitations to the study.

7.1 Summary

The main objective of the study was to find out the factors that determine international students' choice of accommodation in Ireland using the National College of Ireland as a case study. The study was conducted using 100 first-year international students as the sample size. Data was collected through an online survey. Findings revealed that most international students were residing outside the campus. The type of housing international students were accommodated in were shared flats or houses, property owned by relative or friends, lodging with the landlord in own room and or shared rooms. Findings revealed that some international students traveled more than three miles to their faculty for lectures.

Moreover, findings revealed that international students when looking for accommodation consider the following factors as key in selecting their choice of accommodation: cleanliness and sanitation, accommodation cost, privacy, security, space for learning, space of bathroom and toilet, size of room, proximity to faculty or lectures and proximity to recreation centers.

In addition, findings revealed that international students' believed that their academic performance is significantly impacted by accommodation factors such as privacy, proximity to lecture or faculty, cleanliness and sanitation, space for learning, size of the room, recreational facilities, good security, and proximity to restaurant or eating place.

7.2 Conclusion

The study conducted investigated the key factors that determine international student choice of accommodation in Ireland using the National College of Ireland as a case study. The study further examines how these accommodation factors impact students' academic performance. The survey conducted on the first-year international students revealed that cleanliness and sanitation, accommodation cost, privacy, security, space for learning, space of bathroom and toilet, size of room size, proximity to faculty or lectures, and proximity to recreation centers in these order are the important factors international students' considers when selecting their choice of accommodation. Findings revealed that international students' were mostly willing to stay on-campus if the cost of on-campus accommodation was moderate and within their means. Findings further revealed that accommodation factors such as privacy, proximity to lecture or faculty, cleanliness and sanitation, space for learning, size of the room, recreational facilities, good security, and proximity to a restaurant or eating place impact international students' academic performance by a large extent.

7.3 Recommendation

1. National College of Ireland should work hand in hand with the Department of Higher Education to build hostels purposely meant for international students at an affordable price which will reduce the ratio between on-campus and outside campus residence.
2. National College of Ireland should work hand to hand with the bursary committee to see how they can help to reduce the cost of accommodation for on-campus international students to make on-campus residency attractive to international students.
3. National College of Ireland admission unit should make it a point to educate international students during admission or application process the various types of accommodation available on-campus and the terms of payment available for these accommodations available.

7.4 Limitation to the study

The study findings are limited to the National College of Ireland and as such findings cannot be generalized to other tertiary institutions in Ireland or the globe as the results of differences in social and academic environments among institutional types in Ireland and the world. However, this study can be replicated in other universities within Ireland and the world so that findings can be generalized.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 'A': Questionnaire

DETERMINANTS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' CHOICE OF ACCOMMODATION IN IRELAND.

Dear Sir/Madam

This questionnaire is designed to collect data on the research topic "DETERMINANTS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' CHOICE OF ACCOMMODATION IN IRELAND. A STUDY OF NATIONAL COLLEGE OF IRELAND."

Please write in this given spaces and tick in the given boxes the option that best answers the question(s).

* Required

PART I: DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Gender *

- Male
- Female

2. Age *

- 18-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- above 60

3. Marital Status *

Single

Married

Divorce

4. Level of studies *

Undergraduate

Postgraduate

5. What is your nationality? *

PART II : ACCOMMODATION TYPE PREFERED BY STUDENTS

6. Where do you reside? *

- On-Campus
- Off-Campus

7. Where do you prefer to reside? *

- On-Campus
- Off-Campus

8. How did you acquire your On-campus or Off-campus accommodation? *

- Reserved by school
- Through an Agent
- Swapping
- Rented from a student
- Rented from staff
- Through Family and friends
- Myself directly with a property agent or landlord

9. Is location a major factor in selecting accommodation? *

- Yes
- No

10. Which type of housing are you using now? *

- On campus residency
- Shared flat or house
- Hall of residence
- Studio or one bed flat
- Lodging with Landlord in own room
- Lodging with Landlord in shared room
- Property owned by a relative
- Own home

11. If the cost of housing for students were the same which type of housing would you have preferred? *

- On campus residency
- Shared flat or house
- Hall of residence
- Studio or one bed flat
- Lodging with Landlord in own room
- Lodging with Landlord in shared room
- Property owned by a relative
- Own home

12. How far do travel from your term-time accommodation to your university or faculty?
*

- Less than a mile
- One mile
- Two to three miles
- More than three miles

13. What is the total amount of time it takes for you to travel from your term-time accommodation to your first class of the week? *

- Less than 10 minutes
- Between 10-20 minutes
- More than 30 minutes
- Between 30 minutes to 60 minutes
- More than an hour

PART III: Factors That Are Considered By International Students When Choosing Accommodation

14. Among the listed factors select using a scale of very high, high, moderate, low, and very low how these factors influence your choice of accommodation *

	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very low
Proximity to faculty or lecture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Size of room	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accommodation cost	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Privacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Space for learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity to recreational facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cleanliness and sanitation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Space of bathroom and toilet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PART IV: IMPACT OF STUDENTS ACCOMMODATION FACTORS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

15. Indicate Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) to the questions below on how these factors will impact your academic performance. *

	SA	A	UD	D	SD
Proximity to lecture or faculty will have a positive impact on my academic performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity to recreational facilities will improve my academic performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity to space for learning will improve my academic performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The size of the room has an impact on my academic performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Good security checks in my housing facility will improve my academic performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cleanliness and good sanitation of the place of residence will improve my academic performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The proximity of restaurants or eateries will improve my academic performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having privacy in my housing facility will improve my academic performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>