

Theft Inside Boarding Houses: “Its Impact to Student Tenants”

***Bastasa, Alaina B., *Paubsanon, Dianalyn C., Lpt, Maed, *Castillano, Niel Ryan A., *Espinosa, Joriz R., *Ong, Mark Ralph M., *Salazar, Jomar**

Student-researcher at College of Criminal Justice Education, at Pagadian Capitol College, Pagadian City, Zamboanga Del Sur, Philippines 7016.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2025.12060023>

Received: 16 May 2025; Accepted: 29 May 2025; Published: 30 June 2025

ABSTRACT

The study explored college students' perceptions regarding the impact of theft inside boarding houses on tenants. The study participants were Pagadian Capitol College, Inc. students during the school year 2023-2024. The study included 100 students from four levels and employed a correlational-quantitative descriptive research method. A research questionnaire was used for data collection, comprising 10 questions and the demographic profile of the participants. Descriptive statistics and Pearson r-tests were employed for data analysis. Findings revealed a neutral impact, which meant an effect but was bearable. The study highlighted that students were aware of the implications of theft, including financial loss, emotional distress, and a diminished sense of security.

Additionally, students identified common theft targets, such as electronics and personal items, and pinpointed vulnerable areas within boarding houses. The perception of safety was found to be lower in boarding houses with minimal security measures, leading to heightened anxiety and stress among tenants. The impact of theft was not only financial but also psychological, affecting students' academic performance and overall well-being. Consequently, the study suggested the need for comprehensive security measures, educational programs, and support systems to mitigate the impact of theft and enhance the safety and well-being of boarding house tenants. Recommendations included installing surveillance systems, employing security personnel, and conducting regular safety awareness workshops. By implementing these measures, boarding house administrators could create a safer living environment, fostering a more secure and conducive atmosphere for students to thrive academically and personally.

Keywords: Student tenants, Theft, Impact, Boarding houses

INTRODUCTION

The theft was a criminal act that involved taking someone else's property or belongings without their permission and permanently depriving them of it. It was a form of unlawful taking or appropriation of another person's possessions. The theft was considered a crime in most legal systems around the world (Chase, 2016). Theft events had a significant effect on the safety and well-being of students living in boarding houses. Consequently, students became security conscious, nervous or fearful, sad, and developed trust issues (Ahmadi et. al., 2023)

Furthermore, research in selected boarding houses in Lusaka City, Zambia, showed that the majority of boarding homes lacked the essential safety and security precautions. For instance, none of the studied housing units had a safety and security policy. Landlords considered student housing units without safety and security regulations to be careless regarding the security and safety of their tenants. Participants expressed substantial concern about whether boarding homes had safety and security protocols. This suggested that there were safety and security risks associated with these boarding homes (Mubita et al., 2023).

In the Philippines, a study identified certain factors among the safety and security considerations taken into account, such as lockable gates, windows, and doors. In this regard, the study of boarding houses exhibited unsettling characteristics overall. Students boarding accommodation units could be accessed through doors,

windows, and gates (Nobis, 2022). Locked doors, windows, and gates gave students living in these boarding houses a much-needed sense of safety and security. If these resources were unavailable or of low quality, pupils were vulnerable to outside intrusions and attacks. Intruders could physically threaten and attack them, and their property could be taken. Both the students' physical and psychological safety were compromised by this.

Nonetheless, this incident was widespread in Pagadian City. Since no one could anticipate and control the activities of other individuals, particularly those expected to commit crimes, it was imperative not to become a victim. A certain level of security inside had to be reliable enough to keep things secure and avoid compromising situations that might lead to victimization. Therefore, a safe environment was directly proportional to the security of students. Thus, learners' attention was divided between learning and preserving their safety. As noted, safety was essential not just inside schools but also outside schools where most of the learners dwelled, like boarding houses. Guaranteeing complete protection was crucial and should not have been neglected (Hernandez et. al., 2021).

By conducting this study, the specific impact of theft in boarding houses on tenants was determined. It helped identify the factors that contributed to theft within boarding houses. This information was used to develop prevention strategies to reduce the risk of theft. It explored how theft affected the well-being of student tenants, including their sense of security, trust in others, and overall mental health. The findings of the research informed the development of policies and interventions aimed at preventing theft and supporting those affected by it. It provided evidence to advocate for improved security measures, better oversight of boarding houses, and other changes that could benefit student tenants (Mubita et al., 2023). Overall, researching the impact of theft inside boarding houses on student tenants was important for understanding the problem, addressing its effects, and implementing practical solutions.

Therefore, knowing how theft affected students could help with the creation of services and support networks that catered to their material, emotional, and psychological needs. To lessen the issue and foster a happier living environment, tactics including heightened security, community-building projects, and theft prevention education programs were put into practice. Investigating theft in boarding houses helped raise awareness and elevate industry standards. The research offered insights that were utilized to create policies and best practices for boarding house management and security by identifying common weaknesses and risk factors (Mubita et al., 2023). Ultimately, the importance of the problem, which involved the emotional well-being of students living in boarding houses, drove the need to resolve or examine the effects of theft on these renters.

Statement of The Problem and Objective

This study aimed to determine the level of theft inside boarding houses and its impact on the student tenants at Pagadian Capitol College, Inc.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following problems:

What was the profile of the respondents in terms of:

Age;

Gender; and

Course?

To what extent was the level of theft incidents inside the boarding houses?

To what extent was the impact of theft on student tenants?

Was there a significant relationship between the level of theft incidents and the impacts of theft inside boarding houses on student tenants?

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presented the research design, research environment, research respondents, the procedure and data gathering techniques, the data processing method, and the statistical treatment of data.

Research Design

In this study, correlational-descriptive research was employed. The goal of a correlational-descriptive study design was to carefully collect data to characterize a population, situation, or phenomenon. This method of research assisted in illuminating the respondents' feelings following their boarding house theft experiences. Since the goal of the study was to determine the effect of theft within boarding houses on student tenants, this method was suitable for collecting the results.

Research Environment

This study was conducted in Pagadian Capitol College, Inc., one of the higher institutions in the City of Pagadian, Province of Zamboanga del Sur. The Pagadian Capitol College provided quality education within the city.

Participants of the Study and Sampling Procedure

The study participants were student tenants of Pagadian Capitol College, Inc. A total of 100 students aged 18 years old and above participated in the study. These students were specifically selected because they had direct experiences with theft inside boarding houses. Purposive sampling was utilized to select the respondents, a method that involves the deliberate choice of participants based on specific characteristics or experiences relevant to the research. In this case, participants were chosen because they had encountered theft, which made their insights vital to the study's objectives. This non-probability sampling technique ensured that only those who could provide meaningful and relevant data were included. Furthermore, the final number of participants was determined using the Taro Yamane formula ($n = N / (1 + N * e^2)$), which helped in identifying a representative sample size from the total population while maintaining the study's accuracy and reliability.

Research Instrument

In the study, the researchers used a "Researchers- Made Survey Questionnaire" that they created to collect data from participants in a structured and systematic manner. It helped to answer the problem statement—the extent of the impact and level of theft incidents on student tenants. The questionnaire contained ten questions. The preparation of the instrument involved the following activities outlined in this section. In creating a complete and appropriate questionnaire checklist, the researchers read, studied, and researched several times in various references with the help of their adviser to have a concrete and accurate background in the questionnaire preparation based on the variables presented.

Validity of the Instrument

The research instrument was routed to the board of panel members and adviser for content corrections and suggestions. After corrections were integrated, the researchers conducted a pilot test on thirty students to test the reliability of the researcher-made instrument. The reliability of the research instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha level of .70 using SPSS.

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to conducting the study, permission to float the questionnaires was obtained from the Program Head. After approval, the questionnaires were administered to the participants. Attached to each questionnaire was a letter explaining the intent of the study. The researchers administered the questionnaires personally to the student participants.

The following protocols were observed in administering the questionnaire: First, the student-participants were assured that the test and the activities would not affect their grades in the subjects. They were also reminded of the purpose of the test and the importance of genuine efforts and honesty to ensure its validity. Second, they were asked to sign the Informed Consent Form to confirm that they agreed to take part in the study and that they understood their voluntary participation in the study.

Scoring Procedure

Upon completing the questionnaire, the researchers proceeded to tabulate the data, which included the consolidation and tallying process. The finished results were submitted to the assigned statistician to compute, which served as the basis for providing the findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

This study assessed the impact and level of theft incidents on the student tenants at Pagadian Capitol College, Inc., and the table below was the basis for the scoring results from the study.

Weight	Scale Range	Adjectival Rating
5	4.51 – 5.0	Strongly Agree
4	3.51 – 4.50	Agree
3	2.51 – 3.50	Moderate
2	1.51 – 2.50	Disagree
1	1.0 – 1.50	Strongly Disagree

Statistical Treatment

To obtain an extensive understanding of the data, the following statistical tools were used: data concerning problem number 1 was organized using descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage, which determined the demographic profile of the participants.

For problems number 2 and 3, descriptive statistics such as overall mean and standard deviation were employed to determine the level of theft incidents inside the boarding houses and their impact on student tenants.

For problem number 4, inferential statistics such as the Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) were utilized to determine the relationship between the level of theft incidents inside boarding houses and their impact on student tenants.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This study incorporated a variety of relevant literature and studies to examine the differences between the factors that were discovered. The impact of theft on student tenants living in boarding houses was reviewed in this chapter, together with earlier research on the topic.

Theft inside Boarding Houses

In recent years, there has been growing interest in the theft inside boarding houses and its impact on student tenants. This study examined how student tenants were affected by theft that occurred within boarding houses.

It aimed to comprehend how theft impacted student tenants' psychological health, perception of security, financial status, and the decision to remain or leave. The study sought to provide insights into the implications of theft within the setting of boarding houses and proposed potential areas for improvement in terms of security measures and support systems for student tenants.

In a recent study conducted in Zambia, South Africa, certain belongings were common targets of theft in boarding houses, with students reporting having had their laptops, phones, and other valuables stolen. Aballe et.al.(2022) found that boarding houses regularly needed satisfactory security measures, such as security watches, CCTV cameras, and control frameworks. Even though boarding houses had put in security measures, there were still outstanding security concerns. However, boarding house proprietors also seemed to install CCTV cameras to promote surveillance of boarding houses. The landlord should have ensured that all welfare facilities within the boarding house were provided and in good condition to enhance the security of the students' lodging in that specific boarding house. Additionally, local authorities should have collaborated with relevant authorities to inspect the living conditions of boarding houses to ensure the safety and security of students was safeguarded. Boarding houses should also have been registered with local authorities to ensure the safety and security of students was monitored. Landlords should have also oriented students to be responsible users of boarding house facilities and to report any security concerns observed.

Similarly, a study conducted in the United States revealed that local authorities needed to collaborate with relevant agencies to investigate the living conditions of boarding houses and ensure the security of student tenants. Boarding houses were required to register with local authorities to guarantee compliance. Landlords were also expected to facilitate students' access to boarding house facilities and report any security concerns. Overall, this indicated that the government had to ensure the safety and security of students in boarding houses to create a conducive learning environment. Consequently, the government established strict procedures, guidelines, and legislation to govern student safety and security (Salomon, 2025).

Furthermore, the university and the learning environment as a whole benefited from the level of safety and security in students' boarding houses. According to Barker et. al., (2020), universities needed to make an effort to offer secure housing in order to attract and retain learners. Research also indicated that students who felt safe and secure in their homes performed better academically. Consequently, all parties involved were concerned about any weaknesses in the safety and security of boarding houses for students. Additionally, research revealed that many educational institutions, including student dormitories, lacked adequate security and safety protocols for their common areas. As a result, students were highly vulnerable to harm, intimidation, attempted murder, threats, theft, and an increased death rate due to the boarding houses' disregard for safety and security protocols (Xaba, 2019).

Moreover, a study conducted in Chihuahua, Mexico discovered certain crime prevention measures that were often overlooked in some boarding houses. Some boarding houses relied frequently on casual security measures, such as depending on the vigilance of caretakers and establishing neighborhood watch programs. Generally, boarding houses lacked awareness of crime prevention procedures and resources (Brillantes et.al., 2012). Students expressed general concern about their safety and security in boarding houses. They reported feeling unsafe due to a lack of security measures, the presence of strangers in boarding houses, and fear of theft (Mubita et al., 2023).

As a result, a study conducted in the Philippines identified the adverse effects of theft within boarding houses on student tenants. This had a significant negative impact on students' well-being. The review also revealed that criminal activity could detrimentally affect students' academic performance, including reduced attendance, grades, and graduation rates. It had a psychological impact on students both victims and non-victims of theft experienced negative mental effects, including increased fear, anxiety, and depression. Most boarding houses ensured that students and their guardians signed an agreement form to guarantee a conducive environment for residence and effective learning, thereby maintaining students' safety and security outside of school (Ramos et al., 2018).

Security was generally agreed to be about the feeling of being secure from harm, fear, and unease. Additionally, security referred to the protection of individuals, organizations, and properties against external

threats that were likely to cause harm. Security was primarily focused on ensuring that external factors did not cause inconvenience or unwelcome situations to the organization, individuals, and properties within the premises (Nobis, 2022). Furthermore, the quality of security and safety in students' boarding houses contributed to the college and learning environment. Therefore, any deficiencies in the security and safety of students' boarding houses were a concern for all stakeholders. Studies showed that many rental owners neglected security measures in student accommodations. This lack of security could expose students to various risks such as harm, intimidation, threats, and theft. In summary, the safety and security studies provided a broader context, while the theft study zoomed in on a specific issue. Together, they offered a comprehensive understanding of safety challenges faced by student tenants in boarding houses.

In summary, pervasive problem of theft in boarding houses poses a significant threat, especially to student tenants, impacting their psychological health, financial stability, and academic success. Numerous studies point to various contributing factors, such as insufficient security measures, economic challenges, and social pressures. Despite some attempts to improve security with measures like CCTV cameras and security personnel, issues remain. Addressing the safety shortcomings in boarding houses ultimately requires a collaborative effort from all parties involved, including government bodies, educational institutions, landlords, and the students themselves. By enforcing robust security protocols and promoting a vigilant community, the detrimental effects of theft can be mitigated, ensuring a safer living environment for student tenants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following results were disclosed after analysing the data gathered.

1. There were 100 male and female student tenants, with females having the highest frequency of participation (F=65), as shown in Table 1.1. Table 1.2 In terms of age, the highest frequency (F=57) ranged from 21 to 25, followed by ages 18-20 with a frequency of (F=42), and the lowest was age 26 up with the (F=1). Regarding the course in Table 1.3, BSBA (Bachelor in Science and Business Administration) has the highest frequency (F=42) with a percentage of 42%, followed by BSCRIM with a frequency of (F=37) and a ratio of 37%. Then, BSA had a frequency of (F=10) with a percentage of 10%, followed by BSIT with a frequency of (F=9) and a percentage of 9%. BEED had the lowest frequency (F=2) with a percentage of 2%.

Table 1.1 Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Demographic Profile (Gender)

Gender	F	Percentage (%)
Male	35	35%
Female	65	65%
Total	100	100%

Table 1.2 Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Demographic Profile (Age)

Age	F	Percentage (%)
18-20	42	42%
21-25	57	57%
26 Up	1	1%
Total	100	100%

Table 1.3 Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Demographic Profile (Course)

Course	F	Percentage (%)
BEED	2	2%
BSBA	42	42%
BSCRIM	37	37%
BSA	10	10%
BSIT	9	9%
Total	100	100%

2. Table 2 presented the Overall Mean, Interpretation, and SD of participants' responses regarding the level of theft. The overall mean ($M = 2.96$) indicated a neutral response, suggesting that while theft was not widespread, it did occur and affected student tenants. This reflects a moderate yet concerning presence of theft in boarding houses, impacting students' sense of safety and trust.

The study emphasized key risk factors and recommended proactive security measures such as surveillance installation, regular audits, awareness campaigns, and stronger accountability rules. Community involvement was also highlighted as essential in deterring theft and building trust. These measures aim to enhance student well-being and improve the reputation of boarding houses (Adisa & Simpeh, 2021).

Notably, item no. 4, "I wanted my boarding house to have taken sufficient measures to prevent future theft incidents," had the highest mean ($M = 3.84$, Agree), showing a strong demand for preventive action. This was followed by item no. 5 ($M = 3.37$) and item no. 3 ($M = 3.05$), both indicating neutral views but reflecting concern over inadequate security. The findings underline students' need for reliable protection, such as secured doors, windows, and gates, to prevent vulnerability to external threats.

Table 2. Overall Mean, Interpretation, and SD Distributions of Participants' on Level of Theft.

Questions	M	Interpretation	SD
I personally experienced theft incidents in my boarding house	2.46	Disagree	1.38
I personally witnessed theft incident in my boarding house	2.11	Disagree	1.23
My boarding house lacks security measures.	3.05	Neutral	1.32
I want my boarding house to have taken sufficient measures to prevent future theft incidents.	3.84	Agree	1.26
I decided to move out of the boarding house if the issue of theft persist or worsen.	3.37	Neutral	1.40
Total	Mean 2.96	Neutral	Overall SD .803

3. Table 3 displays the Overall Mean, Interpretation, and SD of participants' responses regarding the impact of theft, showing a neutral response with a mean of $M = 3.14$. This suggests that while the effects of theft were noticeable, they were generally bearable for student tenants. Theft incidents affected students physically, psychologically, and financially, potentially leading to anxiety, fear, stress, and trust issues (Nobis, 2022). These impacts could interfere with academic focus and emotional well-being, causing students to feel unsafe and disconnected in their living environment.

The highest-rated item, "I had to adjust how to store and handle my belongings," received a mean of $M = 3.54$ (Agree), followed by "It gave me stress, anxiety, and fear" with $M = 3.26$ (Neutral). These responses indicate that students were compelled to adopt protective behaviors, even if the emotional burden remained manageable. The findings further revealed that many student residences lacked adequate safety measures, especially in common areas. According to Hossain et al. (2022), students thrive socially and academically in safe and well-managed dormitories. Without proper security and administrative interventions, their academic success and overall well-being can be compromised. The study underscores the importance of addressing theft not just to prevent loss, but to ensure a secure and supportive living environment conducive to student development.

Table 3 Overall Mean, Interpretation, and SD Distributions of Participants' on Impact of theft.

Questions	M	Interpretation	SD
1. It gives me stress, anxiety, and fear.	3.26	Neutral	1.27
2. I lost trust in my fellow tenants.	2.88	Neutral	1.30
3. My relationship with other tenants changed as a result.	2.99	Neutral	1.18
4. The incident has affected my financial budget.	3.03	Neutral	1.34
5. I have to adjust how to store and handle my belongings.	3.54	Agree	1.34
Total	Mean 3.14	Neutral	Overall SD .995

4. Table 4 showed the Pearson's r value ($r = .616^{**}$, $p = .000$), indicating a significant positive relationship between the level of theft incidents and the impact of theft inside boarding houses. This means that as the frequency or severity of theft increased, its impact on student tenants also significantly intensified (Smith & Jones & Morales 2012). Both variables showed neutral mean levels, but their correlation confirmed that theft, even at moderate levels, had meaningful consequences.

The null hypothesis—that there was no significant relationship—was rejected, supporting the alternative hypothesis. The findings affirmed that theft not only caused financial losses, but also led to psychological effects such as anxiety, fear, and mistrust among students (Xaba, 2019). These impacts affected not just individuals, but also the overall atmosphere of the boarding houses.

Many student tenants sought total security for their belongings (Arroyo, 2023), emphasizing that theft affected both personal safety and communal well-being. Students became more vigilant, adopted precautionary measures, and engaged in behaviors like locking doors and using alarms to protect their possessions (Mubita et al., 2023). These responses illustrated heightened security awareness triggered by theft incidents.

The study was also supported by the Theory of Opportunity by Wilcox & Cullen (2018), which posits that motivation and opportunity are key factors in theft occurrences. In this context, students' reactions to theft—

such as increased caution and trust issues—highlighted the emotional and psychological impact of being victimized.

In conclusion, understanding the relationship between the level and impact of theft is crucial for developing preventive policies and interventions in boarding houses. Promoting a culture of safety and shared responsibility can reduce theft risk and foster a secure environment. Moreover, students who have experienced theft can contribute to raising awareness and improving the safety of their living communities.

Table 4. Pearson's r Values, Showing the Relationship (Pearson R) between Participants' Level and Impact of Theft.

Level of Theft Incident		
	Measurement	Level of Theft Incident
Impact of Theft on Student Tenants	Pearson Correlation	.616
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).		

CONCLUSIONS

Therefore, student tenants experienced theft, and it had an impact on their overall well-being. These findings supported Pamela Wilcox and Francis T. Cullen's (2018) opportunity theory, a study examining how theft occurred in a particular place and time. Generally, the study's findings confirmed the researchers' assumption that theft inside boarding houses existed and its impact persisted. Thus, efforts to reduce the risks of theft should have been established to provide student tenants with a safe and comfortable living space. Boarding house owners should have implemented access control, installed surveillance cameras and lighting, and provided secure storage for all tenants' safety and security.

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