



International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews

Journal homepage: www.ijrpr.com ISSN 2582-7421

“IMPACT OF SLEEP HYGIENE AWARENESS AND PRACTICES ON SLEEP QUALITY AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS”

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ABSTRACT

Sleep can be defined as an effective way of providing rest to one's mind and body. The basic needs of a human being include things like food, water, shelter, clothing, and sleep. These are the essentials for our survival and well-being. Thus, human beings cannot survive without getting proper sleep. An average time for a healthy sleep is considered as 7 to 8 hours during night time but recent studies shows that healthy sleep is not only based on the time of sleep or sleep without any disruption, it also includes maintaining a consistent sleep schedule, maintaining a relaxing bedtime routine, creating a comfortable sleep environment, avoiding stimulants like caffeine before going to bed, limited exposure to screens before bedtime, incorporating regular exercises and managing stress. The major problems associated with the lack of sleep hygiene practices are impaired cognitive function, memory, and attention, affected immune system, risks of mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, overthinking and so on. This study is significant because it can help us to understand how certain habits and behaviors affect one's sleep in both positive and negative aspects. Health is wealth and its importance doesn't change until there is human existence thus it has a huge significance in the present and future. The aim of the study is to study about the impact of sleep hygiene awareness and practices on sleep quality among college students. The study is conceptual in nature. The research design used is descriptive. Qualitative research is carried out.

INTRODUCTION

According to WHO (World Health Organization) Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” Physical and mental self-care helps us live happier lives. It's all about finding an equilibrium and making choices that support individual's wellbeing. Self-care can include various things like eating nutritious food, staying active, getting sound sleep, managing stress, and maintaining a healthy interpersonal and intrapersonal relationship. Health and wellbeing play a vital role in one's overall quality of life. When health becomes our priority, we can experience increased energy, improved mood, and better physical and mental functioning.

Sleep can be defined as a complex biological process that helps restore and rejuvenate the body and mind (National sleep foundation). During the sleep process, our body repairs itself, our brain processes information and our memories get refined to a consolidated form. In simple terms sleep is the process of giving ourselves a recharge. Getting good sleep is important for maintaining a balance in one's life and it has a huge contribution in maintaining proper physical and mental health. Sleep helps to improve concentration and to boost our immune system which will improve the psychosocial functioning of an individual.

Sleep hygiene can be defined as the practices and habits that contribute to good sleep (Peter Hauri). The term “sleep hygiene” was coined by the late Peter Hauri, a sleep expert and psychologist. He emphasized the importance of creating a conducive sleep environment and adopting healthy sleep routines. A sleep friendly environment and adoptive behaviors can have an impact in promoting the quality of sleep. Some of the key aspects of sleep hygiene involve maintaining a consistent sleep schedule, maintaining a relaxing bedtime routine, creating a comfortable sleep environment, avoiding stimulants like caffeine before going to bed, limited exposure to screens before bedtime, incorporating regular exercises and managing stress. By practicing good sleep hygiene, individuals can improve the quality of sleep which will also result in refreshed and energized feeling when they wake up from the sleep. Sleep hygiene is very important for college students as maintaining good sleep habits can have a significant impact on overall wellbeing and academic performance. In the busy schedule of college life, prioritizing sleep can help to stay focused, alert, and productive.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Lack of proper sleep hygiene refers to the absence of healthy sleep habits and routines that can negatively impact one's quality of sleep and their overall well-being. Graduation students often face various issues and challenges that can disrupt their sleep patterns and lead to sleep deprivation. Insufficient sleep can impair cognitive function, attention, and memory, making it difficult for students to concentrate and retain information. This ultimately affects the academic performance of university students.

Lack of sleep can contribute to higher levels of stress, as it impairs the body's ability to regulate stress hormones. This can later lead to increased anxiety, irritability, and difficulty in managing daily stressors. Lack of sleep affects the immune system negatively, making students more prone to illnesses such as cold, flu, and other infections. This can probably result in frequent illnesses and longer recovery times. Inadequate sleep can also result in increased risk of mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, overthinking and so on. Sleep deprivation can result in increased mental health imbalances and make it harder for university students to cope with their daily functions.

Sleep deprivation affects the prefrontal cortex (the part of the brain responsible for decision-making and judgment). This can lead to poor choices, impulsivity, and increased risk-taking behaviors. Lack of sleep results in the body's hormonal imbalance, which can later result to increased hunger and cravings for junk foods. Over a period, contribute to weight gain and an unhealthy diet, which can have long-term consequences for overall health. Sleep-deprived college students are more likely to experience accidents, both on the road and in other daily activities. Impaired alertness and absent mind sometimes can put them at higher risk of injuries. Insufficient sleep can result in excessive daytime sleepiness and fatigue, making it challenging for students to stay awake and alert during classes or study sessions. This can further impact their academic performance and overall productivity.

To address these problems, it is important for college students to prioritize their sleep hygiene. This includes establishing a consistent sleep schedule, creating a sleep-friendly environment, avoiding stimulants close to bedtime, and practicing relaxation techniques before sleep. By adopting healthy sleep habits, college students can improve their overall well-being.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cameron et.al (2010) conducted a study on the association between sleep hygiene and sleep quality in medical students. The aim of the study was to determine whether quality of sleep was reduced in medical students, and whether demographics and sleep hygiene behaviours were associated with sleep quality. A Web-based survey was the tool of data collection which was completed by 314 medical students. It contained questions about demographics, sleep habits, exercise habits, caffeine, tobacco and alcohol use, and subjective sleep. Correlation and regression analyses was tested for associations among demographics, sleep hygiene behaviours, and sleep quality. The result of the study was that "medical students' sleep quality was significantly worse than a healthy adult normative sample".

Joao Dinis (2018) conducted a study on quality of sleep and depression in college students. The background of the study was that, in the present scenario sleep related challenges are a prevalent occurrence among university students, poor sleep quality is a common problem among college students, affecting anywhere from 10% to 50% of them. This can have a significant impact on their overall well-being, both physically and mentally. College is a time of transition and adjustment, where students face new challenges and responsibilities. Sometimes, they neglect their sleep habits or struggle to cope with the changes, leading to negative consequences that can affect them in the long run. Research has shown a link between poor sleep quality and depression or depressive symptoms. The objective of the study was to appraise the current knowledge around the relationship of sleep with depression in the group of young adults. The study resulted in the identification of bidirectional relationship between sleep and depression.

Seblewngel Lemma et al (2012) conducted a study on sleep quality and its psychological correlates among university students in Ethiopia. The background of the study was that in many countries with limited resources university students often struggle with poor sleep quality because of changes in their social life and studies and there are no studies among university students in Ethiopia. Cross-sectional survey was conducted as the method of study in two universities of Ethiopia. Multistage sampling technique were used, and the study included 2551 students. The study resulted in the poor sleep quality among students and perceived stress level and symptoms of depression and anxiety were strongly associated with sleep quality.

Andrew Steptoe et al. (2006) conducted a study on sleep duration and health in young adults. The background of the study was that Getting too much, or too little sleep can have negative effects on the health of young adults. This study aimed to understand how sleep duration is related to how young adults perceive their own health. Anonymous questionnaires were used as a method of data collection. The data was collected from

17,465 university students and the age group was 17 to 30. The study resulted that insufficient sleep might be more worrisome for young adults compared to excessive sleep.

Hanna G Lund et.al (2010) conducted a study on sleep patterns and predictors of disturbed sleep in a large population of college students. The objective of the study was to characterise the sleep patterns and the predictors of poor sleep quality in a vast population of students in colleges and universities. This study builds upon the 2006 National Sleep Foundation study that looked at sleep patterns in early adolescence. The current study focuses on sleep patterns in older adolescents. The study was conducted by the method of cross-sectional online survey about sleep habits. The study resulted that majority of students reported disturbed sleep and over 60% were categorized as poor-quality sleepers. Most of the students reported that emotional and academic stress had a detrimental effect on their sleep. These findings show that not getting enough sleep and having irregular sleep patterns, which have been well-documented in younger adolescents, are also prevalent in this age group.

Lorna K P Suen et al (2010) conducted a study on association of sleep hygiene related factors and sleep quality among university students in Hong Kong. The objective of the study was to see if factors related to sleep hygiene are linked to the quality of sleep among college students. The research design used was cross sectional survey. The setting was a university in Hong Kong. The sampling technique used in the study was convenience sampling. The study found that practicing good sleep hygiene was strongly linked to better sleep quality. It also emphasized on the importance of educating university students about the significance of adopting healthy sleep habits to improve their awareness and prioritize proper sleep hygiene.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

AIM OF THE STUDY

- To study about the impact of sleep hygiene awareness and practices on sleep quality among college students.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the socio-demographic details of the participants.
- To study the level of sleep hygiene awareness among college students.
- To understand the relationship between sleep hygiene practices and sleep quality.
- To identify the factors influencing sleep hygiene practices among college students.

HYPOTHESIS

"College students who have higher levels of sleep hygiene awareness and practice better sleep hygiene habits will experience improved sleep quality compared to those with lower levels of awareness and poor sleep hygiene practices."

"College students who limit their exposure to electronic devices before bedtime and create a calm sleep environment will have improved sleep quality compared to those who engage in excessive screen time and have a disruptive sleep environment."

VARIABLES

Dependent variable: Sleep quality

Independent variables: Sleep hygiene awareness, sleep hygiene practices, exposure to electronic devices (screen time).

FINDINGS

- ✓ Improved sleep hygiene by increased sleep hygiene awareness which leads to improved sleep quality among college students.
- ✓ Having good sleep habits was closely connected to getting better quality sleep. It also stressed the importance of teaching college students about the benefits of adopting healthy sleep practices to increase their awareness and make sleep hygiene a priority.
- ✓ Many students experienced disrupted sleep, with over 60% being classified as poor-quality sleepers. Many students reported that emotional and academic stress negatively impacted their sleep. These findings indicate that inadequate sleep and irregular sleep patterns, which are commonly observed in younger adolescents, are also widespread among this age group.
- ✓ Not getting enough sleep might be more concerning for young adults than sleeping too much.
- ✓ Students had poor sleep quality, and there was a strong connection between their perceived stress levels, symptoms of depression and anxiety, and sleep quality.
- ✓ There is a two-way relationship between sleep and depression, meaning that poor sleep can contribute to depression, and depression can also lead to sleep problems.
- ✓ The study found that the sleep quality of medical students was much worse compared to a group of healthy adults.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ Develop and implement educational campaigns or programs to increase awareness of the importance of sleep hygiene among college students.
- ❖ Provide resources and information about effective sleep hygiene practices, such as maintaining a consistent sleep schedule, creating a sleep-friendly environment, and avoiding stimulants before bed.
- ❖ Encourage college students to prioritize and make time for sufficient sleep by incorporating it into their daily routines and schedules.
- ❖ Conduct workshops or seminars on stress management techniques and relaxation exercises that can help improve sleep quality.
- ❖ Collaborate with college health services to offer personalized sleep assessments and guidance to students who may be experiencing sleep difficulties.
- ❖ Promote a campus culture that values and supports healthy sleep habits, including providing quiet study spaces and minimizing noise disturbances during nighttime hours.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the conceptual study on the impact of sleep hygiene awareness and practice on sleep quality among college students suggests that increased awareness and consistent adherence to sleep hygiene practices can lead to improved sleep quality. Prioritizing sufficient sleep, creating a sleep-friendly environment, and incorporating stress management techniques can contribute to better overall well-being and academic performance. Collaboration between educational institutions and health services, along with campus-wide policies and initiatives, can support healthy sleep habits among college students. Ongoing research is needed to identify the most effective approaches for enhancing sleep quality in this population. Promoting sleep hygiene awareness remains crucial for fostering healthy sleep habits among college students.

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