

Students Experiencing Sleep Disorders

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Abstract

This paper identifies a major issue of sleep disorders that has developed in many students over time. It examines the length of sleep and sleep disturbance on students' mental health. Students in college tend to experience worry, insomnia, and other sleep disorders which can negatively impact their academic performance. This also allows them to have depression and an increased level of stress. Students tend to be distracted by their cell phones and stay up for numerous hours in order to finish school work. However, when they are not receiving the proper amount of sleep it affects their mind and body. The goal of this review is to bring awareness to this ongoing issue, which occurs in students' daily lives. This review also sheds light on the causes of sleep deprivation in college students.

Keywords: Sleep disorders, Students, Mental Health, Academic Performance

Students Experiencing Sleep Disorders

Do cell phones and sleep length contribute towards sleep disorders in college students? Does not receiving the adequate amount of sleep have an affect on a person? Is sleep disorders a serious issue? Sleep disorders are changes in one's sleeping pattern or a habit that has a negative impact on one's health, safety, and quality of life. Typically, the most common sleep disorder that students tend to experience is insomnia. Insomnia is difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep that occurs consistently throughout the night. *Insomnia and Mental Health in College Students* reports that the significant relationship between insomnia symptoms and mental health found in the general population holds true in the college population as well (Taylor et al., 2011).

Normally, people who experience insomnia have factors that include high levels of anxiety, depression, stress, drug usage, mental status, and bed routines. Those who do not get enough sleep can suffer with sleep debt, which decreases alertness and mental efficiency in a person.

College students are often swamped with various assignments from different classes. The heavy workload that students have has an effect on their sleeping patterns. They tend to stay up long and late hours in order to complete their assignments. The average amount of sleep that is needed is 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night. 36% of the study participants reported less than 7 h of sleep per night, while Lund and colleagues noted 60% of college students to be poor quality sleepers... 1,845 college students, that at least 27% of the participants were at risk of at least one sleep disorder (Becerra et al., 2020). Those who do not have the adequate amount of sleep begin to suffer with sleep disorders. This can have a negative effect on the mind and the body. Poor sleep health is a major problem that college students are experiencing. The percentage of

students that are experiencing sleep disorders are increasing. There are symptoms of fatigue, tiredness, and daytime sleepiness, due to having less than eight hours of sleep per night.

Impact on Students Academic Performance

Poor sleep habits in college students not only affects their mind and body, but it also takes a toll on their academic performance. Sleep deprivation is a major common issue that most college students tend to experience. Sleep deprivation is not getting the required amount of sleep that is needed. Most students are unable to get enough sleep because they have to wake up early in the morning and they go to sleep very late. Among college students who carried a full academic load, those who reported poorer sleep quality were likely to perform worse on academic tests (Gaultney, 2010). This issue gives students difficulties to answer questions that are on tests and assignments, because their brain is not functioning to the best of its ability. Students who are academically at risk are most likely to have a negative sleeping pattern. Their GPA tends to decrease and their grades slip due to the fact that they are not fully aware because of the lack of sleep being experienced. While those who have consistent sleep schedules have higher grades. According to Gaultney (2010), when 15 college students were asked to sleep as much as possible at night during the sleep-extension phase of one study, daytime sleepiness decreased, and reaction time, mood, and fatigue improved, despite the fact that participants had reported little daytime sleepiness prior to the extension phase. This study proves the effectiveness of having an adequate amount of sleep. There were many benefits of having sleep, it reduced the negative effects of sleep deprivation. Sleep is needed to support healthy brain function and maintain physical health. The lack of sleep brings along risk in health and negative

symptoms. Academic performance is an important part of college and students need to be alert and aware in order to receive good grades. Sleep is an important factor for students to have.

The Negative Effect of Technology

The use of technology can also have a negative effect on the amount of sleep that students receive per night. Cell phones and social media play a big role in the lives of college students. In this generation today there is a high percentage of students who have social media and cell phones. Texting also has an effect on the sleep disorders that students experience. Higher levels of overall cell phone use, which predicted greater sleep problems, which in turn, predicted lower satisfaction with life. Also, higher levels of overall cell phone use predicted higher levels of cellphone use during class and study time, which predicted lower grade point average, which in turn predicted lower satisfaction with life (Murdock & Adams, 2017). This article shows how cell phones do have a negative effect on students. The usage of cell phones tends to increase sleep problems in students and it decreases the amount of time the students have to study and care for their grades. It is a distraction that allows students to stay awake for long periods of time because they are into texting and being on social media. This is also one of the reasons why students stay up late to cram for their assignments as well. Students who don't use their phones at night tend to have better behavior changes, good grades, and improved amounts of sleep. Murdock & Adams, (2017), also states, a greater average number of daily text messages was significantly associated only with subjective sleep quality, but greater awareness of nighttime cell phone notifications was significantly associated with global sleep problems, sleep disruptions, and subjective sleep quality. This source of evidence supports the claim that sleep is important for students to have. Lack of sleep causes students to have many issues that affect their

performance in school. Students' usage of their cell phones and sending out various text messages does affect the quality of their sleep. This is one of the main reasons why sleep disorders occur today, because of these distractions. Cell phone usage does affect sleep related functioning.

Sleep Disturbance Correlation to Worrying

Worry has an impact on how a student's sleep is affected, and it plays a role in experiencing sleep disorders. The amount of hours that one sleep can contribute to the amount of worry that one may experience. According to Kelly (2002), individuals who habitually sleep 6 hr or fewer every 24 hr (short sleepers), as compared with those who sleep 9 hr or more every 24 hr (long sleepers), are more likely to be neurotic, demonstrate less creativity, report more hallucinations, endorse more eating disorders, and perform more poorly academically. The lack of sleep takes a toll on students and affects their everyday lifestyle. This source goes into depth to explain the negative outcomes that short sleepers tend to face. Those who do not receive a sufficient amount of sleep can experience these symptoms. Worriers report less sleep because they are often unable to sleep because of worrying, rather than that short sleepers tend to compensate for suboptimal cortical arousal by worrying (Kelly, 2002). Worry is the uneasiness of one's mind, and the focus on difficulties or troubles. Students tend to worry about their families, their school grades, romantic relationships, money, jobs, and more. These worries negatively affect their sleeping schedule. When the mind is in constant trouble and overthinking it is difficult to actually rest the mind. If the student's mind is not receiving enough rest this is when the role of sleep disorders occurs. The relationship between sleep disorders and worrying is that the excess amount of worry can make it difficult for one to have a rested night of sleep.

Sleep Disorders Development During Childhood

Many students' sleep disorders are likely to develop during childhood or adolescence. Adolescents who have untreated sleep disorders can grow up and it can negatively affect their lifestyle as an adult. The lack of sleep in children can ultimately worsen as they reach adulthood due to unresolved treatment in an earlier stage. According to Luginbuehl et al., 2008, studies have shown that untreated sleep disorders can negatively affect cognitive abilities, and academic and behavior performance. Those who are not yet treated for their sleep disorders are at risk for a low performance level. Normal cognitive functioning such as memory, speech, and the ability to learn new information can be prohibited due to the lack of sleep. Students' academic performance can be affected and decrease daily for not receiving the adequate amount of sleep per night. Also, the behaviors of students which includes teamwork, decision making, and productivity can be negatively affected as well. Because sleep disorders are not typically considered a possible cause for school or behavioral-emotional difficulties, numerous research findings suggest that some children with sleep disorders may be inaccurately or prematurely identified as having a learning disability (Luginbuehl et al., 2008). This source proves that sleep disorders can affect a child's academic performance. Learning disabilities is a factor that is developed from the lack of sleep that a person receives. It is worse to occur in children because they will be impaired and unable to learn in the proper way that they should, compared to students who do receive the right amount of education. Students who have the required sleep per night thrive in the classroom, their behaviors are positively affected, and they are able to learn new information. The mind needs to have a proper amount of rest in order to function properly and to allow the body to function properly as well.

Conclusion

Overall, sleep disorders in college students is a very common and important disorder that should not be ignored. My hope is that my review brought awareness to this ongoing issue that may not directly affect every student, but will affect the majority of students during their journey of pursuing a higher education. Students experiencing stress and depression in relation to sleep disorders are more likely to suffer the consequences of poor health, safety and a quality of life. Many students who are unaware of the importance of sleep may find it difficult to perform the necessary daily activities that include the important use of the mind and body. It is critical that students are made aware of and receive the proper amount of sleep per night to help eliminate sleep disorders.

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