Sleep Deprivation Among Different Groups of People

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I have neither given nor received help on this work, nor am I aware of any infraction of the Honor Code.

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Sleep deprivation is a concept that most people are a least somewhat familiar with. Whether a person has their own experiences with it or has witnessed its effects from observing family or friends. By definition, sleep deprivation is when an individual doesn’t get enough sleep, on a short- or long-term level (Ranasinghe, Gayathri & Priya, 2018). With people’s busy work schedules and still trying to make time for family and friends, it is easy to become sleep deprived. With that being said, have you ever thought how being sleep deprived effected your performance at school or work? Most people can feel the effects but do not actually do any research as to how their actions and decisions differ when they are sleep deprived versus when they are well rested. To help answer this question, several career professions and types of people will be analyzed in how being sleep deprived effects their performance.

# Health Conditions and Sleep Deprivation

Studies have shown that as people age, they typically get less sleep per night. When a person gets less sleep than the usual 7 or 8 hours, he or she feels somewhat different. Common symptoms are being more tired, feeling lazy, or unable to focus on tasks. However, recently there have been studies showing the correlation between older people experiencing sleep deprivation and health problems. When referring to older people (in this case 50 years or older) who experience sleep deprivation after being diagnosed with an illness is called “comorbid insomnia” (Koyanagi et al., 2014). In the study being examined, data was collected from 9 countries among people 50 years or older with various illness’s and sleep issues. In each country data was collected and analyzed and links to certain conditions and sleep problems were made. For example, in Finland, Spain, and India, sleep issues were much more likely with people who have asthma (Koyanagi et al., 2014). Furthermore, older people experiencing sleep problems in Poland, Ghana, South Africa and Spain were at a higher risk of being diagnosed with chronic lung disease (Koyanagi et al., 2014). Lastly, there was one condition that was seen to increase in all countries due to sleep deprivation, it was depression (Koyanagi et al., 2014). As one can see, there seems to be a link between conditions and sleep problems within older people, and vice versa.

# Sleep Deprivation in Mothers

It is quite obvious that mothers taking care of their infant children have a lot of responsibilities. In doing so, a mother’s sleep pattern can suffer in trying to take care of their child. This study expands on the relationship between mothers and their infants and how sleep deprivation effects the mother. In this particular study, 40 sleep deprived mothers that have infants between the ages of 3-4 months old were examined in their interactions with one another. This study found that mothers who were very sleep deprived, due to their child awakening multiple times during the night, said their child less manageable to them, opposed to mothers who were not sleep deprived (Deleon, 2012). It makes sense that when someone is tired it causes them to have increased difficulty dealing with stressful situations. That being said, caring for a baby would qualify as a stressful situation. Not only was sleep deprivation making it harder for these mothers to deal with the stresses of child care, but they also said the lack of sleep caused the mothers issues in functioning and in their interactions with their baby (Deleon, 2012). Sleep deprivation not only effects how a mother deals with stress but also how she interacts with her baby, which can have negative effects on the child in the future.

Sleep Deprivation in Nurses

It is no question that being a nurse is a pretty demanding job. Some stereotypes of nurses are they are overworked and underappreciated. However, people and patients alike still expect them to do their jobs properly, despite working long hours. However, could nurses being over worked, then becoming sleep deprived, effect their performance and clarity in their work environment? This is the question being explored in the following study. In order to conduct this study, the researchers examined sleep deprivation effects in 3 male and 97 female nurses, who were said to be healthy and between the ages of 20 to 50 years old. It is also important to note that the examinations took place at the end of the nurse’s shift, after having that shift for 3 to 4 days. This study found that intellect and attention among the nurses at night decreased while their sense of mental quickness and reaction increased (Kaliyaperumal, Elango, Alagesan, & Santhanakrishanan, 2017). The increased sense of mental quickness and reaction time among the nurses at night is most likely due to increased adrenaline. On the contrary, being hyper aware does not exclude a person from making mistakes. To illustrate, the study also found that tests for administration and recollection were much lower at night when compared to nurses working during the day (Kaliyaperumal, Elango, Alagesan, & Santhanakrishanan, 2017). In order for anyone to do their job properly, one needs to be aware and conscious of what they are doing. According to this study, “69% of shift working nurses were affected with sleep deprivation,” (Kaliyaperumal, Elango, Alagesan, & Santhanakrishanan, 2017). These results show that nurses working the night shift might be more likely to make mistakes and to possibly have unintended negative effects on the quality of care of their patients. This is turn, puts the patients’ health at risk.

Sleep Deprivation in School Aged Children and Adolescents

During the grades of kindergarten through senior year of high school, children and teenagers are forced to start their school days fairly early. Since this age group cannot choose the start and end of time of their courses (like how college students can) they are forced to adapt to the early waking time and the travel time to and from school. This process of waking early then having to commute to and from school can affect how that student feels and functions. In the following study, it addresses the concern of the amount of time students spend commuting to and from school, the start time of school, and how these factors interact with one another and cause sleep deprivation. In order to conduct this study, the researchers accessed 84 students who start school at 7:30 AM and 84 students who start school at 11:00 AM. All of the students being accessed were about 14 years of age. During the course of this experiment, the researchers collected data on a variety of topics amongst these school aged teenagers. One of the topics they examined was comparing the amount of sleep each group of teenagers gets during the week. The researchers concluded that the students who go to school earlier, slept less than the students who went to school later (Pradhan & Sinha, 2017). This seems relatively straight forward, however, by the teenagers who have to wake up earlier, may experience more levels of sleep deprivation than the students who get to sleep longer. Since the students who start school earlier have to get up earlier than commute to school, they experienced higher levels of fatigue opposed to the other group of students (Pradhan & Sinha, 2017). Lastly, the researchers concluded that students who start their school day at an earlier time are also more stressed than those who start at a later time (Pradhan & Sinha, 2017). The time students are expected to be at school has direct impacts on the student’s levels of tiredness and how they handle stress. It is evident that the effects of sleep deprivation make a substantial impact in the lives of grade school aged children and teenagers.

**Sleep Deprivation Among College Students**

When a student chooses to go to college, they are also choosing to take on new responsibilities all on their own. College is a time when a student learns more about being responsible and in most cases, also learns more about themselves. Students attending college are faced with many challenges and often have very busy schedules. It is easy to assume that with a lot of activities and responsibilities, that college students experience some degree of sleep deprivation. This study examined sleep deprivation among 100 students through a questionnaire. The results of this study found that students are not getting adequate sleep for multiple reasons. For example, leisure and fun activities, studying, and prolonged screen time, were some of the causes of sleep deprivation among these students (Ranasinghe, Gayathri & Priya, 2018). In the age of technology and connectivity, today’s college students always want to be informed. Moreover, since college students are using their cell phones and other forms of technology quite frequently, it leads them to having trouble falling and staying asleep (Ranasinghe, Gayathri & Priya, 2018). This want to always be informed and involved lead interest as being the primary factor in sleep deprivation among college students, with stress coming in second (Ranasinghe, Gayathri & Priya, 2018). College students being somewhat sleep deprived is not a shocking fact to most people, however being chronically deprived of sleep could cause some problems for these students. “This chronic sleep deprivation may impair academic performance, mood regulation, and driving safety,” (Ranasinghe, Gayathri & Priya, 2018). College students are faced with many challenges and stressors, but sleep is still an important factor in success and well being

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, as one can see, sleep is very important for people of all ages. Getting adequate sleep at night can help people stay happier and healthier. With everyone living such busy and hectic lifestyles now, sometimes sleep is put on the back burner. However, in order to be truly aware and alert of one’s surrounding’s, getting a good night sleep is crucial. To sum things up, life is busy for everyone, no matter of a person’s age or lifestyle all people should still make sleep a priority in living life to the fullest.

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