



## Enhancing Awareness of the Sleep's Importance among Students: A Qualitative Study

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### Abstrak

Sleep is a vital biological state for humans, crucial for the body's recovery and enhancement of human stamina. In its complex process, sleep plays a crucial role in maintaining daily functions. Lack of sleep can result in concentration disturbances, decreased endurance, fatigue, anxiety, and decreased thinking ability, to other health issues. Particularly for students, insufficient sleep can have a negative impact on their academic performance. This study is a qualitative research with a literature review approach, comparing various existing research results. Sleep is extremely important for humans, including students. Therefore, the importance of adequate sleep time for students to support optimal academic achievement is significant.

**Kata Kunci:** *sleep, sleep deprivation, students*

### Abstract

Tidur adalah suatu keadaan biologis manusia yang vital bagi tubuh serta berfungsi sebagai pemulihan serta meningkatkan stamina tubuh manusia. Dalam prosesnya yang kompleks, tidur memiliki peran krusial dalam menjaga fungsi harian. Kekurangan tidur dapat mengakibatkan gangguan konsentrasi, penurunan daya tahan, kelelahan, kegelisahan, serta penurunan kemampuan berpikir, hingga masalah kesehatan lain. Khususnya bagi mahasiswa, kurangnya tidur dapat berdampak negatif pada kinerja akademis mereka. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kepustakaan dengan membandingkan berbagai hasil penelitian yang sudah ada. Tidur sangatlah penting bagi manusia termasuk mahasiswa. Oleh karena itu, pentingnya waktu tidur yang cukup bagi mahasiswa untuk mendukung pencapaian prestasi akademis yang optimal sangatlah besar.

**Keywords:** *tidur, kurang tidur, mahasiswa*

## Introduction

Sleep is the most important activity that humans engage in every day and is also one of the basic needs that must be fulfilled. This activity is a natural process that occurs daily in life. Sleep is an important activity that cannot be separated from life. Although sometimes overlooked, sleep plays a very important role in maintaining a person's physical, mental, and emotional health. According to Nainggolan (2017), driving while drowsy results in fatal accidents by 21 percent. That is why, according to Goble (n.d.), sleep is one of the physiological needs with the highest priority in Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. A person with unmet needs will prioritize fulfilling their physiological needs before other needs (Wikipedia, 2015). Therefore, it is important to always fulfill basic needs such as getting enough sleep.

Adequate sleep is essential for everyone so that the body can function normally. During rest or sleep, the body undergoes a beneficial recovery or regeneration process that restores body stamina to optimal condition. Good and regular sleep patterns have a positive effect on health (Guyton & Hall, 2007).

Someone who cannot meet their sleep needs in terms of both quantity and quality will suffer from insomnia. Insomnia is a condition where a person experiences insufficient quantity and quality of sleep (Lanywati, 2001). Insomnia is not a disease, but rather a symptom of sleep disorder characterized by difficulty sleeping. According to WHO's report in 2020, approximately 19.1% of the world's population is reported to have sleep difficulties (WHO, 2020). In Indonesia, about 10% of its population suffers from sleep disorders. This means roughly 28 million of Indonesia's total population experience insomnia (Kurniawan et al.,

2020). This data suggests that there are many cases of insomnia occurring in Indonesia and require special attention from the community regarding this matter. When someone lacks sleep, it can have negative impacts on them. Therefore, this research was conducted to understand the negative impacts of sleep deprivation and what strategies should be implemented to improve sleep quality for students.

## Method

This study is qualitative research using a literature review approach. The aim of this research is to identify the negative impacts of sleep deprivation and strategies to overcome it. The study utilizes references from books, the internet, and findings from published articles.

## Result and Discussion

### Negative Impacts of Sleep Deprivation

The ideal time for sleeping is during the night, while daytime is meant for being awake. During the night, humans tend to have fewer activities compared to daytime. Moreover, the quiet atmosphere makes the night a suitable time for rest.

Current busy activities often consume time, leading many people to lack sleep. However, the effects of sleep deprivation are not merely feeling sleepy the next day. Many consider poor sleep patterns to be trivial. Nevertheless, numerous studies have revealed the adverse effects of sleep deprivation. Here are some of the negative impacts caused by insufficient sleep:

#### 1. Impaired Motor Skills

Lack of sleep slows down our motor skills and makes us less agile (Sepri, 2007). Consequently, we tend to be more nervous, prone to accidents, or prone to spilling things. This happens because our reflexes decrease and our brains become

less focused, making us appear careless. Similarly, as stated by Setyawati (2020), when someone lacks sleep, it can be observed from physical and psychological signs, such as disrupted motor responses. When motor responses are compromised, a person may perform actions unconsciously or without full control. According to Aminuddin (2020), when students experience sleep deprivation, their brain function declines, leading to reduced attention, slowness, confusion, and academic performance deterioration. Hence, it is crucial to pay attention to sleep quality and quantity.

## 2. Decreased Immune Function

Adequate and quality sleep is essential for a healthy body (Marpaung, Supit, & Nancy, 2013). According to Aminuddin (2020), sleep deprivation results in decreased immune function. When immune function decreases, it can cause fatigue, weakness, and instability (Purwanti & Dian, 2017). During nighttime sleep, the body undergoes cellular regeneration. Lack of sleep weakens the body's immune system, making it susceptible to mild viruses such as flu and cough. Even with a balanced diet, without quality sleep, the immune system will remain weak.

## 3. Physical Changes

Sleep quality refers to an individual's satisfaction with sleep, so they do not show signs of fatigue, restlessness, apathy, dark circles around the eyes, swollen eyelids, burning eyes, scattered attention, headaches, and frequent yawning (Hidayat, 2006). When someone lacks sleep, their body releases more stress hormones or cortisol. Hidayat (2006) also explains that in excessive amounts, cortisol can break down skin collagen, a protein that keeps the skin smooth and elastic. Sleep deprivation can also cause the body to

produce fewer growth hormones. In adolescence, human growth hormone promotes muscle growth, thickens the skin, and strengthens bones.

## 4. Impaired Cognitive Function

Good sleep plays a crucial role in the thinking and learning process. Sepri (2007) explains that sleep deprivation can disrupt alertness, reasoning concentration, and problem-solving. According to Sahri & Hasibuan (2023), sleep plays a vital role in life. Unfortunately, sleep deprivation leading to sleep disorders often occurs among young adults. Its effects can be detrimental not only to physical health but also to mental and cognitive abilities. Health problems arising from lack of sleep can vary, from digestive disorders to the risk of heart disease and diabetes. Lack of sleep adversely affects cognitive functions such as disturbed memory and impaired thinking, making learning difficult and inefficient. The sleep cycle at night strengthens memory consolidation. Without enough sleep, the ability to remember what is learned and experienced decreases. Therefore, for students, sufficient sleep is essential to ensure they can learn and live optimally.

## Adolescence and Poor Sleep Habits

The worst effect of poor sleep quality is not how we feel at night but how it affects us during the day, both physically and emotionally. People who lack sleep are more prone to concentration difficulties, fatigue, mood disturbances, reduced productivity, and so on.

Papalia et al. (2009) state that every individual has different sleep habits, depending on their activities. From toddlers to the elderly, everyone has different sleep times depending on their age. One of the most unique stages is sleep time during adolescence. Adolescence is divided into two stages: young adulthood

(ages 16-30) and middle adulthood (ages 31-60). Young adulthood is a stage in human life development that involves experimentation and exploration, known as emerging adulthood.

Further, uniqueness occurs during young adulthood, where there is a shift in sleep patterns caused by hormonal changes at the end of puberty. Generally, the sleep needs of teenagers increase to 8.5–9.25 hours per day, but their sleep schedule changes (Papalia, Olds, & Feldman, 2009). Interestingly, while others start to feel sleepy around 9 or 10 PM, teenagers are enthusiastic about engaging in activities, whether it's studying or completing their tasks. Meanwhile, in the morning, they have to wake up earlier to prepare for school, college, or work. Research conducted by Woran et al., (2021) regarding the use of social media on sleep quality found a connection between social media use and sleep quality in high school students at SMA N 1 Langowan. Out of 80 respondents, 58 students had poor sleep quality, while 22 students had good sleep quality. Researchers suggest that teenagers should reduce their social media use and regulate their sleep patterns. Collaboration between teachers and parents is also necessary to monitor and provide education regarding social media use. Similarly, research by Sahri & Hasibuan (2023) states that there is a relationship between sleep quality and academic achievement among college students. The research was conducted on students at STIKes Murni Teguh Medan and STIKes Flora Medan, with the majority of students having excellent sleep quality, resulting in a very satisfactory GPA. Research conducted by Habibi (2021) shows that high school students in class XI at SMKN 1 Seruyan Tengah are categorized as always playing online games, resulting in poor sleep quality among teenagers.

### **Tips for Overcoming Sleep Deprivation in College Students**

To address sleep deprivation in college students, here are 3 practical steps from several that can be practiced.

#### **1. Establish a Consistent Sleep Schedule**

Setting a regular sleep schedule is important to ensure optimal sleep quality. According to Malau et al., (2023), it is important for humans to establish a consistent bedtime every day. By adhering to a regular sleep schedule, the body can regulate its biological rhythm and provide physical and mental recovery (Guyton & Hall, 2014). Consistency in sleep patterns can play a role in reducing sleep difficulties, improving sleep quality, and maintaining hormone balance during sleep, thus avoiding diseases and contributing significantly to concentration and overall health. By applying consistent sleep patterns, humans can increase productivity and maintain bodily health.

#### **2. Create a Comfortable sleeping Environment**

Creating a comfortable sleep environment is crucial to ensuring quality sleep and supporting optimal sleep health. According to Azari & Zururi (2021), it is important to create a comfortable and peaceful sleep environment. Environmental factors affect sleep hygiene. An uncomfortable bedroom with noisy sounds, bright lights, or hot room temperatures, uncomfortable beds and pillows, and thick blankets that cause overheating during sleep can affect sleep hygiene. Therefore, according to Wnarni & Nisa (2017), creating a comfortable sleep environment can increase the natural tendency to sleep and mitigate sleep disturbances.

### 3. Engage in Physical Activity and Exercise

Engaging in physical activity and exercise has significant effects on improving sleep quality and overall health. Asri & Lely Octaviana (2021) state that regular exercise releases endorphins that help reduce stress and improve mood, which ultimately helps us feel relaxed and ready to sleep at night. Additionally, exercise can help reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression that often disturb sleep (Saras, 2023). Furthermore, Nugroho (2021) states that regular physical activity can also help regulate the body's circadian rhythm, making it easier to sleep and wake up at the same time every day. However, it is important to remember that exercising too close to bedtime can increase energy levels, making it a hindrance when trying to sleep. Therefore, it is recommended not to exercise too vigorously close to bedtime (Wisnubrata, 2021).

### 4. Healthy Eating Habits

Healthy eating habits play an important role in supporting good-quality sleep. Consuming balanced and nutritious foods can affect human sleep quality. According to Hikmah et al., (2024), there are obstacles for students from high school to college regarding healthy eating habits. Due to a lack of time to prepare meals and limited access to nutritious foods, students consume processed foods that tend to worsen their sleep quality. According to the short sleep pattern at night, there is an increase in ghrelin hormone and a decrease in leptin hormone, which results in an increase in eating patterns at night and ultimately increases obesity. Adolescents must maintain a balanced diet (Amrynia & Prameswari, 2022) because nutritious foods have a significant impact on health (Kasingku, 2023) and can help in creative thinking, thus creating a healthy

generation (Goni et al., 2023). According to Salsabilla (2023), there are foods that are good to consume before bed, resulting in sound sleep at night, namely bananas and almonds, protein smoothies, oatmeal, pineapples, cherries and oranges, nuts, grains, and yogurt. By consuming the above foods, it will help us achieve quality sleep. Therefore, let us not forget that body health is greatly influenced by the food consumed. It is necessary to pay attention even to healthy food, but do not consume it excessively because there are dangers when consuming food excessively (Kasingku & Lumoindong, 2023). So, even though there are foods that can have a positive effect on improving sleep quality, they should be consumed in moderation.

### Conclusion

From the references obtained, it can be concluded that the cause of sleep deprivation among college students is during the night when they fulfill their obligations, such as doing assignments and studying for exams. In addition, they also engage in leisure activities, such as watching dramas or favorite films and playing favorite games, to spend time. If done frequently, these activities can have negative effects on the body, leading to impaired motor skills, decreased immune function, physical changes, and decreased cognitive abilities in students.

To address lack of sleep and its negative effects, students can start by changing their sleep patterns, including regulating their bedtime and waking up earlier in the morning. They also need to create a clean sleeping environment and not forget to engage in sufficient physical activity and exercise. Additionally, students should balance this with healthy eating habits.

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