

Chapter 16

Targeted Sleep Interventions and Their Effect on Academic Performance


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ABSTRACT

This chapter offers a comprehensive overview of sleep within academic and lifestyle contexts. It examines targeted intervention strategies, including educational initiatives and lifestyle adjustments, to optimize students' sleep habits. The impact of technology on sleep, along with its neurological implications, is explored. Practical strategies for educators and stakeholders are provided to bridge research insights with actionable solutions, aiming to enhance students' well-being and academic capabilities. The chapter identifies gaps, such as the need for diverse student population studies and further investigation into the efficacy of sleep education programs. It concludes by urging policymakers and educational institutions to consider these findings for improving student well-being and academic competence.

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Nowadays, students encounter a lot of stress as they deal with the hurdles of schooling (Luthar & Kumar 2018). The weight on students for academic achievement has tremendously increased, creating an environment where students feel compelled to excel amidst expectations and intense competition. While chasing their goals and getting involved in tasks, students meet ever-present demands because of the deeply settled culture of constant hard work (Luthar & Kumar 2018). Still, among all the tests and dreams that education brings, students often disregard the importance of sleep in their health. Sleep tends to be neglected in the race for achievement.

Research studies conducted by Walker (2017) and Dewald et al. (2010) have explored the connection between sleep patterns and academic performance. Observations by Walker have highlighted the significance of getting high-quality sleep for functions like memory formation, and problem-solving. Students frequently ignore or underestimate the importance of sleep despite there being plenty of evidence linking sleep with better performance in academia. Over time even researchers have shifted their focus on understanding the relationship between sleep and cognitive function within sleep research. Recently scholars and educators have given it more attention and highlighted its significance, in academic discussions. There's been an increase in research dedicated to exploring how sleep patterns and cognitive processes interact. In the past, studies on sleep mostly focused on health issues than its specific effects on performance. However, as awareness grew about the impact of sleep on learning environments researchers started focusing on examining the relationship between sleep and cognitive function.

Many studies within the community have explored the connections between sleep duration, quality, and various aspects of academic performance. This evolving understanding emphasizes a shift in perspective that recognizes sleep as a factor affecting health, memory consolidation, cognitive function, and problem-solving abilities. It is now understood that sleep is more than rest; it is a multifaceted and dynamic process closely linked with cognitive functioning and general well-being (Hirshkowitz et al., 2015). The groundbreaking research by Hirshkowitz and colleagues highlights the complexity of sleep beyond being a state of hibernation. They emphasize its role in enhancing processes that are crucial for academic success and overall wellness. Sleep profoundly impacts the well-being of a person, cognitive capabilities as well as the application of analytical and reasoning skills (Hirshkowitz et al., 2015). The conventional belief that sleep is, for rejuvenation is being challenged as this chapter delves deeper into its impact on brain processes. Understanding the stages and roles of sleep has become crucial for researchers, educators, and students alike.

This nuanced perspective on sleep aligns with the growing recognition that promoting performance requires an approach that acknowledges the mutually beneficial relationship between good quality sleep and cognitive abilities. Despite evidence showing the role of sleep in success, there is a noticeable lack of practical imple-

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