



Awareness of community about sound sleep, sleep disorders and its implications: a step towards sleep health.

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ABSTRACT:

Sleep is a naturally cyclical state of the mind and body. It plays an indispensable role in sustaining the good health of an individual. Inadequate and poor-quality sleep upsets the people of all ages leading to widespread impact on the body and mind. Insufficient sleep can be due either to medical conditions or mental health disorders or sleep disorders. Worldwide, 30%-35% of adults are suffering from insomnia, and about 10% of the population fits in diagnostic criteria for sleep disorders. From 8 countries across Asia and Africa, 17% people reported trouble with their sleep. People have poor knowledge and awareness about the sleep disorders. There is scarcity of trained healthcare professionals and workers in sleep medicine in South Asia; trained and experienced health professionals need to enhance the services of sleep medicine to meet the needs of their population. Creating awareness among the public about sleep and sleep disorders is one of the step towards Sleep Health. It is recommended to the policy makers of countries of South Asia to develop National Sleep Health Policy to address the issue of Sleep Health as lack of sleep or inadequate sleep both in quantity and quality will have impacts on health of the people and consequently economy of the country.

Keywords: Awareness, Health Policy, Insomnia, Sleep Disorders, Sleep Health.



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INTRODUCTION

Sleep, a naturally cyclical state of the mind and body plays an essential role in sustaining the good health of an individual. An adequate sound sleep at night prepares the body to get readied to take tasks of the day. Adults between 18 and 64 years of age need 7-9 hours and people above 65 years need 7-8 hours of sleep per night. While babies need 12-17 total hours of sleep in 24 hours depending on their age, toddlers need 11-14, preschool children need 10-13 hours and school-age children need 9-11 hours of sleep daily. Inadequate and poor-quality sleep distresses the people of all ages and genders resulting in far-reaching impact on the body and mind.¹ For example, lack of sleep confines person's ability to think and solve the problem effectively.²

Insufficient sleep can be due either to medical conditions or mental health disorders or sleep disorders.¹ The health implications of sleep disorders include increased risk of drowsy-driving-related motor vehicle accidents, increased risk of a wide range of chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes mellitus, obesity, cardiovascular disease, and depression; all these increase mortality risk.² Sleep disorders includes conditions causing hypersomnia (sleep apnea and narcolepsy), parasomnia (restless leg syndrome and sleepwalking), insomnia, and sleep-wake cycle disturbances.³

LITERATURE REVIEW

Globally, 30%-35% of adults are suffering from insomnia symptoms, and about 10% of the population meet diagnostic criteria for insomnia disorder or sleep disorders.⁴ In 2012, study conducted from 8 countries across Asia and Africa, 17% people reported trouble with their sleep.⁵⁻⁶ The prevalence of insomnia in the general population of South India in 2012 was 9%.⁷ Rasul et al from Bangladesh documented 28.3% children from 2 selected schools in Khulna had sleep problems.⁸ In Nepal 56.4% of people aged 60 years and above in one village⁹ and in another village 70.1% people aged 65 years and above¹⁰ had insomnia. In one third of adolescent internet users in selected semi-urban areas in Nepal reported poor quality of sleep.¹¹ The prevalence of insomnia in semi-urban and urban communities in Karachi, Pakistan in 2013 was reported as 30.1%.¹² COVID-19 pandemic has also adversely affected the quality of sleep of people.⁽¹³⁻¹⁴⁾

Panda S et al in their study on "sleep-related disorders among a healthy population in South India" reported poor knowledge and awareness about sleep disorders in India.⁷ Sultan N, Ajmal M, Saqib I, et al. in their study "Obstructive Sleep Apnoea in Pakistan: A Single Tertiary Care Center

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Experience” concluded that there is a dire need of Asian including Pakistani, health professionals to expedite process of enhancing services of sleep medicine to meet the needs of their population.¹⁵

It is essential to promote awareness among the clinician and public about sleep disorders with the intent of increasing rates of recognition of disorders, their prevention and treatment strategies and promotion of sleep health. Sleep health promotion has not been acknowledged as a critical component of public health even though poor sleep health is strongly associated with morbidity and mortality.⁴

With one of the aims creating awareness about the sleep disorders and its impact on the community, medical fraternity of countries of South Asia have created Sleep Society in their respective countries. These societies may aware and train the clinician about the problem of sleep and sleep health but to make community aware about it is not an easy task. With the support of government and other stake holders including community the sleep society may fulfil the task of providing technical know-how about sleep, sleep disorders and its implications, recognition and prevention of sleep disorders, on awareness strategy for public, on policy for sleep health and etc.

Developed countries like USA developed policy and programs for sleep and sleep disorders. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), US developed Sleep and Sleep Disorders Team which focusses on raising awareness about the problem of sleep insufficiency and sleep disorders and the importance of sleep health for the nation’s overall health in collaboration with American Academy of Sleep Medicine.¹⁶

CONCLUSION

None of the countries of South Asia have developed Sleep Health Policy or included Sleep Health in their National Health Policy. It is recommended to the policy makers of countries of South Asia to develop National Sleep Health Policy to address the issue of Sleep Health as lack of sleep or inadequate sleep both in quantity and quality will have impact on health of the people and consequently economy of the country.

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