

SOME ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF SLEEP DEPRIVATION

The problem of sleep deprivation is one of the topical subjects of psychology today because it is widespread all over the world and can result in negative effects not only on the life of individuals but also on the social and economic situation in the society. The problem of sleep deprivation is known to be the object of research by a great number of scientists in different countries. Among those who have studied this problem are Bjørn Bjorvatn, Frances Chung, Mariusz Sieminski and others.

Scientists define sleep deprivation as a continued or chronic lack of sleep. While sleep requirements vary from person to person, experts generally agree that most adults need seven to nine hours of sleep a night. Regularly short-changing yourself of sleep can impact the functioning of every system in the body, especially cognitive, emotional, and psychological health [2]. Also, when an individual has multiple consecutive days of sleep deprivation, they enter “sleep debt,” which is a cumulative effect of insufficient sleep for any period of time [3].

It should be noted that sleep deprivation can be caused by different reasons. For example, many individuals, guided by the belief that sleep is a waste of time, consciously deprive themselves of sleep to prioritise work obligations, socialising, or entertainment. Others may become sleep deprived due to various family or professional responsibilities, like raising a newborn or shift work. Hormonal changes, chronic illnesses, sleep disorders, and mental health challenges can lead to sleep deprivation as well [2].

It is supposed that the main symptoms of sleep deprivation include excessive daytime tiredness and daytime impairment. This all-consuming fatigue can make it harder to stay awake when you need to. In some instances, this may lead to microsleeps where you fall asleep momentarily, increasing the risk of unintentional accidents and errors [2].

Being critical to both physical and mental health of the people, sleep deprivation can cause some negative psychological effects. Poor or insufficient sleep increases negative emotional responses to stressors and decreases positive emotions. Sleep is known to be important to a number of brain and body functions engaged in processing daily events and regulating behaviors. It helps maintain cognitive skills, such as attention, learning, and memory [1]. Chronic sleep deprivation is considered to have serious consequences such as depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation. Recent research suggests sleep-deprived individuals are angrier, more distressed, more exasperated, and less able to adapt to frustrating situations than those who get sufficient sleep [3].

In conclusion, sleep deprivation is a burning issue nowadays. Caused by different reasons and varying from person to person sleep deprivation results in worsening the quality of life of individuals as well as decreasing their productivity and effectiveness of their work, which in the end, having mass character and involving more and more people, can lead to some negative influence on the social and economic life filling the society with the atmosphere of tiredness, anxiety, stress, depression and creating threats to health and risks in the workplace.

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