The Impact of Insomnia on the Academic Performance of Mexican Medical Students: Gender Perspective

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Abstract : Insomnia is a disorder characterized by difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep or both. It negatively affects the life quality of people, it hinders the concentration, attention, memory, motor skills, among other abilities that complicate work or learning. Some studies show that women are more susceptible to insomnia. Medicine curricula usually involve a great deal of theoretical and memory content, especially in the early years of the course. The way to accredit a university course is to demonstrate the level of competence or acquired knowledge. In Mexico the most widely used form of measurement is written exams, with numerical scales results. The prevalence of sleep disorders in university students is usually high, so it is important to know if insomnia has an effect on school performance in men and women. A cross-sectional study was designed that included a probabilistic sample of 118 regular students from the School of Medicine of the Autonomous University of Yucatan, Mexico. All on legally age. The project was authorized by the School of Medicine and all the ethical implications of the case were monitored. Participants completed anonymously the following questionnaires: Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index, Insomnia Severity Index, AUDIT test, epidemiological and clinical data. Academic performance was assessed by the average number of official grades earned on written exams, as well as the number of approved or non-approved courses. These data were obtained officially through the corresponding school authorities. Students with at least one unapproved course or average less than 70 were considered to be poor performers. With all courses approved and average between 70-79 as regular performance and with an average of 80 or higher as a good performance. Statistical analysis: t-Student, difference of proportions and ANOVA. 65 men with a mean age of 19.15 ± 1.60 years and 53 women of 18.98 ± 1.23 years, were included. 96% of the women and 78.46% of the men sleep in the family home. 16.98% of women and 18.46% of men consume tobacco. Most students consume caffeinated beverages. 3.7% of the women and 10.76% of the men complete criteria of harmful consumption of alcohol. 98.11% of the women and 90.76% of the men are perceived with poor sleep quality. Insomnia was present in 73% of women and 66% of men. Women had higher levels of moderate insomnia (p=0.02) compared to men and only one woman had severe insomnia. 50.94% of the women and 44.61% of the men had poor academic performance. 18.86% of women and 27% of men performed well. Only in the group of women we found a significant association between poor performance with mild (p= 0.0035) and moderate (p=0.031) insomnia. The medical students reported poor sleep quality and insomnia. In women, levels of insomnia were associated with poor academic performance.

Keywords : scholar-average, sex, sleep, university

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