



Sleep disorders among undergraduate students in Palestine

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Background



- Sleep is an important mechanism to restore the normal function of brain and the body, therefore, sleep disturbances might negatively affect the quality of life and learning.
- Sleep disorders have not been studied among students in the Middle East in general and in Palestine in particular.



Background

- There are several types of sleep disorders, most importantly are:
 - Insomnia
 - Parasomnia
 - Day time sleep (DST) = narcolepsy
- Prevalence of sleep problems vary based on ethnic and cultural beliefs.



Background

- University students are subjected to various educational and life stressing factors particularly with exams and lack of job opportunities after graduation.
- A pub-med search indicated that no studies have been published about sleep habits and sleep disorders among Arabs in this age categories.



The Objective



- Therefore, the objective of this study was to investigate the prevalence of sleep disorders among a sample of students at An-Najah National University.



Methodology (Study Tool= The Questionnaire)



- A questionnaire containing 32 questions divided into 6 sections was developed for this study.
- The participants were asked to limit their responses to incidents occurred during the past week.
- The questionnaire was based on The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DMS-IV) criteria and Pittsburg.

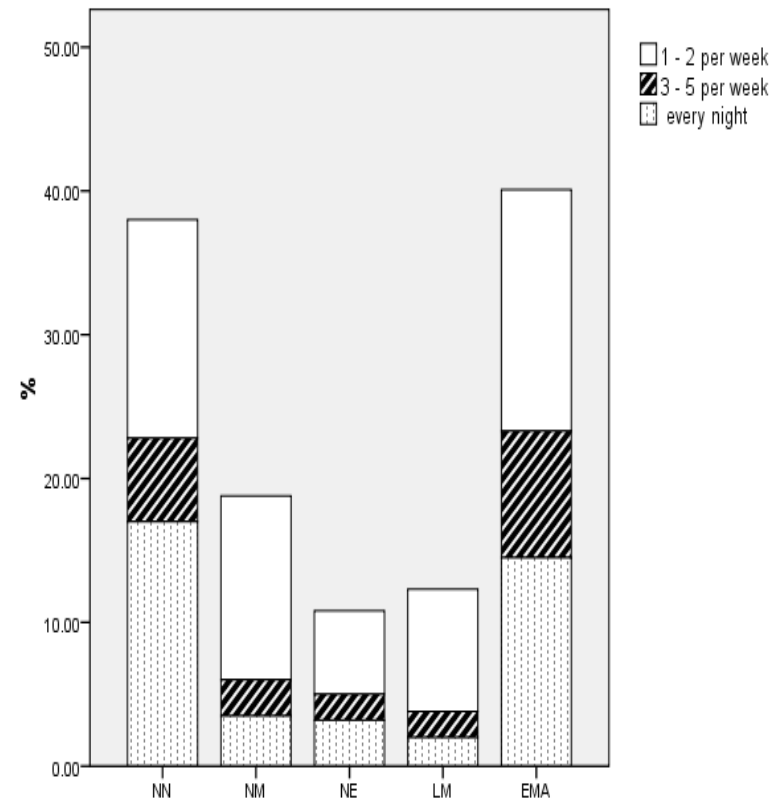


Results



Figure 1.

The prevalence of sleep disturbance symptoms associated with difficulties maintaining sleep: waking up due to noise at night (NN); waking up because of nightmares (NM); waking up because of nocturnal eating habits (NE); leg movements or disagreeable symptoms (LM); and early morning awakening (EMA).

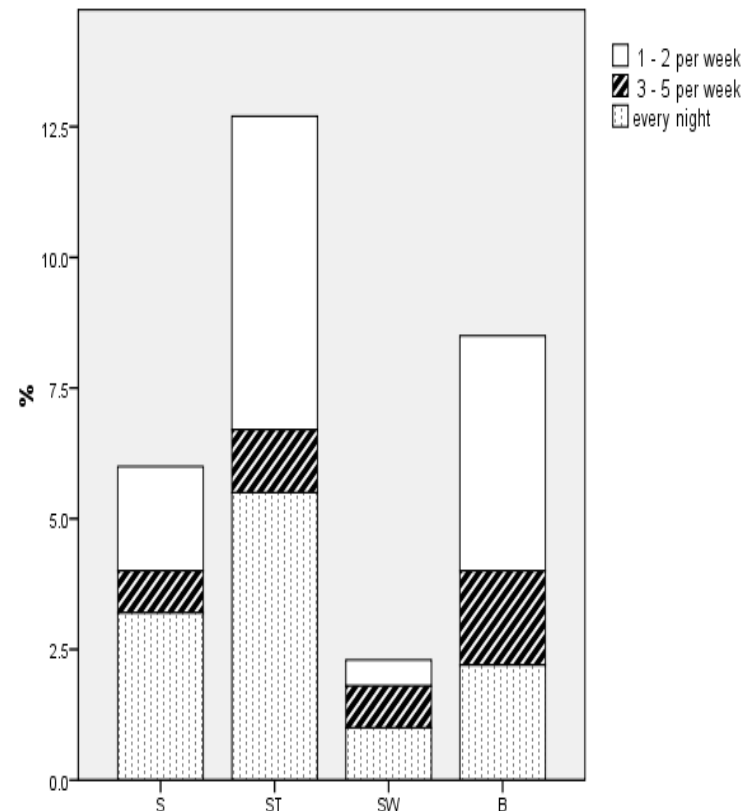




Results



- Figure 2.
- The prevalence of parasomnias such as snoring (S), sleep-talking (ST), sleepwalking (SW), and sleep bruxism (B).



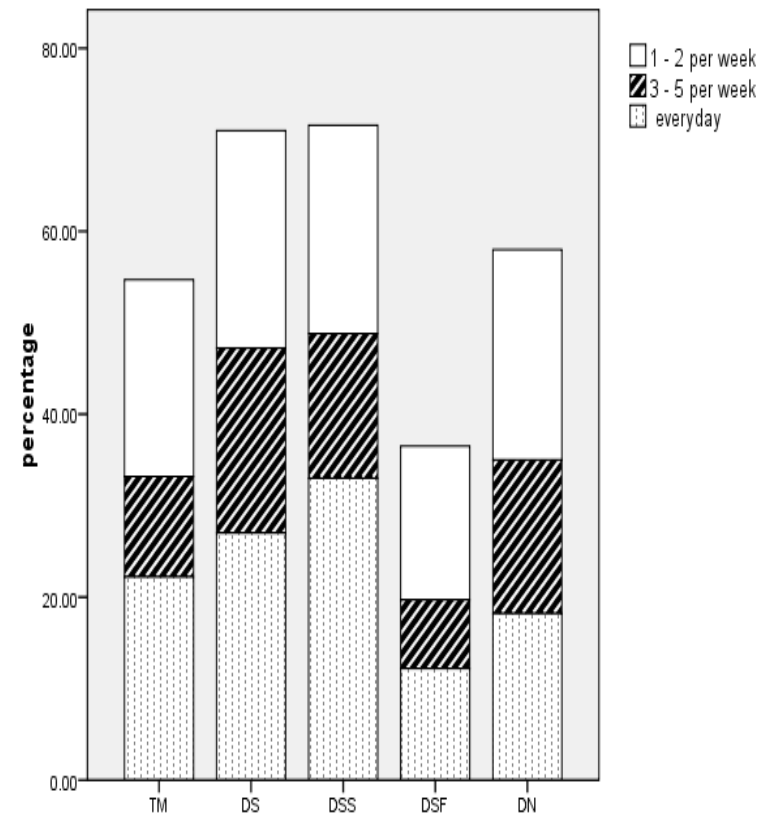


Results



- **Figure 3.**

The prevalence of complaints about sleepiness: tiredness in the morning (TM), daytime sleepiness (DS), daytime sleepiness during classes (DSS), daytime sleepiness in free time (DSF) and daytime naps (DN).





Discussion & Conclusion



- To the best of the author's knowledge, this is the first study about sleep disorders among young Arab students in a university.
- Cultural differences and different lifestyle habits may explain differences in results.
- This study demonstrated that complaints about sleep problems are common in young university students.



Discussion & Conclusions...



- The study showed that insomnia related symptoms, Parasomnia, and daytime sleepiness are important and common among Palestinian university students.
- This study also shed some light about sleep pattern and habits among Arab students in the Middle East.
- The university officials and health practitioners need to be aware of these sleep disorders and implement methods to minimize it.



Limitations...



- First, the student data are self-reported and students may have not accurately reported sleep habit or sleep difficulties that they were experiencing. Therefore, sleep problems obtained in this study might be under-represented.
- Secondly, other factors affecting sleep such as overcrowded homes, sharing room with other students, watching TV and internet use were not included in the study. Inclusion of such factors could have resulted in a lengthy questionnaire that could have made students unwilling to participate.
- Finally, this study was a cross-sectional study based only on the previous week. Further studies based on longer period with separate data on week days and weekends are needed.

Thanking You

