

Analysis of the factors that influence my sleeping habits

[Health & Medicine](#), [Healthcare](#)



The lifestyle aspect I am focusing on for this essay is on my sleeping routine. Each level of the Social-Ecological (SE) model will identify the positive and negative contributors that influence my sleeping habits.

Sleep is often neglected when individuals are hard-pressed by work, with many overlooking the lasting side effects of inadequate sleep. Based on a poll by SingHealth Polyclinics, “ 44% and 26% of Singaporeans aged between 21 and 80, sleep less than 7 hours on weekdays and weekends respectively.” Individuals who encounter sleep deprivation tend to feel lethargic, having difficulty focusing at work or school the next day. Furthermore, the side effects from insufficient sleep are greater than the above. Studies show that “ sleeping fewer than 6 hours a night increases a person’s early death rate by about 12 percent.” Immediate signs of insufficient sleep include daytime fatigue and yawning. But continuing this unhealthy lifestyle can also lead to a few medical conditions such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and stroke etc.

Individual Lifestyle Factors

It is recommended to have at least 8 hours of sleep every night. However, more young adults are not getting enough sleep due to stress from submissions and personal commitments. I myself have fallen into this trap, with an average of only 5 hours of sleep on weekdays. An individual who has a meticulous personality, I pay attention to every little detail in almost everything I do. Although being meticulous seems to be a strength rather than a weakness, being overly thorough can also be detrimental. When it comes to assignments, I tend to spend countless hours picking on the less

important aspects and that results in going to bed late or even sleepless nights. Another individual factor which results in insufficient sleep is Procrastination. Procrastination usually happens when I encounter a distraction while doing work. A distraction, like a text, usually comes in, and I stop my work. After a while, I realize that I have been on my phone for over an hour and have lost the motivation to continue working. This results in taking longer time to complete my daily tasks, leading to late nights. There are also times due to my procrastination, I am unable to complete my daily tasks and work starts piling up, causing me to worry excessively. According to a study, “ Due to overwhelming workload, an individual who constantly worries causes the brain to be pumped up, making it impossible to sleep.” The failure to sleep well creates a vicious cycle as insufficient sleep makes it more difficult to focus on the next days’ tasks, delaying work even longer. Hence, the combined effect of procrastination and being overly meticulous has resulted in me having insufficient sleep, hindering my health.

Social and Community Influences

With my individual personality playing a significant role of deteriorating my health, the social and community influences help create a balance by injecting positive factors that prevents my health from going downhill. My parents strongly believe that regular exercise will help increase the body’s immune system and improve our overall quality of life. Every Sunday morning, my family goes to East Coast Park to run and cycle, before having breakfast nearby. This routine has been ongoing for 3 months and I realize that I feel more alert when doing work after exercising. Study shows that “

exercise boost the blood flow to an individual's brain, causing the brain cells to function at an increased pace." This will then make an individual more alert and focused. Furthermore, exercising regularly has a positive impact on our quality of sleep. Research has shown that "exercising in the day may result in longer periods of slow-wave sleep, which is the most therapeutic type of sleep." With a good quality of sleep, I will be more energetic and focused come the next day. Given that physical exercise makes me more focused in my work and improves my quality of sleep, by controlling my meticulous and procrastinating nature, my health will turn for the better.

Working and Living Condition Influences

Having an overly meticulous personality is a norm with the people I meet in school. Coming from Architecture school, most of the students are perfectionistic in their own way, resulting in an environment where staying overnight in studio and having insufficient sleep is common. In order not to waste time, students rather remain in studio to work than spend time travelling back home. There are also occasions where I choose to stay back due to group work and it is also more fun to do work with friends, as we can help each other with our ideas. Hence, the intensive school environment has developed in me a need to stay back in school till late, compromising my sleep and health. However, it is only occasional when I stay back in school, as I do not live in hall and need to go home. It is during these journeys home that I try to get as much rest as possible. Compared to others, I am fortunate enough to get my own room. I feel that having an own room helps me get a better night's rest as compared to others who need to share with their

siblings. Some studies show that “ factors such as different sleeping schedules and tidiness of rooms can affect the quality of sleep of those who share rooms with their siblings. Conflicts might also occur when both parties are unwilling to compromise.” Hence, having my own room gives me the luxury to create the best environment for a good night’s rest, which helps promote good health. Blessed with a weekly exercise routine and the comfort of my own room, which promotes a healthy lifestyle by ensuring a good night’s rest, there is a stronger need to control my meticulous personality and try to reduce as much overnight occasions in school.

Socioeconomic and Cultural Influences

Singaporeans are brought together when there is food, which is why the supper culture is unique to Singapore. Having dinner at around 7pm, I usually get hungry later in the night, which is why I have also developed a habit of going out for supper especially during Friday nights. Initially I felt that having supper before going to bed will lead to an unhealthy lifestyle of weight gain. However, research shows that the “ our body’s metabolic rate averages the same in the night as during the day, so our body still requires energy while we are asleep.” Hence, there is no evidence that calories burn slower while we are sleeping. In fact, research also shows that “ hunger can affect an individual’s quality of sleep and it is recommended to consume a light meal to get better sleep.” Therefore, filling my stomach before bed helps me get better sleep, which promotes a healthy lifestyle. On the other hand, going out for supper too long can also result in me sleeping late. There are days where I stay back in school to work with my friends and we usually

go to the nearby eateries for supper to recharge ourselves. During these occasions, I have classes the next day and hence will not have enough rest, which affects my concentration as well as my health. Fortunately, this lifestyle only happens occasionally and does not impact my health too significantly. For weekends which I need to wake up early, I tend not to go out for supper the night before, to get enough rest. As my family goes exercising on Sunday mornings, I consume my supper at home so that I can sleep earlier and have sufficient energy the next day.