

Sleep and culture



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Sleep and Culture This paper explores the behavior of the brain pertaining to sleep, its function to our body, and the different sleeping pattern or practices of other culture. Sleep is a fundamental activity of our body wherein it affects the physical and mental health of a human and it helps our body maintain its normal function and increases immunity to diseases, being revived from stress, as we engage in sleep. Normally, people need at least 8 hours of sleep to achieve the total rest and revival of our body. But due to the different factors affecting our sleep, it is often neglected. These factors, such as the environment and culture, have a significant effect and influence on the sleeping pattern or practices of a person. This study will guide the readers to understand how factors such as the environment and culture affect the sleeping pattern of a person. Keywords: sleeping pattern, environment, culture

Sleep and Culture 2 Sleep and Culture Sleep is an essential activity of our body. The function of sleep has a significant effect in our body. One function of sleep is to repair and to restore both body and brain because during the waking life, our body and brain “ produce wear and tear on the body and some mind/brain down time (Nairne, 2003)” and this can be fixed during sleeping. Another function of sleep is that it increases our survival value. It was believed that “ sleep is an adaptive response to changing environmental condition, a form of behavior that is useful because it increases the chance to survive (Nairne, 2003)”. However, every person has his own sleeping pattern or practice. It is due to the factors such as the environment and culture that affects the sleeping pattern of a person. The sleeping pattern is incorporated on our biological clock that is influenced by the environment (day and night, climate, lifestyle). Biological clock is one function being controlled in the brain and automatically sends a message to <https://assignbuster.com/sleep-and-culture/>

our body the needed activities to be done in time. The day and night influences a person to sleep because “ people use light during the day, as well as the absence of light at night, as a way of setting their internal sleep clock (Nairne, 2003)”. Another factor that influences the sleeping pattern of a person is the climate. During the cold season, people tend to sleep longer and more often than in the warm season due to the reason that it is harder to sleep with a hot and humid weather. However, in some places in Southeast Asia, even though the climate is tropical, the people living there take nap in mid afternoon because the warm weather drains their energy pulling them to make a short sleep after a rigid activity. On the other hand, the lifestyle of a person, however, has a significant effect also on the sleeping pattern. Because of the hectic Sleep and Culture 3 lifestyle of human today, not to mention the economic struggle being experienced, people tend to work too hard neglecting sleep, to be able to withstand the economic crisis. In the United States, it is usual to have more than 1 job so people extend working until late night making their sleeping pattern adjusted to a limited number of hours of sleep. In my case, I also experience limited number of hours in sleeping which is 4 hours a day and 5 hours is the most. I have two jobs which require me to work 70 hours a week, not to mention my college studies in two different universities. My requirement both to work and my studies and at the same time taking care of my family, affects my sleeping pattern making it too limited and short which resulted to my sleeping disorder, Insomnia. Another factor that affects the sleeping pattern is the person’s culture. A study made in Japan to 870 students, age 12 – 15 years old, using questionnaires of morningness – eveningness by Torsvall and Akerstedt, showed that adolescents in Japan are experiencing bad

dreams and have made the adolescents engaged in a limited duration of sleep. They tend to sleep late which triggered mental symptoms of depressed mood and irritation. This type of sleeping pattern is due to environmental factors particularly their lifestyles because of the activity of the youths in Japan. The adolescents tend to make their mornings their night and vice versa because of their exposure to violent media, music, and video games which resulted to their bad dreams when they sleep. On the other hand, as the result of Sleep Questionnaire in Italian children and adolescents sleeping pattern is due to cultural and environmental factors, wherein, adolescents with intact families have less sleep irregularities. The study also showed that adolescents in Italy, also experience sleep irregularities due to their class schedules. Sleep and Culture 4 It is indeed that both environmental and cultural factors really affect the sleeping pattern of an individual. Whether in other culture or my culture, the environment, most especially, has a significant effect in sleep. And it should not be neglected or ignored. The impact of sleep irregularities has a significant effect not only in our body and mind but also in our productivity as a human as well. Sleep and Culture 5

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