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Sleep quality, daytime sleepiness and fatigue among dental students

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Objectives: (i) To investigate sleep habits (ii) To determine the average sleeping hour (iii) To assess the sleep quality, level of daytime sleepiness and severity of fatigue (iv) To analyse the differences between gender and year of study in sleep quality, level of daytime sleepiness and severity of fatigue (v) To assess if sleep quality affects the level of daytime sleepiness and fatigue

Material and Methods: The sleep quality, daytime sleepiness, and fatigue of University of Malaya undergraduate dental students (n=214) were assessed in this online cross-sectional survey using the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI), Epworth Sleepiness Scale (ESS), and Fatigue Severity Scale (FSS) based on inclusion and exclusion criteria after a pilot study. Data were analysed with SPSS-26 using independent t-test, one-way ANOVA, and Pearson correlation coefficients.

Results: Response rate = 87.8%. 95.3% went to bed post-midnight. Average sleeping hour = 6.9 (\pm 1.4) hours, 62.6% sleep < 8 hours. 44.9% students reported having poor sleep quality. 24.8% had a total ESS score \geq 11, suggestive of hypersomnia. Subjects with significant fatigue scoring \geq 36 = 75.7%. FSS difference between Year 1 and 4 is significantly higher in Year 4 (43.3 vs. 38.0, $P < 0.05$). PSQI showed a significant positive correlation with ESS score ($r = 0.278$, $P < 0.001$), FSS score ($r = 0.236$, $P < 0.001$) using Pearson's correlation coefficient.

Conclusion: Dental students displayed unhealthy sleep habits that lead to excessive daytime sleepiness and fatigue. Hence, further studies and interventions are needed to improve this condition.

Keywords: Sleep Quality, Daytime Sleepiness, Fatigue, Hypersomnia, Undergraduate, Dental Students