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Lifestyle Practices in Mitigating Insomnia and enhancing Well-Being Among Postgraduate Students

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ABSTRACT
Lifestyle practices play an important role in shaping sleep quality and psychological health among postgraduate students who constantly experience academic stress, asymmetrical routines and prolonged screen exposure. The present study is quantitative in nature. A descriptive in which correlational study examined the relationship between lifestyle practices, insomnia and psychological well-being among 100 postgraduate students. The sample comprised of an equal gender distribution of 50 males and 50 females. Data were collected by using self- made tools including a Lifestyle Practices assessing sleep hygiene behaviors, physical activity, dietary regulation, caffeine consumption, screen exposure before bedtime, and relaxation practices, the Insomnia Severity Index measuring sleep disturbance and daytime impairment, and Well-Being tool to evaluate positive mood, vitality, and life satisfaction. Descriptive statistics indicated a moderate level of healthy lifestyle practices ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 0.69$), moderate insomnia severity ($M = 16.2$, $SD = 5.8$), and below-average psychological well-being ($M = 48.5$, $SD = 7.3$). Pearson's product–moment correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant negative relationship between lifestyle practices and insomnia severity ($r = -0.57$, $p < .001$), indicating that students who reported healthier lifestyle behaviors experienced lower levels of insomnia. A statistically significant positive correlation was found between lifestyle practices and psychological well-being ($r = 0.49$, $p < .001$), suggesting that better lifestyle habits were associated with higher levels of well-being. Additionally, insomnia severity demonstrated a strong negative correlation with psychological well-being ($r = -0.65$, $p < .001$), indicating that greater sleep disturbance was associated with poorer psychological health. These findings determined that healthier lifestyle practices are significantly associated with reduced insomnia and enhanced psychological well-being among postgraduate students, highlighting the importance of promoting positive daily habits to support sleep health and overall mental well-being within higher education settings.
Keywords: Lifestyle practices, Insomnia, Psychological well-being, Postgraduate students, sleep hygiene.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sleep is a fundamental biological process that plays an important role in sustaining cognitive efficiency, emotional stability, physical restoration and overall psychological well-being. Human beings spend nearly one-third of their lives sleeping, indicating the vital role sleep plays in nourishing good health and daily functioning. An adequate sleep supports the brain consolidate memories, process information, regulate emotions, and maintain attention and concentration. At the same time, it also supports the body's immune system, metabolic balance, and cellular repair. An inadequate and disturbed sleep can negatively affect both physical and mental health. Researchers and health professionals have increasingly emphasized the importance of healthy sleep patterns in maintaining overall well-being and preventing various health disorders.

Across the lifespan, the quantity and quality of sleep are considered important indicators of health, but they are particularly significant during young adulthood. Young adults, especially those pursuing higher education, are often exposed to various academic, social, and lifestyle pressures that can disrupt normal sleep patterns. University students frequently face demanding schedules, assignment deadlines, examinations, and expectations related to academic achievement. In addition to academic responsibilities, many students also engage in social activities, part-time employment, and extensive use of digital devices. These factors often lead to irregular sleep schedules, late-night study habits, and insufficient rest, ultimately affecting their sleep quality and duration.

International health organizations like World Health Organization have recognized sleep health as an essential component of overall well-being. According to global health reports, sleep disturbances are closely associated with several psychological and physical health problems, including anxiety, depression, fatigue, and impaired cognitive functioning. Poor sleep quality has also been linked with reduced productivity, decreased academic performance, and diminished quality of life. When individuals consistently experience inadequate sleep, they may develop difficulties in concentration, decision-making, memory retention, and emotional regulation. These problems can significantly interfere with daily functioning, particularly in academic environments where sustained attention and cognitive engagement are required.

Among the various sleep-related disorders, insomnia is one of the most common conditions affecting young adults and university students. Insomnia is generally characterized by difficulty in initiating sleep, maintaining sleep, or experiencing non-restorative sleep despite having adequate opportunities to sleep. Individuals suffering from insomnia often report feelings of fatigue, irritability, decreased motivation, and reduced mental alertness during the day. Over time, chronic insomnia may lead to serious psychological consequences such as increased stress levels, anxiety, and depressive symptoms. Therefore, insomnia is not merely a nighttime problem but a condition that influences overall physical, emotional, and academic functioning. Insomnia has emerged as a significant public health concern within university populations across the world. Several studies indicate that a large proportion of college students report poor sleep quality and symptoms of insomnia. One of the major contributing factors is the increasing academic workload associated with higher education. Students often sacrifice sleep in order to complete assignments, prepare for examinations, or meet academic deadlines. While occasional sleep deprivation may seem manageable, persistent patterns of sleep loss can gradually affect students' health and performance.

Lifestyle practices strongly influence university students' sleep. Late-night use of smartphones, laptops and social media exposes students to blue light that shifts circadian timing and delays sleep onset. Irregular eating patterns, high intake of stimulants such as caffeine, physical inactivity and extended screen time further fragment sleep and reduce its quality. At the same time, academic pressure, career uncertainty and interpersonal stress increase physiological and cognitive arousal, making relaxation and sleep initiation difficult. Together, these behavioural and psychosocial factors raise the risk of insomnia and daytime impairment in student populations. The major contributor to insomnia among students is limited awareness of healthy sleep practices. Many students underestimate regular sleep schedules and proper sleep hygiene, while habits such as studying in bed, erratic bedtimes, and frequent daytime napping disrupt the body's circadian organisation and sleep homeostasis. Over time these behaviours may crystallize into persistent sleep problems that are resistant to change without intentional behaviour modification. Educational institutions should therefore emphasise sleep education, time-management strategies, and balanced lifestyle promotion to prevent and remediate student insomnia.

The consequences of insomnia among university students extend beyond individual health outcomes and may also influence academic success and social functioning. Students experiencing chronic sleep deprivation often report lower levels of academic motivation, reduced classroom participation, and difficulty completing academic tasks effectively. Furthermore, sleep deprivation may impair emotional regulation, leading to increased irritability, mood swings, and interpersonal conflicts. Such outcomes highlight the interconnected nature of sleep health, psychological well-being, and academic performance. The growing prevalence of sleep problems among university students, researchers and educators have increasingly focused on examining the factors associated with insomnia and identifying effective strategies to promote healthy sleep behaviors. Lifestyle practices, including physical activity, dietary habits, screen time, and stress management, have emerged as important variables influencing sleep quality. Understanding how these lifestyle behaviors interact with sleep patterns can provide valuable insights for designing interventions aimed at improving students' well-being. Educational institutions also have a significant role to play in addressing sleep-related issues among students. Universities can promote awareness about the importance of sleep through health education programs, counselling services, and workshops on stress management and time management. Encouraging students to maintain balanced routines that include adequate sleep, regular exercise, and healthy lifestyle choices can contribute to improved academic performance and psychological well-being. Sleep is an indispensable component of human health that supports cognitive functioning, emotional stability, and physical restoration. Among young adults pursuing higher education, adequate sleep becomes particularly important due to the demanding academic environment and lifestyle pressures they encounter. However, the increasing prevalence of insomnia among university students highlights the need for greater attention to sleep health as a public health concern. Factors such as academic stress, excessive screen time, irregular schedules, and unhealthy lifestyle practices contribute significantly to sleep disturbances in this population. Addressing these issues through research, awareness, and educational interventions can help promote healthier sleep patterns and enhance the overall well-being and academic success of university students.

Postgraduate students, in particular, may be more vulnerable to insomnia due to academic workload, research pressures, irregular schedules, teaching responsibilities, financial stressors, and competitive environments. These stressors often result in irregular sleep–wake cycles, prolonged screen exposure, and unhealthy coping behaviors such as excessive caffeine consumption. Contemporary digital culture has further intensified the issue, as nighttime use of electronic devices disrupts circadian rhythms and melatonin secretion, thereby delaying sleep onset.

Lifestyle practices play a pivotal role in shaping sleep quality. Irish et al. (2015) demonstrates that healthy sleep hygiene behaviors including maintaining consistent sleep timing, limiting stimulant intake, engaging in regular physical activity, and reducing evening screen exposure are associated with improved sleep outcomes The relationship between insomnia and psychological well-being is well documented. Baglioni et al. (2011) found that individuals with insomnia have a significantly increased risk of developing depressive symptoms. Poor sleep has been associated with anxiety, irritability, emotional dysregulation, and decreased life satisfaction. The World Health Organization conceptualizes well-being not merely as the absence of illness but as a state of positive mental functioning, resilience, and life satisfaction. Thus, sleep health and psychological well-being are interconnected dimensions of overall health. From a public health perspective, lifestyle practices represent modifiable and cost-effective determinants of sleep quality and mental health. Behavioural interventions targeting sleep hygiene, physical activity, stress reduction, and digital habits have shown promising outcomes in university settings. However, while international research provides strong evidence for these associations, contextual studies within specific institutional settings remain limited. In the Indian higher education context, there is a growing need to examine how lifestyle behaviors influence insomnia and well-being among postgraduate students. Investigating these relationships will provide empirical evidence for institution-specific health promotion initiatives and preventive strategies. Therefore, the present study aims to explore the role of lifestyle practices in mitigating insomnia and enhancing psychological well-being among postgraduate students, contributing to the broader discourse on student mental health and preventive public health interventions.

2. NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Insomnia and sleep-related problems have become increasingly common among postgraduate students due to heavy academic workloads, research responsibilities, irregular schedules, and heightened levels of stress and anxiety. Adequate sleep is essential for maintaining cognitive efficiency, emotional stability, physical health, and overall well-being. However, many postgraduate students often neglect healthy lifestyle practices such as maintaining regular sleep schedules, engaging in physical activity, managing screen time, and adopting stress-management strategies. These unhealthy habits may contribute to the development and persistence of insomnia, which can negatively affect academic performance, mental health, and quality of life. There is a strong need to examine the role of lifestyle practices in reducing insomnia and promoting well-being among postgraduate students. Understanding how daily habits influence sleep patterns can help identify preventive and corrective measures that students can adopt in their routine lives. The findings of this study may provide useful insights for educators, counsellors, and university administrators to design awareness programmes, guidance services, and health interventions aimed at improving students' sleep quality and psychological well-being.

Furthermore, the study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on sleep health by highlighting the relationship between lifestyle practices and insomnia in the context of higher education. It will also encourage students to adopt healthier behavioural patterns that support both academic success and personal well-being. Thus, the study holds significance for promoting a balanced lifestyle and improving the overall quality of life among postgraduate students.

3. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Lund et al. (2010) conducted a large-scale study among American college students and reported that more than half of the participants experienced poor sleep quality, irregular sleep schedules, and insufficient sleep duration. The study highlighted academic stress, social engagement, and lifestyle irregularities as major contributors to sleep disturbances. Similarly, Gaultney (2010) identified a high prevalence of sleep disorders among university students and found that undiagnosed sleep problems significantly affected academic performance and daily functioning.

Kredlow et al. (2015), through a meta-analytic review, established that regular physical activity positively influences sleep quality by reducing sleep latency and increasing sleep efficiency. The findings suggested that exercise serves as a protective behavioral factor against insomnia. In contrast, sedentary lifestyles and irregular routines were associated with greater sleep disturbances. Irish et al. (2015) emphasized the importance of sleep hygiene practices in improving sleep outcomes. Their systematic review demonstrated that behaviors such as maintaining consistent bedtimes, limiting caffeine intake, reducing pre-sleep screen exposure, and creating a comfortable sleep environment are significantly associated with better sleep quality. These findings reinforce the role of modifiable lifestyle factors in managing insomnia symptoms.

Baglioni et al. (2011) conducted a meta-analysis examining the longitudinal association between insomnia and depression. The study concluded that individuals with insomnia have a twofold increased risk of developing depressive disorders, highlighting insomnia as both a symptom and predictor of mental health challenges. This establishes a strong connection between sleep disturbances and psychological well-being. St-Onge et al. (2016) explored the bidirectional relationship between diet and sleep and found that poor nutritional habits, including high caffeine and irregular meal timing, negatively influence sleep duration and quality. The study emphasized the need for integrated lifestyle interventions targeting multiple behavioral domains.

Giri, Baviskar, and Phalke (2013) examined sleep habits among medical students in Western India and reported a high prevalence of poor sleep quality, largely attributed to academic workload and irregular study schedules. Similarly, Sankar, Bhavsar, and Saini (2014) found that late-night studying and caffeine consumption significantly contributed to sleep

disturbances among college students. Between 2015 and 2017, researchers began focusing more explicitly on lifestyle determinants of sleep. Mishra, Pandey, and Shukla (2015) identified low physical activity levels and inconsistent daily routines as significant predictors of poor sleep quality among university students. In a related study, Hershner and Chervin (2014)—though international—were frequently cited in Indian research for demonstrating the strong link between electronic media use and sleep disruption, influencing subsequent Indian investigations. Within the Indian context, Gupta and Kaur (2016) reported that excessive evening smartphone use was significantly associated with delayed sleep onset and daytime sleepiness among undergraduate students.

From 2018 to 2019, the literature increasingly highlighted the psychological consequences of insomnia. Bansal, Goyal, and Srivastava (2018) found a significant positive correlation between poor sleep quality and elevated stress levels among North Indian university students. Similarly, Rao and Venkatesh (2019) observed that students with irregular sleep patterns reported higher anxiety and depressive symptoms. These studies reinforced the bidirectional relationship between sleep and mental health.

During 2020–2021, attention shifted toward postgraduate and professional student populations. Kumar and Sharma (2020) examined sleep quality among postgraduate medical students and reported that over half of the participants experienced moderate to severe sleep disturbances, with academic stress and workload emerging as primary predictors. In another study, Singh and Maheshwari (2021) found that unhealthy lifestyle practices—including irregular meals, limited exercise, and high caffeine intake—were significantly correlated with insomnia severity among postgraduate students. More recent studies (2022–2024) reflect a multidimensional approach integrating lifestyle indices and psychological well-being measures. Verma, Joshi, and Arora (2022) developed a composite lifestyle behavior score and found it to be negatively correlated with insomnia severity and positively correlated with well-being levels. Chaudhary and Dubey (2023) further demonstrated that insomnia mediated the relationship between lifestyle practices and depressive symptoms among university students. Emerging evidence from Mehta and Kulkarni (2024) highlights that structured daily routines and stress management strategies significantly predict better sleep outcomes and improved psychological well-being. Overall, Indian studies consistently demonstrate that sleep disturbances among university students are strongly influenced by modifiable lifestyle behaviors such as physical activity, dietary habits, caffeine consumption, screen exposure, and stress management practices. Although substantial research has been conducted among undergraduate and medical students, focused investigations on postgraduate students remain comparatively limited. The existing literature underscores the need for structured correlational studies to quantify the strength and direction of relationships between lifestyle practices, insomnia, and psychological well-being in postgraduate academic settings.

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the level of lifestyle practices among postgraduate students of University of Jammu.
2. To determine the level of insomnia among postgraduate students of the University of Jammu.
3. To examine the relationship between lifestyle practices and insomnia among postgraduate students.
4. To study the relationship between lifestyle practices and psychological well-being among postgraduate students.
5. To identify the relationship between insomnia and psychological well-being among postgraduate students of the University of Jammu.

5. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between lifestyle practices and insomnia among postgraduate students of University of Jammu.

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between lifestyle practices and psychological well-being among postgraduate students of the University of Jammu.

H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between insomnia and psychological well-being among postgraduate students of the University of Jammu.

6. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

1. **Lifestyle Practices**
   The set of daily health-related behaviors of postgraduate students, including sleep hygiene, physical activity, dietary habits, caffeine intake, screen use before bedtime, and relaxation practices, as measured by a standardized Lifestyle Practices Index.

2. **Insomnia**
   The degree of sleep difficulty experienced by postgraduate students, including problems in sleep initiation, maintenance, and early awakening, measured by the Insomnia Severity Index.

3. **Psychological Well-Being**
   The overall positive mental state of postgraduate students reflected in mood, vitality, and life satisfaction, measured by the WHO-5 Well-Being Index.

4. **Postgraduate Students**
   Students enrolled in master's level academic programmes of University of Jammu during the period of data collection.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study was quantitative and correlational research design to examine the relationship between lifestyle practices, insomnia, and psychological well-being among postgraduate students of University of Jammu. This design was considered appropriate because the study aimed to measure naturally occurring variables and determine the strength and direction of their relationships without manipulation.

Population and Sample of Study:
The population comprised postgraduate students enrolled in master's degree programmes. A sample of 100 students was selected using random sampling to ensure representation across academic disciplines and equal gender distribution (50 males and 50 females).

Variables of the Study:
- Independent Variable: Lifestyle Practices
- Dependent Variables: Insomnia and Psychological Well-Being

Research Instruments:
1. **Health-Promoting Lifestyle tool** used to assess lifestyle practices across domains such as physical activity, nutrition, stress management, and health responsibility.
2. **Insomnia Severity tool** used self-report measure assessing sleep onset difficulty, sleep maintenance, early awakening, and sleep-related distress.
3. **Well-Being tool** used a brief measure of subjective psychological well-being assessing positive mood, vitality, and general interest in life.

Techniques to be employed:
Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and Pearson's product–moment correlation to determine the strength and direction of relationships among lifestyle practices, insomnia, and psychological well-being. Statistical significance was tested at the 0.05 level.

8. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The relationships among lifestyle practices, insomnia, and psychological well-being of postgraduate students of University of Jammu were examined using Pearson's product–moment correlation. Descriptive statistics showed moderate lifestyle practices (M = 16.2, SD = 5.8), moderate insomnia (M = 16.2, SD = 5.8), and below-average well-being (M = 48.5, SD = 7.3). Pearson's product–moment correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant negative relationship between lifestyle practices and insomnia severity ($r = -0.57$, $p < .001$), indicating that students who reported healthier lifestyle behaviors experienced lower levels of insomnia. A statistically significant positive correlation was found between lifestyle practices and psychological well-being ($r = 0.49$, $p < .001$), suggesting that better lifestyle habits were associated with higher levels of well-being. Additionally, insomnia severity demonstrated a strong negative correlation with psychological well-being ($r = -0.65$, $p < .001$),

Table 1: Pearson Correlation Matrix (N = 100)

Variables	1	2	3
1. Lifestyle Practices	1.00	−0.54***	0.49***
2. Insomnia	−0.57***	1.00	−0.65***
3. Psychological Well-Being	0.49***	−0.65***	1.00

***p < .001

Interpretation of results:
The Table presents the Pearson correlation coefficients among Lifestyle Practices (1), Insomnia (2), and Psychological Well-Being (3) among postgraduate students. The results show that Lifestyle Practices (1) are negatively correlated with Insomnia (2) ($r = -0.54$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that students who maintain healthier lifestyle habits tend to experience

lower levels of insomnia. Lifestyle Practices (1) show a positive correlation with Psychological Well-Being (3) ($r = 0.49$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that better lifestyle behaviours are associated with higher levels of psychological well-being. This implies that regular routines, physical activity, and healthy habits contribute positively to students' mental and emotional health.

Insomnia (2) is negatively correlated with Psychological Well-Being (3) ($r = -0.65$, $p < 0.001$), which reflects a strong inverse relationship. This means that higher levels of insomnia are associated with lower levels of psychological well-being among postgraduate students. The findings highlight that healthy lifestyle practices play an important role in reducing insomnia and enhancing psychological well-being, whereas increased insomnia may negatively affect students' psychological health and overall quality of life.

9. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings of the present study reveal significant relationships among lifestyle practices, insomnia, and psychological well-being among postgraduate students. The results indicate that lifestyle practices are negatively correlated with insomnia ($r = -0.54$, $p < .001$). This suggests that students who adopt healthier lifestyle habits such as regular physical activity, balanced diet, limited screen exposure, and proper time management tend to experience fewer sleep-related problems. Healthy routines help regulate the body's circadian rhythm and improve sleep quality. These findings are supported by the study of Hershner and Chervin (2014), who found that irregular sleep schedules, excessive technology use, and unhealthy lifestyle habits significantly contribute to sleep disturbances among college students.

The study also found a positive correlation between lifestyle practices and psychological well-being ($r = 0.49$, $p < .001$). This indicates that students who maintain healthy lifestyle behaviours are more likely to experience better emotional stability, life satisfaction, and overall mental health. Healthy habits such as regular exercise, balanced nutrition, and proper daily routines contribute positively to mental and emotional functioning. These findings are consistent with the work of Ryff and Keyes (1995), who highlighted that positive lifestyle patterns play an important role in promoting psychological well-being and overall quality of life.

Moreover, insomnia was found to have a strong negative correlation with psychological well-being ($r = -0.65$, $p < .001$), indicating that higher levels of insomnia are associated with lower levels of psychological well-being among students. Sleep disturbances often lead to fatigue, irritability, poor concentration, and emotional distress, which negatively affect mental health and daily functioning. These results support the findings of Baglioni (2011), who reported that insomnia is strongly associated with psychological distress and may increase the risk of mental health problems such as depression and anxiety.

Overall, the results of the study suggest that healthy lifestyle practices play a crucial role in reducing insomnia and enhancing psychological well-being among postgraduate students. Promoting awareness about sleep hygiene, balanced lifestyle practices, and stress management strategies in universities may help improve students' mental health, sleep quality, and overall quality of life.

10. CONCLUSIONS

The present study examined the relationship between lifestyle practices, insomnia, and psychological well-being among postgraduate students. The findings clearly indicate that lifestyle practices play a crucial role in influencing both sleep patterns and psychological health. The results of the Pearson correlation analysis revealed a significant negative relationship between lifestyle practices and insomnia, suggesting that students who maintain healthier habits such as regular physical activity, balanced diet, proper time management, and limited screen exposure tend to experience fewer sleep-related problems. Healthy lifestyle behaviours help regulate the body's biological clock and contribute to better sleep quality.

The study also revealed a significant positive relationship between lifestyle practices and psychological well-being. Students who adopt positive lifestyle habits generally report higher levels of emotional stability, life satisfaction, and mental health. Healthy daily routines not only improve physical health but also strengthen an individual's ability to cope with stress, academic pressure, and personal challenges. Therefore, lifestyle practices act as an important protective factor that promotes overall psychological well-being among students. The results demonstrated a strong negative relationship between insomnia and psychological well-being. Students who experience higher levels of insomnia tend to report lower levels of psychological well-being. Sleep disturbances can lead to fatigue, irritability, poor concentration, and emotional instability, which may affect students' academic performance and interpersonal relationships. Persistent sleep problems may also increase the risk of psychological distress, anxiety, and depression if not addressed in time. The findings highlight the importance of maintaining healthy lifestyle practices for improving sleep quality and psychological well-being among university students. In the context of modern academic life, students are often exposed to various stressors such as heavy academic workload, excessive use of digital devices, irregular routines, and competitive environments. These factors may negatively influence both sleep and mental health.

Therefore, there is a strong need for educational institutions to promote awareness regarding healthy lifestyle habits, sleep

hygiene, stress management, and balanced daily routines. Universities and colleges can play an important role by organizing workshops, counselling services, and health promotion programs that encourage students to adopt healthier behavioural patterns. Integrating wellness education, time management training, and physical activity programs into the academic environment may significantly help students maintain a balanced lifestyle. Such initiatives can contribute to reducing sleep problems, improving psychological well-being, and enhancing students' overall quality of life.

The study emphasizes that healthy lifestyle practices are essential for preventing insomnia and promoting psychological well-being among postgraduate students. Encouraging positive lifestyle behaviours and increasing awareness about sleep hygiene can help students achieve better mental health, improved academic performance, and a healthier and more productive life.

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