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# Low math scores? Try getting more sleep

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Adolescents sleeping more hours are likely to score higher in maths, Spanish researchers say.

Meanwhile, those who sleep between six and ten hours (ie. an average sleep pattern) got significantly better scores, as compared to those with a short (6 hours or less per night) or long (more than 9 hours per night) pattern sleep. Moreover, this difference is more prominent in physical education.

The aim of this study was to analyse how sleep patterns can affect students' academic performance. Their academic performance was measured in terms of mean grade -in common subjects and at global level- of a group of Secondary School students.

Researchers from the University of Granada and Junta de Andalucía analyzed a sample of 592 students aged 12 to 19 years from a Secondary School center in a rural region in Seville. From these middle-class 592 students, 231 (39percent) were men and 361 (61percent) were women.

The students answered two different questionnaires aimed at measuring the quality of sleep, level of sleepiness or tendency to get asleep of students in different situations.

Authors found that adolescents sleeping more hours get higher marks in mathematics and that -within average sleep patterns- differences are more significant in physical education, as compared with the rest of subjects.

This can be due to the inherent characteristics of these subjects, as these two subjects involve skills that are more influenced by sleep patterns, as the study authors explain.

The researchers observed that bedtime and wake time do not significantly influence academic outcomes, except for those individuals who go to bed earlier and get up later, which showed a significant worsening on academic achievement, as compared with their classmates.

The researchers also found significant information in connection with sleep latency (the time elapsed since the subject is lying in bed intending to sleep until they fall asleep). Scientists found that those who have a good sleep latency (less than 15 minutes) get significantly better marks than the rest.

As a general conclusion, the authors found that sleep patterns influence academic performance, as those adolescents with less day sleepiness were found to get lower marks than their classmates.

The study has been published in the journal International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology.

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