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Letter to Editor

Long Sleep Duration in University Students during the Covid-19 Quarantine in Brazil -

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ABSTRACT

During the quarantine period due to Covid-19, the suspension of face-to-face classes was one of the first measures taken in the country. The adoption of virtual classes consequently led to a change in the life of university students, which may cause changes in sleep patterns. The present study aimed to investigate the weekly and weekend sleep duration in university students during the quarantine period. The survey was administered to 667 university students from April 27th to 28th through social media. The results indicated a prevalence of long sleep duration on weekdays (49.5%) and on weekends (59.1%). It was also found that 61.5% of the participants continued to practice physical activity at home. It is concluded that Brazilian university students remain active and have long sleep duration during the pandemic period.

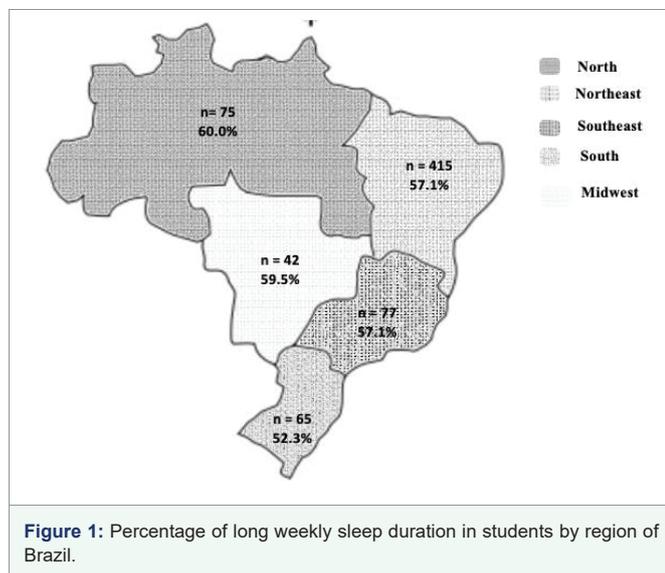
Keywords: Covid-19; Quarantine; Sleep duration; University

Brazil is ranked second in the world as having more positive cases of COVID-19 [1]. After the arrival of COVID-19 in Brazil, non-essential establishments such as schools, universities, stores and public places were closed. This caused a significant change in the routine of students from all over the country [2]. All of these transitions caused changes in the biological clock of each individual, compromising sleeping and waking times [3]. In this way, the objective of this study was to investigate the duration of sleep in university students who, even in the quarantine period, maintained their academic activities in a virtual way.

The collection instrument was designed using Google Forms[®] which included questions about socio-demographic characteristics, physical activity practices, sleep duration during the week and weekend. The forms were sent via internet, through social Medias: whatsapp, instagram and Facebook pages of the universities between April 27 and 28, 2020. Long sleep duration was considered as ≥ 8 h.

The university students had an average of 25.3 ± 7.1 years of age, with 54.7% being female. Initially, it was identified that 61.5% of students continued to practice physical activity at home. Regarding the hours of sleep, we identified a prevalence of long sleep duration on weekdays (49.5%) and weekends (59.1%). The map below describes the percentage values of long sleep duration for the regions of Brazil.

Upon finalizing this study, it was determined that no previous studies had been carried out with Brazilian university students regarding the influence of the pandemic on sleep duration. However, a study conducted in Greece with 1,000 university students found results similar to the present study, identifying 66.3% of long sleep duration in university students [4]. On the other hand, in China, a study performed among six universities with 2,485 university students, identified that there was short sleep duration (67.2%) [5]. Thus, we can see that the effects of the pandemic on the sleep duration of university students seems to present different characteristics according to the regions, and there is still no consistent situation as to whether the pandemic period contributed to increased or decreased hours of sleep in university students.



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