Sleep program needed for IT engineers

November 22 2010

Insomnia is bad news for software engineers' quality of life and deserves greater recognition and attention, according to new research by Sara Sarrafi Zadeh and Khyrunnisa Begum from the University of Mysore in India. Their work shows that poor sleep has a bearing on quality of life - affecting physical and mental health in particular - in this group with high levels of job-related stress. Their paper is published online in Springer's journal *Applied Research in Quality of Life*.

Insomnia, a disorder of insufficient or poor quality sleep, has been shown to have adverse daytime consequences ranging from fatigue, irritability and memory impairment to loss of productivity and relationship difficulties. Left untreated, it has also been linked to severe depression and [coronary heart disease](). Because the majority of insomniacs do not seek medical treatment, poor sleep is also thought to affect quality of life.

Sarrafi Zadeh and Begum believe that a high incidence of [insomnia](), alongside minimal recognition of the problem by healthcare professionals, has led to the tangible consequences of chronic insomnia being underestimated.

They studied the relationship between the amount of sleep and the quality of life of 91 software engineers aged between 21 and 45, working for a software company in Mysore, in order to determine the prevalence of insomnia among this group particularly prone to job-related stress. The participants completed two questionnaires: The first looked at insomnia and sleep quality; the second assessed their quality of

life.

The authors found that 56 percent of the participants had mild (35 percent) or severe (21 percent) insomnia, compared to 23 percent in the general population. In contrast to what other studies have shown, younger engineers were more likely to be insomniacs than their older counterparts. In terms of gender differences, more women suffered from mild insomnia than men while more men suffered from severe insomnia than women.

Quality of life in general, and mental and physical health in particular, were significantly lower in subjects with insomnia than in other participants. The association between insomnia and poor quality of life was particularly strong for mental health. There were no gender differences in the effects of poor sleep on quality of life.

The authors conclude: "In view of the serious health consequences of insomnia in software engineers who are at high risk, suitable awareness programs should be developed as a preventative measure. Sleep assessment should be included as part of routine medical check-ups so that management of the problem is easier in the early stages. Lifestyle management programs which include sleep hygiene and care should be incorporated as a policy matter in the IT industry."

Citation: Sleep program needed for IT engineers (2010, November 22) retrieved 20 April 2024 from https://medicalxpress.com/news/2010-11-sleep-program-needed-for-it.html