

# FREQUENCY OF BEHAVIOURAL FEATURES AMONG INSOMNIAC PATIENTS

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Insomnia may affect daytime quality of life and have different behavioral symptoms among patients. **Objective:** To determine the frequency of behavioral and demographic features among insomniac patients. **Patients & Methods:** A cross sectional study was conducted on patients from southern Punjab, who were insomniac and taking medications from Psychiatric Ward, Nishtar Hospital Multan, from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 to 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2011. Data was collected from 417 insomniac patients. A questionnaire was administered targeting insomnia criteria. Confidentiality of information taken was ensured. The data was entered and analyzed by SPSS version 15. **Results:** A total of 417 patients participated in the study. The age range was 10-80 years, with 52% females, 272 insomniac patients out of 417 (65.2%) were anorexic. 225 (54%) cases were the eldest, among insomnia patients, following were the youngest who were 116 (28%) and the least were in between the eldest and the youngest who were 75 (18%). 284 (68%) patients complained about the uncontrolled level of anger with destructive behavior. **Conclusion:** Anorexia, uncontrolled anger, restlessness was found in insomnia. Females, illiterate and elder members of family were more insomniac.

**Key Words:** Appetite, Restlessness, Anorexia, Illiteracy

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## INTRODUCTION

Insomnia defined by, The International Classification of Sleep Disorders is problem in initiating or continuing sleep or non-restorative sleep along with a declined daytime activity e.g., fatigue, sleep in day time, low mood and restlessness.<sup>1</sup> Lack of concentration and impairment of memory is for a period of at least three to four weeks.<sup>2</sup> In insomnia there is under recognized and no proper treatment of the general people.<sup>3</sup> Although it is a common problem among elderly people, disorders related to sleep are scarcely diagnosed and treated.<sup>4</sup> Being a serious problem among elderly people and due to its global prevalence along with poor sleep, it can have serious results with different aspects of resilience and vitality needed for successful aging.<sup>5</sup> The significant risk of morbidity, mortality and raised level for nursing home placement is associated with sleep disturbances among the elderly people.<sup>6,7</sup> Insomnia is also linked with risk for falls.<sup>8</sup> Maintenance of sleep

rather than initiation in sleep is the most generally reported problems in the adult population with sleep disturbance,<sup>4,9,10</sup> and can have serious results.<sup>11</sup> In these sleeping problems women are more affected.<sup>12</sup> The diagnostic criteria include: (1) difficulty in sleeping and staying awake (2) this problem can be present if there is proper opportunity and condition to sleep (3) this difficulty in sleep is linked with daytime distress; and (4) lack of sleep occurs at least 3 times per week and is a problem for at least 1 month.<sup>13</sup> The study was conducted to assess the relations of insomnia with anorexia, anger, restlessness, level of education and sex, whether it prevails more in the eldest member of the family or following him the other members.

## PATIENTS AND METHODS

In this cross-sectional study, a total of 417 insomniac patients were interviewed by using a questionnaire. Consent was taken before the questionnaire was administered. Confidentiality of data was ensured. If the patients couldn't understand the questions due to language problems, interview was taken in the language of the patient. Patients from southern Punjab who were insomniac and taking medications from Psychiatric Ward, Nishtar Hospital, Multan participated in the study.

We started collecting data from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2010 to 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2011. Patients which were not

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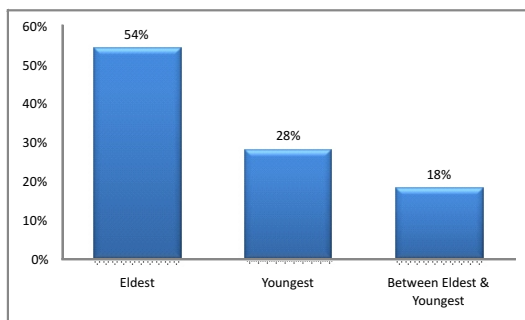
insomniac were excluded from the study.

As the data was completed from 417 patients, it was analyzed in SPSS version 15. They were questioned about their behavioral changes after suffering from insomnia. Especially more focus was given to anger and its control, appetite whether their appetite is normal or having loss of appetite, restlessness, education, birth order in family (youngest, middle, eldest).

## RESULTS

A total of 417 patients participated in the study. The age range was 10-80 years, with 52% females. 225 (54%) cases were the eldest, among insomnia patients, following were the youngest who were 116 (28%) and the least were in between the eldest and the youngest who were 75 (18%). 272 insomniac patients out of 417 (65.2%) were anorexic. 284 (68%) patients complained about the uncontrolled level of anger with destructive behavior. 193 (46.3%) insomniac patients reported restlessness in their life style.

**Figure I: Frequency of Insomnia according to birth order in family.**



It was found that 61.4%, were illiterate and primary, middle, SSC, HSSC, graduates, masters and above were, 2.9%, 12.7%, 10.6%, 7.4%, 3.6%, 1.4% respectively.

## DISCUSSION

These findings support the fact of future impact on the people of underdeveloped areas who had not got much awareness about insomnia and due to poor education level and consequently jobless conditions, they are more pressurized to earn a living to support their family. This is also a possible factor with other main psychiatric factors that can't be ignored. Some previous studies have shown that sleep related problems affect approximately 25-40% of children and

adolescents.<sup>14,15</sup> This is comparable to our study where insomnia was independently associated with less education in both sexes.<sup>16</sup> Lower education level and being retired was associated with a higher risk of insomnia in males.<sup>14</sup> Our study also revealed that majority (61%) of our patient were illiterate. Our study also showed that 65% have anorexia, 46% have restlessness, and 68% have anger. Insomnia is also associated with a significant economic burden for younger and older patients.<sup>15,16</sup> Women are more affected with insomnia than men.<sup>17-21</sup> However in our study, male and females were equally effected. It is also shown in our study where 68% of the patient had anger. Insomnia has been shown to be a risk factor for anxiety disorders and anger.<sup>22</sup> Insomnia is a confirmed feature of anorexia nervosa. Insomniac patients are sometimes agitated and restless and have lost considerable weight. It is found that insomnia patients have higher level of anger and anger expression.<sup>23</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Most of the insomniac patients complaint of anorexia, anger and restlessness. Females, illiterate and elder members of family were more insomniac.

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