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Ratrijagarana-Impact & Implication

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ABSTRACT:

Night awakening or Ratrijagarana is a phenomenon that involves extended wakefulness during nighttime hours, a practice influenced by cultural, social and individual factors. This research project delves into the multifaceted effects of Ratrijagarana on human health, behavioural and psychology, integrating insights from modern sleep science and Ayurvedic principles.

The study examines the psychological consequences of Ratrijagarana including circadian rhythm disruption, alterations in cortisol levels and the onset of sleep disorders such as insomnia. Parallely, the Ayurvedic perspective highlights *Vata* and *Pitta* imbalances caused by irregular sleep cycles, which are linked to mental fatigue, digestive issues and compromised immunity.

To ground these theoretical insights, a comprehensive survey was conducted, encompassing questions about general sleep patterns, the frequency of Night awakening and its perceived effects on physical and mental health. The data revealed trends in how nocturnal habits influence cognitive performance, emotional stability and overall well-being. This approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of both the short term and long term consequences of this practice. Through this project, we aim to provide insights into the coping

mechanisms employed by individuals, ranging from meditation and structured sleep schedules to nutritional adjustments.

By harmonizing scientific research and traditional wisdom, this study not only highlights the adverse effects of Ratrijagaran but also provides actionable recommendations for mitigating its impact. The findings aim to foster awareness and encourage the adoption of balanced practices that support holistic health in a fast paced world.

INTRODUCTION:

Nidra is the natural state of unconsciousness or rest which allows the body and mind to rejuvenate. It is closely connected to the Doshas & Nidra helps in maintaining the balance of these Doshas, playing a crucial role in maintaining harmony.

Nidra is considered one among the *Trayopastamba* along with *Ahara* (food), and *Brahmacharya* (celibacy). These are the sub pillars of life which support our *shareera*. Nidra is considered as one among the *Adharaneeya* *Vegas*. Benefits of sleep comprises of *Sukha* [Pleasure], *Pushti* [Nourishment & growth], *Bala* [Strength], *Vrishya* [Potency & Sexual vigour], *Gyaanam* [Knowledge & intellect] And *Jeevitam* [longevity of life] are the desired effects of qualitative and quantitative Nidra. Suppression of *nidra* results in *Jrumbha* [Yawning], *Angamarda* [Malaise], *Tandra* [Drowsiness], *Shiroruja* [Headache], *Akshigaurava* [Heaviness in eyes]. An individual falls asleep when his mind including the sensory & motor organs get exhausted and they dissociate themselves from their objects.

Ratrijagaran is *Ruksha* which causes increase in *Vata* and *Diwaswapna* causes *Snigdha* i.e. increases *Kapha* in our body. Hence both Ratrijagaran & *Diwaswapna* are contraindicated. Therefore night sleep is the one all should follow because night is the best time for sleep. Ratrijagaran is mentioned among one of the *Vata* *Prakopa* *Hetu*, those who are indulging in Ratrijagaran can affect with *Vata* and *Pitta* disorders. For those who had kept awake at night, sleeping during day for half period of wakefulness is desirable. As wholesome diet is essential for the maintenance of the body, Sleep is essential for happiness. Therefore, obesity & leanness are specifically caused by improper sleep and diet.

In the present scenario, our society demands round the clock services in order to meet their needs. Hence to meet this, long and variable working hours for different professions lead to inadequate sleep. When people work against their natural sleep cycle, they have more ill effects on physical and psychological health. In general it can be understood that *Nidra* gives a rest which is essentially required for the strained senses, mind and soul. Thus, the sleep is vital for healthy brain activity during the day.

Sleep deprivation causes decrease in attention, decrease in working memory, decrease in decision making, decrease in vigilance, visual tasks may get affected, mind - body coordination may be affected. Circadian rhythms are endogenous rhythms with a periodicity of approximately 24 hours. These rhythms are synchronized to the physical environment by social and work schedules. The most common symptoms of these disorders are difficulties with sleep onset or sleep maintenance and excessive sleepiness that are associated with impaired social and occupational functioning.

Sleep disorders which in turn affects physical and psychological health which is becoming a burning crisis in the society and are increasing day by day due to life style and job pattern of people. The working pattern of job too has promoted irregular and improper sleep habits which is becoming increasingly prevalent amongst the people. People are engaged in night awakening for several reasons. In this present study, health status of

individuals having normal sleep patterns and the physical and psychological effects on those individuals who are indulged in Ratrijagaran are analysed.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

- To evaluate the impact of Ratrijagaran on physical, mental and emotional health
- To study the causes and frequency of Ratrijagaran in modern youth

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

A Google form survey was conducted with 147 respondents aged between 18 - 30 years. The questionnaire included both objective and subjective questions related to sleep patterns, reasons for night awakening and it's effects.

Survey Analysis Summary:

As part of the research, a comprehensive survey was conducted to understand the sleep patterns, causes of night awakenings, and subsequent physical, mental, and emotional impacts on individuals. The survey aimed to bridge both modern and Ayurvedic perspectives on disturbed sleep cycles.

Demographics:

The survey was conducted among individuals aged between 18 to 35, with a majority being students and working professionals. Most respondents were based in urban or semi-urban areas, contributing to varied sleep environments.

Key Findings:

1. Usual Sleep Timings:

A significant number of participants reported going to bed between 12 AM to 2 AM, indicating a delay from the natural circadian rhythm. Only a small percentage followed the ideal Ayurvedic sleep window of 10 PM to 6 AM.

2. Frequency of Ratrijagaran (Staying Awake at Night):

More than 60% of respondents admitted to frequently staying up late at night at least 3–4 times a week. Some reported staying awake even beyond 3 AM on multiple occasions.

3. Reasons for Ratrijagaran:

Academic/work pressure and mobile phone usage were the most commonly cited reasons.

Other contributors included social media, watching shows, gaming, and emotional stress.

A few also mentioned festive events, spiritual practices, or night shifts as causes.

4. Reported Effects:

Physical Effects: Fatigue, headaches, heaviness in the body, poor digestion, and disturbed appetite were frequently reported.

Mental Effects: Difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness, mood swings, and lack of motivation were prevalent.

Emotional Effects: Irritability, anxiety, and a feeling of restlessness were commonly mentioned.

5. Awareness of Health Impact:

Most respondents were aware that their irregular sleep patterns were unhealthy.

Despite this, a majority confessed to not taking active steps to improve their sleep hygiene.

6. Coping Mechanisms:

Some respondents attempted to catch up on sleep during the day, which in turn disturbed their nighttime cycle.

Others used caffeine or energy drinks to stay awake, while a few relied on yoga, meditation, or herbal remedies to balance the effects.

7. Ayurvedic Insights (based on responses):

The pattern of Ratrijagaran showed clear signs of Vata and Pitta imbalances.

Symptoms like anxiety, dry skin, digestive issues, and insomnia aligned with these doshic disturbances.

A few respondents who followed Ayurvedic lifestyle principles reported significantly better resilience to the effects of night awakenings.

CONCLUSION:

The survey findings highlight a strong prevalence of Ratrijagaran among young adults, primarily driven by modern lifestyle demands and digital distractions. The negative impact on health is multifaceted—affecting the physical body, mental clarity, and emotional well-being. The responses support the Ayurvedic belief that night sleep is essential for Ojas (vital energy), mental calmness, and physiological balance.

DISCUSSION:

Psychological Factors: Chronic Ratrijagaran (sleep deprivation) increases cortisol, reduces serotonin and dopamine, contributing to stress, anxiety, depression, and mood disturbances.

Studies show lack of sleep can impair the prefrontal cortex, responsible for judgment, emotional control, and memory.

As per Acharya Charaka, Nidra is one of the Trayopastambha (three pillars of health). Its vitiation leads to Manasikavikara like Chinta (worry), Bhrama (confusion), and Krodha (anger).

Prolonged wakefulness increases rajas and Tamas, disturbing Manasdoshas and leading to unsteadiness of mind (Asthirata).

Neurological Factors: Sleep deprivation leads to cognitive dysfunction, memory loss, and even risk of neurodegenerative disorders

Ratrijagaran aggravates Vatadosha, particularly affecting the Majjadhātu (nervous tissue). Vataprakopa leads to Buddhibhramsha (cognitive impairment), Smritinasha (memory loss) and Dhi-Dhriti-Smriti-Vibhramsa.

Immunological Factors:

Ratrijagaran reduces immune markers like IL-2, IL-6, TNF-alpha and natural killer cell activity.

Even short-term sleep loss can lower immune surveillance, increasing susceptibility to infection and inflammation.

Improper sleep causes Ojahkshaya (loss of vitality), reducing Vyadhikshamatva (immunity).

Nidranasha is a cause of Ojasvyapat, weakening the body's ability to fight disease.

Endocrine Factors:

Sleep affects the HPA axis and regulates hormones like cortisol, melatonin, insulin, GH, and reproductive hormones.

Ratrijagaran disrupts this rhythm, affecting metabolism, growth, and fertility.

Dhatukshaya due to excessive night waking hampers proper Dhatuposhana, especially Rasadhātu and Shukradhātu, affecting strength and fertility.

Agnimandya occurs due to vitiation of Samanavata, impacting metabolic hormones.

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