

## INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SLEEP CHARACTERISTICS, DISSOCIATIVE EXPERIENCES AND RUMINATION IN ADULTS

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**BACKGROUND AND AIM:** Sleep deprivation has been widely linked to the exacerbation of dissociative symptoms. Insufficient sleep weakens cognitive control, making individuals more prone to negative thoughts. This study aimed to explore the relationship between sleep quality, dissociation, and ruminative thoughts in young adults.

**METHODS:** This field study at Selçuk University involved 647 volunteer students from 36 faculties, selected through random sampling. Using a descriptive research design, participants completed a semi-structured sociodemographic questionnaire and self-report measures, including the Dissociative Experiences Scale (DES), the Ruminative Thinking Style Questionnaire (RTSQ) and the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI). Ethical approval was granted by the Selçuk University Local Ethics Committee (2024/63).

**RESULTS:** Correlation analyses revealed significant positive associations between RTSQ and DES ( $r = 0.441$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), RTSQ and PSQI ( $r = 0.338$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and DES and PSQI ( $r = 0.309$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Logistic regression identified RTSQ

(OR=1.031,  $p=0.000$ ) and PSQI (OR = 1.145,  $p = 0.000$ ) as significant predictors of DES. Among PSQI subscales, sleep disturbance (OR = 1.889,  $p=0.001$ ) was particularly significant. Mediation analysis showed that PSQI had both direct ( $\beta = 2.019$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and indirect ( $\beta = 0.982$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ) effects on RTSQ via DES.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Our findings suggest that dissociative experiences may result from involuntary transitions between waking and sleep-related consciousness due to emotional stress. Poor sleep quality not only increases dissociation but also contributes to rumination, both directly and indirectly. Sleep disturbances play a central role in this effect. However, limitations exist: childhood trauma, depression, and anxiety—factors strongly linked to dissociation—were not assessed. Those with psychiatric illness were not excluded. The study also relied on self-reports and had a cross-sectional design, limiting causal inferences. Future research should investigate these relationships prospectively.

**Keywords:** Dissociation, rumination, sleep