

Abstract

Existing studies suggested that sleep problems were common among obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). However, no consensus on the nature of the relationship was drawn due to inconsistent findings. First part of the current study investigated if sleep characteristics differed across OCD subtypes. Results demonstrated that OCD subtypes showed distinctive sleep profiles. In particular, hoarding was demonstrated to be correlated with a subjective report of increased total sleep time, which was in contrary to the pattern of reduced sleep duration observed in other subtypes. The results highlighted the distinctiveness of manifestations in sleep and potentially explained inconsistencies of previous sleep research in the OCD populations. The results also supported the separation of hoarding from other OCD subtypes in DSM-5 classification. Second part of the study investigated the role of sleep and anxiety in relation to compulsive checking. Checking has been linked to memory complaints and anxiety but the mechanism between them was unclear, especially when the role of sleep was considered. In testing memory and anxiety as mediators between sleep and checking, the current study found that sleep problems contributed to subjective memory complaints, that gave rise to anxious mood, leading to checking. Physiological dysregulation may have a negative impact on individual's affect regulation and subjective evaluation of their cognitive performance, leading to emotional vulnerability and maladaptive behavioural coping. The results advanced the understanding of presentation and possible etiological factors of checking, which drew insights to intervention and conceptualization.