

## Relationship of Psycho-Traumatic Problem (Nightmares) with Students' Physical, Mental Health and Their Academic Achievement at Secondary Level Due to War Hazards and U.S. Drone Strikes in North Waziristan

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### Abstract

*Nightmares badly influence health and learning. Population of the study comprised of all boys and girls of Secondary Schools in NWA whereas (n=403) respondents, 202(50.12%) boys and 201(49.88%) girls were taken as sample from the entire population. Face-to-face questionnaire was used to collect data from respondents through stratified random sampling technique. The key objective of the study was to examine relationship of nightmares with students' health and their academic achievement. Data was delimited to Secondary School students in NWA. Data was statistically analyzed through SPSS by using Pearson Correlation. The respondents perceived nightmares responsible for students' poor health and low academic achievement. The Mean value of nightmare was 3.2109, SD, 1.43263, and (p, .000 < 0.05) with negative 'r' = -.355\*\* which shows negative correlation of nightmares with students' health and their academic achievement. Results and conclusions were drawn. Recommendations were suggested for future researchers and further improvement in the study.*

**Key Words:** Nightmares, War Hazards, U.S. Drone Attacks, Students' Academic Achievement, North Waziristan.

### Introduction

Chronic nightmares have been noted approximately 3 to 8% in the general population. Nightmares mostly causes insomnia (sleep problems) which have negative effects on physical and mental health due to which problems in studies and academics occur automatically; those students who are suffering from insomnia disorder are highly instable and sentimental, their attention is very disturbed because of sleeplessness (insomnia) ([Blunden, Lushington & Lorenzen, 2005](#)). Students show poor academic grade due to insomnia disease and this disease is highly developed because of nightmares; nightmares mentally disturb students due to which their sleep remain incomplete and they confront other problems also like headache, mental disturbance, depression, fear and concentration problems ([Schredl, 2013](#)). A man with nightmare disorder loses his ability to adjust himself in the society because he suffers from insomnia in such circumstances due to which he always shows anger and aggressiveness; his concentration is highly disturbed and negatively affected; he can't concentrate on his studies and other academic activities due to which he gets poor academic grade and show low learning performance as well ([Davis & Wright, 2005](#)). Those, who are suffering from nightmare problems, are fully depressed and bad tempered, minded because of their insomnia and incomplete or disturbed sleep ([Ohayon, Morselli, & Guilleminault, 1997](#)). Sleeplessness (insomnia) happens because of nightmares and other psychological problems like inattention and anxiety also become the part of life of students with nightmare disorders or problems due to which they always show aggression and anger for minor matters; such types of students avoid people in their lives and take no interest in their studies at all ([Germain & Nielsen, 2003](#)). Low academic grades and poor learning are highly associated with nightmares and insomnia or sleep disorders ([Schredl, 2009](#)). Nightmares and insomnia are responsible for other physical and mental problems also such as memory weakness, depression, aggressiveness and zero interest in studies and other activities of routine

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life ([Stores, 2007](#)). Most of the students suffering from nightmares problems show low and unsatisfactory academic achievement because of their irregular sleeps due to nightmares ([Spoormaker, Schredl & Bout, 2006](#)). Majority of the students with nightmares are depression, stress and anxiety and insomnia patients also due to which they either fail in examination or hardly pass with very poor academic grades ([Nguyen et al., 2002](#)). Students suffering from nightmares problems, show aggressive behaviors, unwanted and vulgar attitudes and such students are highly hyper and emotional. They fight one another and have quarrelsome nature due to which their academic and learning badly suffered a lot ([Germain & Nielsen, 2003](#)). Children who show low academic grades and poor learning performance tend to emerge as harassment and victimization in the society for which nightmares and insomnia like psychological problems are responsible ([Bastien, Vallieres & Morin, 2001](#)). Nightmares weaken the brain and thinking capabilities of students due to which they show poor academic scores in their classrooms or schools ([Thomas, Sing & Belenky, 2000](#)).

A student suffering from distress is a psychiatric problem and this problem is highly developed due to nightmares. As a nightmare patient has insomnia problem due to which he or she is highly distressed and in such situations he or she can't take interest in studies due to which he or she gets either failing/eleventh grades or hardly pass in examination ([Schredl, 2009](#)). A man having nightmare problems is highly psychiatric patient ([Aronen, Paavonen & Fjällberg, 2000](#)). All those people, who have nightmare disorder, they have also insomnia problems due to which they are disturbed and suppressed. They are not interested in others and they have ill-tempered nature; people with nightmare problem become angry and aggressive for minor matters due to their sleeplessness problems ([Edinger, Bonnet & Bootzin, 2004](#)). Nightmares disorder cause parasomias and insomnia (sleep disorder) problem due to which disturbance in behavior, dreams, perception and emotions occur ([Nielsen et al., 2000](#)). Nightmare influences the physical, mental and psychological health of a person due to which he or she faces other psycho-traumatic problems such as terror, fear, anxiety, disgust, embarrassment, anger and aggressiveness etc. ([Marshall, Acheson & Risbrough, 2014](#)). A person with nightmare problem is highly aggressive and he or she is fully confused. He/she is the man of slow and unclear speech and disturbed thinking ([Blagrove, Farmer & Williams, 2004](#)). The prevalence rate of nightmares disorders in children is 1-6.5% and in adults is 2.9-4.2% in Pakistan ([Zadra & Donderi, 2000](#)). Dread and fear are highly developed in nightmares patients ([Sjöström, Waern & Hetta, 2007](#)). War hazards are responsible for sleep terrors and in such circumstances, nightmares patients jumped out from their beds, they either runaway or leave through windows and doors ([Krakow & Zadra, 2006](#)).

## **Methodology**

The researcher conducted a descriptive study over Secondary schools students in North Waziristan during 2011-2012. The total numbers of (n=403) respondents were taken as samples from the entire population in which 202(50.12%) were boys and 201(49.88%) girls by apply stratified random sampling technique. The population was divided into two strata i.e. rural and urban; the total numbers of thirty Secondary Schools were taken for sampling (15 boys and 15 girls Secondary schools) for which John Curry (1984) sample size rule of thumb was used to determine the size of sample. Face-to-face questionnaire (interview in a form of documents) was used to collect data from the sampled respondents with five points scale of options "always, frequently, occasionally, seldom and never carrying values 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The questionnaire was properly translated into local language (Waziristan Pashto), Urdu and English also in order to easily get data from the students. All the students were given briefing in local language. Data was entered into SPSS (Version 16.0) by using Arithmetic Mean for the identification of Psycho-traumatic effects (the effects of nightmares on students physical, mental health and their academic achievement) while Pearson Correlation was used to know the relationship between U.S. drone attacks psycho-traumatic effects (effects of nightmares) and war hazards as well as students' academic achievement at Secondary level in North Waziristan. Data was delimited to Secondary Schools students of both genders (boys and girls) in North Waziristan only.

**Results**

**Table 1.** Psychotraumatic Problem (Nightmares) Caused by War Hazards and U.S. Drone Strikes in North Waziristan (n = 403)

Gender	Respondents Responses					Total
	Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Frequently	Always	
Male (Boys)	21 (10.4%)	21 (10.4%)	38 (18.81%)	58 (28.71%)	64 (31.68%)	202 (50.12%)
Female (Girls)	43 (21.39%)	38 (18.91%)	50 (24.88%)	30 (14.93%)	40 (19.9%)	201 (49.88%)
Total	64 (15.88%)	59 (14.64%)	88 (21.84%)	88 (21.84%)	104 (25.81%)	403 (100%)

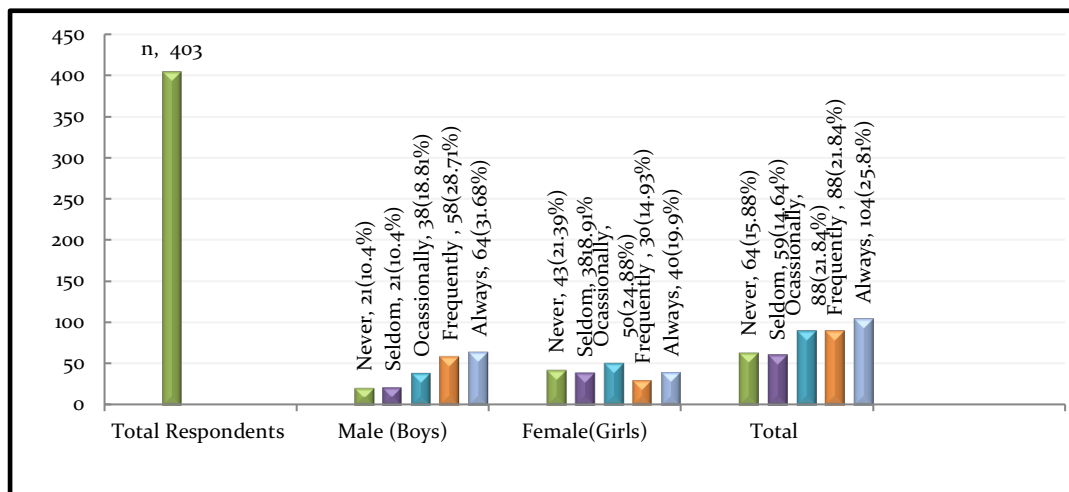


Table 1 shows that out of (n=403) respondents, 50.12% respondents were boys and 49.88% were girls. Among boys (n=202, 50.12%), 21(10.4%) respondents never suffered from nightmares because of war hazards and U.S drone strikes in North Waziristan; (n=21, 10.4%) respondents seldom suffered, (n=38, 18.81%) respondents occasionally suffered; (n=58, 28.71%) respondents frequently suffered while (n=64, 31.68%) always suffered from nightmares caused by war hazards and U.S. drone attacks in Waziristan. Likewise, among girls (n=201, 49.88%) respondents, 21.39% (n=43) respondents never suffered; 18.91% (n=38) respondents seldom suffered; 24.88% (n=50) occasionally suffered; 14.93% (n=30) frequently suffered and 19.9% (n=40) respondents always suffered from nightmares due to war hazards and U.S. drone strikes in North Waziristan. As a whole, the respondents, never suffering from nightmares were 64(15.88%), respondents who were seldom affected from nightmares were 59 (14.64%), occasionally effected respondents were 88 (21.84%), and frequently effected respondents were 88 (21.84%) while the respondents always suffering from nightmares were 104 (25.81%) respectively.

**Table 2.** Correlation between Nightmares and Academic Achievement of 10th Class Students (n =403)

Statement	Statistical Result			
	Mean	S.D	r	Sig.
Psychotraumatic Problem Caused by War Hazards and U.S. Drone Strikes in North Waziristan NIGHTMARES	3.2109	1.43263	-.355**	.000

N=403 \*p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01(2-tailed).

Table 2 shows that the Mean of Nightmare = 3.2109, S.D = 1.43263, r = -.355\*\* and p = .000. The value of p is less than 0.05 and the value of 'r' is negative so there is negative correlation between nightmares and the academic achievement of 10th Class students.

## **Discussion**

During 2011-2012, majority of the male and female respondents were of the views that psycho-traumatic problems (nightmares) had always badly affected students' physical and mental health as well as their academic achievement due to the reason of U.S. drones attacks and war hazards in North Waziristan. Most of the respondents frequently and occasionally agreed with the statement in table 1 that U.S. drone strikes and war hazards created a problem of nightmares among the citizens of North Waziristan in which students' academic achievements were badly suffered, for the students having nightmares disorders had insomnia (sleeplessness) problems also due to which they were physically, mentally and academically disturbed and showed poor academic grades at Secondary level in North Waziristan. According to the recent survey, 50-85% of adults are suffering from occasional nightmares throughout Pakistan especially in tribal districts due to war hazards as well as critical law and order situations ([Hansen et al., 2013](#)). The parasomnia and insomnia patients had been given medications of antidepressants as it had related to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other neurological disorders ([Cukor et al., 2009](#)). Nightmares develop other health related problems in nightmares patients like fear, anxiety, embarrassment, insomnia, and sleep avoidance, physical injured as well as depression ([Agargun & Kara, 2003](#)).

Nightmares results crime victims, stress, depression and aggressiveness that badly affect the physical, mental and psychological health of nightmares patients ([Casement & Germain, 2014](#)). Nightmare disorder is highly responsible for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD ([Spoomaker & Montgomery, 2008](#)). War hazards and traumatic events are the key to cause nightmares and insomnia problems among the people due to which the experiences, thoughts and emotions of nightmares patients are badly affected ([Nadorff, Nadorff & Germain, 2015](#)). A man suffering from nightmares always feel unsafe and worried and in such circumstances, he or she becomes crazy and aggressive ([Levin & Fireman, 2002](#)). Nightmares cause other mental and psychological problems like sleeplessness (insomnia), stress, sleep-walking, depression and anxiety ([Zschoche & Schlarb, 2015](#)). All those people, who are nightmares patients, are physically, mentally, emotionally and psychologically disturbed and they have confronted the problem of sleep disorder or insomnia due to which they lead a very confused and disturbed life ([Nadorff, Nazem & Fiske, 2013](#)). Teeth-grinding, sleep-walking and sleep-talking are the common symbols of parasomnias nightmares ([Blagrove, Farmer & Williams, 2004](#)). War hazards develop different types of nightmares like chronic nightmares (caused by sleep disorder); parasomnias nightmares (sleep walking, sleep talking, confusion arousals and night terrors); and idiopathic nightmares (mostly in childhood but also due to stress, trauma, mental and physical illness) among those citizens who are residing or living in war hazardous regions (Germain & Nielsen, 2003).

Table 2 also clarifies that the Mean value of nightmares is 3.2109, S.D = 1.43263,  $r = -.355^{**}$  and  $p = 0.00$ . The value of  $p$  is less than 0.05 and the value of ' $r$ ' is negative so there is negative correlation between nightmares and the academic achievement of 10<sup>th</sup> class students.

## **Limitations**

The study has several limitations also because the researcher focused only and only students, although all citizens and even animals were badly affected because of U.S drone strikes and war hazards in North Waziristan. The researcher limited this study up to North Waziristan only due to time factor and critical law and order situations i.e. U.S drone strikes, army operations and movement, talibanization and war hazards.

## **Conclusions**

This study highlighted psycho-traumatic problems (nightmares) and its negative effects on physical and mental health of students due to U.S. drone attacks and war hazards in North Waziristan. The study also concluded that nightmares (psycho traumatic problems) are highly responsible for the poor and low academic achievement of students at Secondary Schools level in North Waziristan because the students suffering nightmares were very depressed, anxious, stressed and the patients of insomnia (sleeplessness) due to which their academic careers were badly affected.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations and suggestions are given for the better improvement and treatment of nightmares patients:

1. Awareness regarding stress, depression, aggression, anxiety and fear may be ensured among the public to avoid it in to reduce the chances of nightmares in North Waziristan.
2. The doctors/physicians may recommend cyproheptadine, antidepressant and prazosin like medications to severe nightmare patients.
3. The doctors/physicians may review the medical history, sleep patterns and symptoms of the people living in war hazardous regions like Tribal districts in order to easily diagnose nightmare disorders.
4. Traumatic events may either be avoided or such events may be tackled with high patience and courage.
5. Sleep disruption or insomnia may be properly treated in the supervision of concerned psychologists, psychiatrists or neurologists to reduce nightmare problems in North Waziristan which is war affected areas in Pakistan.
6. Imagery Rehearsal Therapy (IRT) which is cognitive behavioral treatment may be given special priority in order to reduce the intensity of nightmare disorders and Post Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD) in the citizens of North Waziristan.
7. People living in North Waziristan may avoid the feelings of fear, terror, distress, anxiety, stress and depression to reduce the chances of nightmares.

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