Correlation Between Menstrual Symptoms and College Academic Activities
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INTRODUCTION
Sleep and the menstrual cycle are greatly intertwined¹. Women have poorer sleep quality during menstruation, including difficulties in falling asleep and maintaining sleep². However, few studies have looked directly at the correlation between menstrual symptoms, sleep quality, stress, and academic activities.

METHOD
We will be collecting both qualitative and quantitative data for two menstrual cycles. Participants will be taking the same survey nightly regarding the following aspects:
- Severity of menstrual symptoms
- Severity of premenstrual symptoms
- Sleep quality
- Stress levels
- Academic activities
Participants will also be required to wear an Actiwatch 64, in order for us to have a more objective measurement of sleep quality. Following data collection, a regression analysis will be completed.

PARTICIPANTS
College women with a GPA of at least 2.5. Exclusion criteria:
- Pregnant or actively trying to become pregnant
- Use of nicotine products
- Use of any form of birth control
- Use of a DivaCup
- Diagnosis of any type of:
  - Sleeping disorder
  - Menstrual disorder
  - Mental health illness/disorder
  - Chronic illness

RESEARCH PURPOSE
The purpose of this study is to analyze any relationships between menstrual cycle symptoms and sleep quality, stress levels, and their effects on college academic activities. In addition to these correlations, this study will also investigate whether students compensate for the negative effects of menstruation, how they compensate, and how much they compensate.

EXPECTED RESULTS
- Female students may experience poorer sleep quality, higher stress levels, and decreased attention levels in class while menstruating.
- Academic activities will decrease during menstruation.
- Women are able to maintain their performance by compensating for the detrimental consequences associated with menstruation.
- Women with more severe menstrual symptoms will display a larger decrease in academic activities.

IMPLICATIONS
One of the components of this study was to examine the compensation that occurs during menstruation. Compensatory responses reflect how, despite significant impact into their daily lives, women are able to maintain their average performance level.

LIMITATIONS
- Confounding variables
  - Unable to distinguish individual sources of stress or pain
  - Exaggeration of symptoms
- Self-report
- Loss of participants due to attrition

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REFERENCES

FIGURES
1. Example image of menstrual symptoms and severity question.
2. Example of academic activity questions.
3. Graph of expected results displaying possible trends of stress, sleep quality, and average severity of menstrual symptoms.
4. Graph of expected results of possible compensatory behaviors of academic activities compared to menstrual symptom severity.