

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTENTION DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER SYMPTOMS AND SUBSTANCE/ALCOHOL USE AMONG TURKISH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Ercan Dalbudak^a, Cuneyt Evren^b, Merve Topcu^a, Secil Aldemir^a, Metin Canbal^c



^a Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, Turgut Ozal University, Ankara, Turkey

^b Bakirkoy Training and Research Hospital for Psychiatry, Neurology and Neurosurgery, Alcohol and Drug Research, Treatment and Training Center (AMATEM), Istanbul, Turkey

^c Department of Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Turgut Ozal University, Ankara, Turkey



Introduction

Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is characterized by attention problems, deficient impulse control, and hyperactivity in childhood and persists through adulthood. Adult ADHD symptoms (ADHDs) are known to associate with comorbid psychiatric disorders, particularly substance/alcohol use (SAU) [1]. The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between ADHDs with SAU among university students.

Methods

Among a total of 803 randomly selected students from two universities, regarding exclusion criteria 582 was remained and grouped into three groups due to the Turkish version of the Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale (ASRS) cut-off scores, namely, highly likely (HLG), likely (LG) and without ADHD (WG), respectively. They were assessed through online close-ended questions and likert-typed data form related to substance use and CAGE questionnaire [2] focussing on cutting down, annoyance by criticism, guilty feeling, and eye-openers for alcohol abuse risk. Chi-square was used.

Table 1. CAGE, cigarette and substance use according to ASRS

	WG		LG		HLG		χ^2	P
	N	%	N	%	n	%		
CAGE	39	20.6	13	17.1	19	34.5	6.27	<0.05
Cigarette	165	45	74	57	46	52	6.90	<0.05
Hookah	160	64.8	53	21.5	34	13.8	.909	0.635
Il/legal tranquilizers	19	5.2	5	3.9	12	13.6	10.21	<0.01
Cannabis	26	7.1	13	10.1	17	19.3	12.17	<0.01
Inhalants	10	2.7	12	9.3	10	11.4	14.77	<0.01
Ecstasy	5	1.4	2	1.6	5	5.7	6.74	<0.05
Energy drink	236	64.7	87	67.4	62	70.5	1.87	0.55
Substance without knowing	3	0.8	2	1.8	6	6.8	13.85	<0.001
Substance availability	86	23.6	32	24.8	40	45.5	17.65	<0.001

Note: Two students in HLG used heroin and cocaine. One student in the WG used Cocaine.

CAGE: Abbreviation of Cutting down, Annoyance by criticism, Guilty feeling, and Eye-openers

Results

Using cigarette and substances, namely, cannabis, ecstasy, inhalants, benzodiazepine and without awareness of the individual were higher in the HLG than the WG (Table 1). While hookah, energy drink use and CAGE were higher in HLG, only CAGE was significantly different than the WG. Moreover, the HLG reached substance more easily and reported more relative and friend users around them whereas WG reported more people without substance use (Table 1).

Discussion

Consistent with previous studies [3, 4], students with severe ADHDs had higher rates of SAU and negatively affect their lives. Also, since individuals with ADHDs have more risk of SAU, they can have more access to potential other than WG. Therefore, clinicians should carefully assess ADHDs and take SAU into consideration.

References

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