Childhood predictors of persistent ADHD in early adulthood: Results from the first follow-up study in China

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Abstract
It is known that childhood attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) persists into adulthood. Previous studies have demonstrated that gender, ADHD symptoms, functional impairment severity, medication treatment, IQ, comorbid with oppositional defiant disorder, conduct disorder and follow-up periods were associated with ADHD persistence in longitudinal samples of western population. In this study, we attempted to widely investigate the predictors particularly in a Chinese Han ADHD cohort. 399 children who met DSM-IV ADHD criteria were followed up into early adulthood. Ordinal logistic regression combined with survival analysis were conducted to examine the association of retrospectively reported childhood factors with adult ADHD persistence based on both categorical indicators and quantitative traits. 46.37% of the participants still met ADHD criteria in adulthood. Logistic models and survival analyses indicated that ADHD combined type appeared as a significant risk factor for ADHD persistence while superior IQ played a protective role even after controlling for the other potential confounders. When quantitative traits were applied, a number of hyperactivity/impulsivity symptoms and IQ still made significant contributions. In conclusion, our results indicated the syndromic continuity of ADHD. Further, a number of hyperactivity/impulsivity symptoms were a risk factor while higher IQ was protective for ADHD persistence.