Prevalence and correlates of bipolar spectrum disorder comorbid with ADHD features in nonclinical young adults

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Abstracts

Background
We investigate the rate of bipolar spectrum disorder comorbid with ADHD features using two screening instruments, the Mood Disorder Questionnaire (MDQ) and the Wender Utah Rating Scale (WURS), in a nonclinical young adult population.

Methods
College and graduate students aged 18 years or older from four universities in Korea were selected. Comorbidity was defined as both MDQ positivity and WURS positivity. To look for a trend in clinical characteristics according to the severity of the comorbid condition, we used the Jonckheere-Terpstra test and the linear-by-linear association test. We performed ordinal logistic regression analysis to identify predictors associated with the studied comorbid condition.

Results
A total of 1948 subjects were included in the study, and 15 (0.8%) of them were found to have the comorbid condition defined as both MDQ positivity and WURS positivity. As the severity of the comorbid condition increased, we saw trends of lower socioeconomic status, higher history of suicidality, higher history of self-mutilating behavior, higher history of parental abuse or abuse by other people, more severe depression, and more severe problematic alcohol use. The ordinal regression analysis showed that history of parental abuse, depression, and problematic alcohol use predicted the comorbid condition.

Limitations
We did not use standardized diagnostic tools for case findings.

Conclusion
The condition of comorbid bipolar spectrum disorder with ADHD features had a notable prevalence of 0.8% in a nonclinical young adult sample. This comorbid condition was found to be related with serious clinical phenomenology.