Emotional dysregulation of ADHD in childhood predicts poor early-adulthood outcomes: A prospective follow up study.


Abstract

BACKGROUND:
Emotional dysregulation (EDR) is commonly seen in individuals with attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD). But few are known about the influence of EDR on early-adulthood outcomes.

AIMS:
To detect the relationship between emotional dysregulation (EDR) in childhood and the outcomes in early-adulthood of participants with attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD).

METHODS AND PROCEDURES:
Han Chinese children who met DSM-IV ADHD criteria were followed up into early adulthood. The subjects were divided into two groups (with or without EDR) according to the emotion control subscale of Behavior Rating Scale of Executive Function in childhood. In the follow-up interview, their clinical outcomes were assessed by the Conner's Adult ADHD Diagnostic Interview and the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV-TR Axis I and II Disorders. Information on after-school tutoring and suspension of schooling was also collected as indices of educational outcomes.

OUTCOMES AND RESULTS:
We followed up 68 out of 90 individuals when they reached early adulthood. Data analysis showed that EDR predicted HI symptoms of ADHD both in childhood (OR=10.28, p<0.01) and in early-adulthood (OR=4.07, p=0.01). And EDR in childhood had trend to predicted adult ODD (X2=3.93, p=0.05). The suspension of schooling was also predicted by EDR (OR=9.31, p=0.04).

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS:
This study illustrated that EDR of children with ADHD, independent of co-occurring ODD, predicted poor long-term clinical and educational outcome in early-adulthood.