Co-Ocurrence of ASD and ADHD Traits in an Adult Population

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Abstract

Objective:
ADHD and autism spectrum disorder (ASD) can be viewed as the extreme end of traits found in the general population. Clinical and genetic studies suggest that ADHD and ASD often co-occur and share genetic susceptibility. The aim of this study was to examine co-occurrence of ADHD and ASD traits in the general population.

Method:
In total, 334 participants were recruited from a population-based sample. Four questionnaires assessing current and retrospective ADHD and ASD traits were administered online: the Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale (ASRS) Symptom Checklist, the Wender Utah Rating Scale (WURS-25), the Broad Autism Phenotype Questionnaire (BAPQ), and the Autism Spectrum Quotient (AQ).

Results:
A significant correlation was found between ADHD and autistic traits. In particular, higher inattention and overall ADHD scores were associated with self-reported deficits in communication and social skills.

Conclusion:
Our findings are similar to results from studies on clinical populations, suggesting that ADHD and ASD might share common etiology.