Trait emotional intelligence in a sample of Egyptian children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder

Eman Abo Elella, Ghada A.M. Hassan, Walaa Sabry, Heba Hendawy, Eman Shorub, Fadia Zyada, Omar Medany

Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 2017
DOI: 10.1111/camh.12236

Abstract

Background
The link between types and severity of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms and trait emotional intelligence (TEI) is still under investigated, especially in children. We aimed to examine the relationship between TEI and ADHD symptoms in a sample of Egyptian children.

Method
The study included 50 children with ADHD, who were compared on the basis of their TEI and contrasted with 25 matched healthy controls. They were subjected to the Arabic version of the following scales: Connors scale 3rd edition, parent rating form, Kiddie-Schedule for affective disorders and Schizophrenia present and Lifetime Version (K-SADS-PL), Stanford Binet intelligence scale, 4th edition and Trait Emotional Intelligence Child form (TEI) and a semi structured clinical data sheet for sociodemographic data.

Results
Using TEI scale, the control group was shown to have higher scores in TEI than cases, there was a high significant difference with regards to eight of nine TEI facets together with the TEI global score. Moreover, the control group significantly outperformed ADHD children with mixed and hyperactive subtypes on TEI global score in all facets except for adaptability. Meanwhile, the inattentive group performed significantly poorer than those in the control group on TEI global score, adaptability, emotional expression, self-motivation and emotion regulation facets. Trait Emotional Intelligence was negatively correlated with four of ADHD symptom groups assessed by Connors test, namely; impulsivity, cognitive, social problem, and emotional liability symptoms. However, Impulsivity was negatively correlated with all the domains of TEI except for adaptability and emotional expression. On the other hand, oppositional symptoms did not show a significant correlation with any of the TEI facets.

Conclusions
Trait emotional intelligence is highly impaired in children with ADHD and emotional deficits are corner stone features of that disorder, low impulsivity facet of TEI is highly correlated with social problems and poor peer relations.