Impact of implementing a parental training program in the treatment of a sample of ADHD children

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Abstract

Background:
The prevalence of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) among children is widespread. With proper parental involvement, a better outcome can be gained, allowing more children to achieve their full potential and decreasing the impairment inflicted by a common childhood disorder. This research aimed to study the impact of incorporating a parental training program in the treatment strategy for ADHD in children and to determine whether pharmacological management alone or combined with parental training will yield a better therapeutic outcome in the affected children.

Participants and methods:
This is a follow-up case–control study conducted in the child psychiatry unit of El-Abbassia Mental Health Hospital. Thirty patients with ADHD and their parents were recruited and divided into two equal groups. In the study group (the combined approach group), patients received stimulant medications (at a dose of 0.5–1 mg/kg) and their parents underwent the parental training program, whereas in the control group (pharmacotherapy only), only patients received stimulant medication at the same dose as that in the combined approach group. Patients were assessed using a full psychiatric sheet; an International Classification of Diseases-10 checklist; the Kiddie Schedule for Affective Disorders and Schizophrenia, Present and Lifetime versions; the Stanford Binet Test of Intelligence, 5th ed.; and Conners’ parent rating scale-revised (long version) before and after 8 weeks of therapy.

Results:
The combined approach group showed statistically significant reductions in the oppositional component, cognitive/inattention problems, the ADHD index, the Conners’ global index-emotional lability component, the Conners’ global index-total component, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th ed., hyperactive–impulsive symptom component, and the DSM-4-total symptom component. In contrast, the pharmacotherapy-only group showed improvement in cognitive/inattention problems and social components of the Conners’ test.

Conclusion:
Findings from this study indicate important positive changes in many behavioral aspects in children with ADHD whose parents had received parental training, pointing to the importance of parental involvement, training, and education in the outcome of a child with ADHD.