Determination of Anxiety Sensitivity and Investigation of its Association with Impulsivity in Adult Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Patients

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Abstract

Objectives
Anxiety sensitivity (AS) reflects an individual’s belief that anxiety symptoms or arousal may lead to harmful results. In contrast, more impulsive behavior and anxiety disorders comorbidity is observed in adult Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) patients. We aimed to determine AS levels in patients with ADHD and to investigate the relationship between AS and impulsive behavior.

Methods
The study included 30 patients who were diagnosed with ADHD and 30 healthy controls matched by age, gender, education and marital status. Participants filled out the DSM-IV based Adult ADD / ADHD Diagnosis and Assessment Inventory (A-ADHD). Those who scored at least six of nine questions in the first or second section of A-ADHD as 2 or 3 were clinically interviewed, an ADHD diagnosis was investigated, and participants were diagnosed with adult ADHD according to the DSM-IV-TR criteria. Participants who gave consent filled in the Barratt Impulsivity Scale and Anxiety Sensitivity Index (ASI).

Results
Using the Barratt Impulsivity Scale’s all subscale scores and total score, the ADHD group showed statistically significant differences when compared to the controls. When the ASI was assessed in terms of the cognitive and social subscale scores and the total score, the ADHD group showed statistically significant differences when compared to the controls. In the ADHD group, a positive correlation was found between ASI scores and Barratt scale scores.

Conclusion
Anxiety sensitivity in the cognitive and social sub scores and total scores was found to be higher in the ADHD group than in the control group and impulsivity seems much more by the people who have more AS. This situation must be addressed in larger scale operation could adversely affect the treatment process and functionality.