Oppositional defiant disorder/conduct disorder co-occurrence increases the risk of Internet addiction in adolescents with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder

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Abstract

Objectives
The aims of this cross-sectional study were to assess the prevalence of Internet addiction (IA) in a clinical sample of adolescents with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and to detect the moderating effects of co-occurring oppositional defiant disorder/conduct disorder (ODD/CD) on the association between ADHD and IA.

Methods
The study group comprised 119 adolescent subjects who were consecutively referred to our outpatient clinic with a diagnosis of ADHD. The Turgay DSM-IV-Based Child and Adolescent Disruptive Behavioral Disorders Screening and Rating Scale (T-DSM-IV-S) was completed by parents, and subjects were asked to complete the Internet Addiction Scale (IAS).

Results
The IAS results indicated that 63.9% of the participants (n = 76) fell into the IA group. Degree of IA was correlated with hyperactivity/impulsivity symptoms but not with inattention symptoms. As compared to the ADHD-only group (without comorbid ODD/CD), ADHD + ODD/CD subjects returned significantly higher scores on the IAS.

Conclusions
As adolescents with ADHD are at high risk of developing IA, early IA detection and intervention is of great importance for this group. In addition, adolescents with ADHD + ODD/CD may be more vulnerable to IA than those in the ADHD-only group and may need to be more carefully assessed for IA.