

Public recognition of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder in Korea: Correct identification, causes, treatments, and social distance

Park S, Lee Y, Lee ES, Kim CE.

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Abstract

INTRODUCTION:

To examine the Korean public's recognition of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), its sociodemographic correlates, and its implications for lay beliefs and social attitudes.

METHODS:

Six hundred seventy-three Korean adults were recruited for an online survey. Participants completed questionnaires on sociodemographic characteristics and their familiarity with ADHD. Participants were then provided with a vignette describing a person with ADHD symptoms, and subsequently were asked to answer whether the person had any sort of problem. Among the 673 participants who were initially recruited, those who recognized any problem responded to subsequent questions concerning the exact identification of the disorder, their beliefs about its etiology and treatment, and their preferences for social distance.

RESULTS:

It was found that 30.8% of participants perceived no problem and that 23.9% of those who did recognize a problem correctly identified ADHD as the diagnosis. Female gender, younger age, higher family income, higher education level, and having had any acquaintance with ADHD were associated with the correct identification of ADHD. The correct identification of ADHD was positively associated with behavioral/discipline beliefs and decreased social distance toward persons with ADHD, whereas it was negatively associated with beliefs concerning diet and personal characteristics.

DISCUSSION:

The present study highlights the importance of the accurate recognition of ADHD in relation to appropriate beliefs about its etiology, treatment strategies, and better social attitudes toward persons with ADHD.