

Parenting stress among mother's of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder children

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ABSTRACT

Objective: is to study the parenting stress among mothers of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) children and to highlight the possible risk factors attributed to the co-occurring stress.

Method: a case control study was conducted on 20 mothers of ADHD children and a matched control group. Both groups underwent the following: semi-structured clinical interview and parenting stress index. ADHD children were diagnosed according to ICD-10 and underwent the following: semi-structured clinical interview and a revised-behaviour problem checklist.

Results: The central finding of the present study is that mothers of ADHD children experienced a significantly higher parenting stress score than the control and international scores, this included the total score, as well as parent and child domains scores. The study confirmed that ADHD children display qualities that make it difficult for mothers to fulfill the parenting process. The maternal distress was experienced in all dimensions of the parents functioning including parents sense of competence, restriction of role, social isolation, parent attachment, parent health, parent depression and relationship with spouse. The maternal distress was significantly positively correlated with the presence of inattention, hyperactivity, conduct disorder, anxiety withdrawal, duration of the illness, the delay to start treatment and age of the child.

Conclusion: this study concluded that for mothers, parenting an ADHD child is a stressful event and has a great impact on the mothers coping abilities. As the mother is the keystone of the family system, this distress would have an adverse effect on the entire parent-child system.

INTRODUCTION:

Although parenting can be stressful at times for most everyone. Parents of children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) may experience greater stress because of the additional parenting challenges they face (*Johnston and March, 2001*). During many years of working with children who have ADHD and their parents, the level of stress that many families seemed to experience was striking. It was found that many parents who felt incredibly burned out by the daily struggles around behavior, homework, etc, this was often compounded by frustrations associated with trying to make certain that their child's needs were getting adequately addressed at school (*Rabiner, 2002*). Researchers studying the impact on parents of raising a child with ADHD have emphasized that increased caretaking demands exist for parents throughout childhood and adolescence. These increased demands can have an adverse These increased demands

can have an adverse impact on parents and increase the parenting related stress that they experience. In fact, several studies have documented that, on average, parents of children with ADHD experience more parenting stress than parents of other children, including parents of children with disorder other than ADHD (*Smalley, et al., 2000*). In addition, prior studies have shown that mothers of ADHD children experience more parenting-related stress than other mothers and often feel less competent as a parent. These findings certainly do not mean that parents of children with ADHD do not derive enormous pleasure and satisfaction in their parenting role. This may indicate, however, that parenting a child with ADHD presents parents with additional challenges that can increase stress and lead parents to question their own competence (*Biederman, 2003*). ADHD in children is associated with disturbances in family and marital functioning, disrupted parent-child