Attention deficit hyperactivity symptoms and disorder (ADHD) among African children : a review of epidemiology and co-morbidities : original

M.O. Bakare

African Journal of Psychiatry
Volume: Volume 15
Issue: Issue 5
Publication Date: 2012
Pages: 358 - 361

Objective : To review literature from Africa on the epidemiology of ADHD as well attention deficit hyperactivity symptoms and associated co-morbid conditions among African children.

Method : A literature search was done through Pubmed/MEDLINE and Google Scholar using then following terms, "attention deficit", "hyperactivity disorders", "epidemiology", "co-morbid conditions", "Africa". Nine studies met the inclusion criteria with four studies coming from South Africa, two each from Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria respectively and one from Ethiopia.

Results : The prevalence of ADHD varied with rates of between 5.4% and 8.7%, amongst school children, 1.5% amongst children from the general population between 45.5% to 100.0% amongst special populations of children with possible organic brain pathology. Common associated co-morbid conditions were oppositional defiant disorder, conduct disorder as well as anxiety/depressive symptoms.

Conclusion : Published data from Africa is limited. For effective healthcare policy further studies are needed to define the magnitude and burden of ADHD and other childhood neuro-developmental disorders in Africa.