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# Family Functioning in Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder with or without Oppositional Defiant Disorder/Conduct Disorder Comorbidity

Sebla Gökçe İmren, Ayşe Rodopman Arman, Funda Gümüştaş, Yasemin Yulaf, Özlem Çakıcı.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Üniversitesi Rize Eğitim ve Araştırma Hastanesi Çocuk Ruh Sağlığı ve Hastalıkları Kliniği; RİZE

Marmara Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi Pendik Eğitim ve Araştırma Hastanesi Çocuk Ruh Sağlığı ve Hastalıkları Anabilim Dalı, İSTANBUL

Adıyaman Eğitim ve Araştırma Hastanesi Çocuk Ruh Sağlığı ve Hastalıkları Kliniği ADIYAMAN

Tekirdağ Devlet Hastanesi Çocuk Ruh Sağlığı ve Hastalıkları Kliniği; TEKİRDAĞ

Diyarbakır Eğitim ve Araştırma Hastanesi Ruh Sağlığı ve Hastalıkları Kliniği, DIYARBAKIR

Çukurova Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi Dergisi (Cukurova Medical Journal) 2013; 38 (1):22-30.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the study was to examine family functioning in attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and ADHD comorbid with oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) or conduct disorder (CD).

**Method:** Forty nine children and adolescents diagnosed with ADHD and forty eight controls (aged 8-16 years) were assessed with Kiddie Schedule for Affective Disorders and Schizophrenia Present and Lifetime Version; Parents completed the McMaster Family Assessment Device (FAD) for family functioning which assesses 6 dimensions of family functioning (problem solving, communication, behavior control, affective involvement, affective responsiveness, and roles and also includes a general functioning subscale).

**Results:** 34.7 % of the ADHD children had comorbid psychiatric disorders, and the major comorbidity was ODD (24.5 %). ADHD families scored high at the level of “unhealthy functioning” in the problem solving, roles, affective involvement, general functioning, and behavior control subscales of FAD. Besides, problem solving behaviour and general functioning were significantly poorer than control families and they had more difficulties in area of roles. When DEHB was comorbid with ODD or DB, all areas of family functioning as measured by FAD were scored high

at the level of “unhealthy functioning “. Additionally, general functioning and affective responsiveness were significantly poorer than ADHD without ODD or DB comorbidity.

Discussion: Recent studies revealed that ADHD and especially ADHD comorbid with ODD or DB may disrupt family functioning in many ways. In this study, the families of children and adolescents with ADHD and ADHD comorbid with ODD or DB had poorer family functioning in most of the subscales of FAD. Treatment of children and adolescents diagnosed with ADHD especially comorbid with ODD or DB should include parental treatment and intervention addressing parental skills, and family functioning.