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Investigation of Time Perspective: Adolescents Suffering from ADHD

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Abstract

The present study aims at investigating time perspective of adolescents who suffer from Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The primary hypothesis of the study was that academic performance and planning problems in the adolescents with ADHD are the result of the bias existing against the time perspective of these people. The students of junior high school to senior high schools of Isfahan in academic year 2013-14 comprised the statistical population of the study. Of this population, 60 students (30 girls and boys with ADHD recognized in counseling centers and 30 healthy girls and boys as the control group) were selected by convenience sampling. To collect the data, the time perspective questionnaires were used. Sampling methods included descriptive statistics and inferential analysis by logistic regression. The findings revealed that although the participants with ADHD had passed treatment courses like counseling and medication, they showed a meaningful statistical difference.

Keywords: Adolescents, ADHD, Time Perspective.

Introduction

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder is one of the most common childhood disorders. In the fourth edition of the diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (DSM-IV), there are three sub-types for ADHD: a. predominantly hyperactive, b. impulsive, c. combined (Thomon and Thomson, 2005; Abikoff et al., 2007).

The prevalence of ADHD has been reported 3-5% in school age and 8.7% in American university students. Furthermore, different studies show the prevalence of ADHD in different ages, genders, and races in a manner that ADHD is more prevalent in African-Americans (Atvile et al., 2011). ADHD originates from childhood. That is, general symptoms, i.e., impulsivity, predominant hyperactivity, and combination of both begin from childhood and continue to adulthood. What is of importance is that if ADHD is not diagnosed in its early

stages, it will lead to adulthood hyperactivity and, consequently, crime, prison, job failures, divorce, and education problems (Tatle et al., 2010).

Approximately, 1-6% of the ordinary adults suffer from ADHD. Contrary to the past, it is now believed that ADHD is not cured by passing time and growing up. 85% of children with ADHD continue to adolescence and 50-70% to adulthood (Max et al., 2009; Bark Li et al., 2001). The studies indicate since ADHD is chronic, in their adulthood, these people will be subject to other psychiatric disorders like education problems, antisocial personality disorder, addiction, and interpersonal and psychological problems; in general, hyperactivity is the reason to damage the social position of these people to a large extent (Dang Hang, 2008; Mac Inerni & vide, 2001; Max & Kloniz, 2003; Attoli et al., 2011).

Time perspective: it is a long time researchers lean towards the effect of time on human performance despite time perspective is the person's vision of their future, past, and present is ambiguous in terms of psychology. The finding of the studies reveal that time perspective directly influences a person's decisions and daily activities. Zimbardo and Boyd (1999); Zimbardo and Stolarski (2011) quoted in Tabre (2012) specified five time perspective dimensions as follows:

1. Past-negative (PN) entails generally negative, aversive view of the past due to actual experiences of unpleasant or traumatic past events. This type of perspective is associated with depression, unhappiness, low self-esteem, and anxiety.
2. Present-hedonistic (PH) is characterized by symptoms like enjoyment, risk-taking, and present pleasure with little concern for future consequences. This type of perspective is associated with novelty and sensation seeking.
3. Future (F): reflects a general future orientation and a striving for future goals along with conscientiousness and low levels of novelty and sensation seeking.
4. Past-positive (PP): is characterized by a warm, nostalgic, positive construction of the past. It is in opposition to the past-negative factor which follows negative past experiences and traumatic events.
5. Present-fatalistic (PF): reflects a positive attitude towards present and future. In PF, it is believed that the future is predestined and uninfluenced by individual actions.

Since the presentation of time perspective by Zimbardo, many studies have been done in this regard as follows: the relation between time perspective and career path identity formation (Smith and Gosenz, 2010; Lonz and Tsozki, 2007 quoted in Smith and Guthans, 2010), time perspective and career path decision making (Haul and Zhang, 2011; Zimbardo, 2004; Chenko, 2010 qoted in Tabre, 2012), time perspective and emotional intelligence (Woodman and Vine, 2011; Nouzal and Bajkar, 2004 quoted in Stolarski, Bitner, and Zimbardo, 2011).

One of the problems the adolescents with ADHD have faced is that their academic performance is affected much by ADHD. The example is incompatibility at school and negative reactions by teachers, principal, and others. The reactions gradually make them believe that they are incapable and humiliated. The academic record of these individuals is full of negative memories. Although many studies have been done on time perspective and its effect on different variables and applied in treating disorders, the relation between time perspective and the academic performance of ADHD students has not been investigated so far. Thus, time perspective in adolescents with ADHD well be examined and studied in the present research.

Methodology

The main purpose of this study is to investigate time perspective in adolescents with ADHD. The students of junior high school to senior high schools of Isfahan in academic year 2013-14

comprised the statistical population of the study. Of this population, 60 students (30 girls and boys with ADHD recognized in counseling centers and 30 healthy girls and boys as the control group) were selected by convenience sampling. To collect the data, QTime perspective questionnaires were used.

Zimbardo time perspective questionnaire (1999): this questionnaire consists of 56 items entailing the five dimensions of time perspective, i.e., past-negative, present-hedonistic, future, past-positive, and present-fatalistic. In this questioner, the respondent is asked to reveal their belief about the items and express their interest in each choosing one of the options of 1. Strongly agree, 2. Agree, 3. Neutral, 4. Disagree, 5. Strongly disagree. To measure validity, Cronbach's alpha was used. Alpha coefficients for the five-item scales were between 0.68 and 0.89. Using test-retest method, reliability of the scales was between 0.86 and 0.89 in 2 weeks.

Findings

Table 1 shows the correlation between time perspectives of normal people and the people with ADHD. The correlation between ADHD and PP time perspective was -0.39. Furthermore, the correlation between ADHD and F was -0.49.

Table1. Pearson Correlations for ZTPI and ADHD

ZTPI	ADHD	Control	Statistic	Effect size
Past Negative	0.79	0.52	16.13**	.13
Past Positive	0.62	0.49	39.19**	.25
Present Hedonistic	0.47	0.32	8.98**	.07
Present Fatalistic	0.59	0.48	14.16**	.13
Future	0.54	0.50	27.43**	.20

Table 2. One way ANOVA of ADHD group and control group.

ZTPI	ADHD	Control	Statistic	Effect size
Past Negative	0.79	0.52	16.13**	.13
Past Positive	0.62	0.49	39.19**	.25
Present Hedonistic	0.47	0.32	8.98**	.07
Present Fatalistic	0.59	0.48	14.16**	.13
Future	0.54	0.50	27.43**	.20

As seen, table 2 shows the results of difference of ADHD group in the five time perspective dimensions. In this table, ADHD is mostly related to PN as 0.79, and the coefficient relation exists between ADHD and PP as 0.62.

Discussion

The purpose of the present research was to study time perspective in adolescents with ADHD. According to the results of the research, adolescents with ADHD, compared to control group, revealed a significant difference in their time perspective. Both groups showed some differences, but ADHD group had the maximum correlation with past-negative dimension of time perspective and also present-fatalistic. An example of past-negative dimension is: I think about the bad things that had happened to me in the past. An example of present-hedonistic dimension is: I do things impulsively; I make decisions at the spur of the moment, and that of present-hedonistic is: fate determines much in my life; as whatever will be will be, it does not really matter what I do.

The results of this research correspond to those gained by (Wiberg et al., 2011). That is, adolescents with ADHD have difficulties in planning and time perspective. Furthermore, the results are in accordance with description of ADHD in diagnostic and clinical manual published by American psychiatric association and other scientific sources. Because of hyperactivity, impulsivity, being too much emotional, and attention deficit symptoms, people with ADHD receive negative reactions from others. As a consequence, children with ADHD will have a lot of negative and painful memories of the past when they reach adolescence.

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