

Critical Evaluation on ADHD and its barriers

Introduction

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a disorder characterized by persistent patterns of inattention, hyperactivity, acting on impulse which impacts individuals across their lifespan (NHS, 2021). This academic poster aims to explore and dissect these barriers, shedding light on the challenges encountered by individuals with ADHD and the strategies they use to overcome barriers. Individuals with ADHD encounter various barriers including, social interactions, employment opportunities and healthcare access. The social stigma and misconceptions around ADHD can lead to feelings of isolation and discrimination, hindering social integration and emotional wellbeing.

Diagnosis

Getting an ADHD diagnosis, typically involves an assessment conducted by a qualified healthcare professional. The process usually is: an initial screening, a comprehensive evaluation, diagnostic criteria, ruling out other conditions, checking medical history and physical examination and then observing the individual in various settings to see if symptoms persist, collaborating with other professionals then feedback and diagnosis (ADHD Aware, 2024). To gain a diagnosis of ADHD, you need to recognise symptoms of ADHD, these symptoms will be persistent and could significantly impact daily functions such as home or school. Then consult with a healthcare professional and provide detailed information about the symptoms you have noticed, how long they have been present and how they affect daily life.

Impact ADHD has on Children

ADHD can have a significant impact on children across various aspects of their life, including academic performance, social interactions, emotional wellbeing and their daily functioning (Young Minds, 2022). Children with ADHD often struggle with attention, focus, organization, and impulsivity, which can impede their ability to learn and perform well in school. They may have difficulty staying on task, following instructions, completing assignments, and managing time effectively. As a result, they may experience academic underachievement, lower grades, and increased risk of academic failure compared to their peers. ADHD can affect children's social interactions and relationships. They may have trouble regulating their emotions and behaviour, leading to impulsive actions, emotional outbursts, and difficulty controlling impulses. These behaviours can alienate them from peers and make it challenging to maintain friendships. Children with ADHD may also struggle with social skills such as taking turns, listening, and understanding social cues, further impacting their social interactions.

Symptoms of ADHD

Symptom	How a child with this symptom may behave
Inattention	Often has a hard time paying attention, daydreams Often does not seem to listen Is easily distracted from work or play Often does not seem to care about details, makes careless mistakes Frequently does not follow through on instructions or finish tasks Is disorganized Frequently loses a lot of important things Often forgets things Frequently avoids doing things that require ongoing mental effort
Hyperactivity	Is in constant motion, as if "driven by a motor" Cannot stay seated Frequently squirms and fidgets Talks too much Often runs, jumps, and climbs when this is not permitted Cannot play quietly
Impulsivity	Frequently acts and speaks without thinking May run into the street without looking for traffic first Frequently has trouble taking turns Cannot wait for things Often calls out answers before the question is complete Frequently interrupts others

Bing IMAGE, (2013)

Impact ADHD has on Families

The challenges associated with raising a child with ADHD can also impact the family dynamics and parental stress levels. Parents may feel overwhelmed, frustrated, and exhausted by managing their child's symptoms, navigating school accommodations, and addressing behavioural challenges. Siblings of children with ADHD may also experience feelings of resentment, jealousy, or neglect due to the attention and resources devoted to their sibling with ADHD (ADHD KIDS, 2020). Parents of children with ADHD may experience feelings of guilt and self-blame, questioning their parenting abilities and wondering if they could have done something differently to prevent or mitigate their child's symptoms. These feelings can exacerbate stress and negatively impact parental well-being. The costs associated with diagnosing and treating ADHD can place financial strain on families, particularly if they require specialized services, therapy, or educational support. Additionally, parents may need to take time off work to attend appointments, advocate for their child's needs, or provide additional supervision and support, impacting household income. Families of children with ADHD may experience social isolation or withdrawal due to the challenges associated with their child's symptoms. They may avoid social gatherings or activities that could trigger or exacerbate their child's behaviour, leading to feelings of loneliness or alienation.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Support systems for children with ADHD play a crucial role in helping them manage their symptoms, succeed academically, build social skills, and thrive in various aspects of their lives. Here are some key support systems that can benefit children with ADHD: Family support is foundational for children with ADHD. Parents and caregivers can provide emotional support, encouragement, and structure at home. Establishing routines, setting clear expectations, and using positive reinforcement can help children with ADHD feel secure and supported within the family environment. Collaborating with educators and school staff is essential for creating a supportive learning environment for children with ADHD. This may involve developing individualized education plans (IEPs) or 504 plans that outline accommodations and strategies to address the child's specific needs in the classroom. Accommodations such as extended time for assignments, preferential seating, and breaks can help children with ADHD succeed academically. Support groups provide parents with ADHD children a forum to connect with other parents facing similar challenges, share experiences, and exchange tips and advice. Support groups may be led by professionals or facilitated by peers and can offer emotional support, validation, and practical guidance in a non-judgmental environment (Action for Children, 2024).

In conclusion, our academic poster has delved into the multifaceted impact of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) on children and families, exploring the challenges they face, the diagnostic process, and potential barriers to accessing support. Through our examination, several key themes have emerged, highlighting the urgent need for greater awareness, understanding, and support for individuals affected by ADHD.

References

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