

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Khush Bakht Shariq 2110107

ECEY6006/C

Introduction

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) affects people's behaviour by making them restless, causing impulsive behavior and having a short span of attention. People with ADHD have persistent patterns of inattention or hyperactivity that affect their daily life and find it hard to cope with stress, organization, and time management skills (ADHD UK, No Date). Furthermore, children with ADHD are at a high risk of anti-social behaviour as ADHD is a psychiatric disorder that seriously impacts the emotional, social, and academic lives (Parker, 2005; Scaccia, 2016).

Identification and Diagnosis

According to research conducted by Dey, Rao, and Shah (2012), ADHD is a behavioural disorder affecting around 3-5% of school-aged children. Currently, there is no significant biological method for diagnosis, and medical professionals mainly rely on behaviour analysis. Similarly, Dupaul, Stoner and Reid (2014) explained that there are multiple assessment methods, however, there is confusion among professionals regarding the proper evaluation and diagnosis of ADHD. ADHD is clearly linked with underperformance in school, and if not diagnosed and treated, it results in mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and poor social interaction. It is a neurodevelopmental disorder where symptoms usually appear before the age of seven and have three types. The first type is inattentiveness where the child finds it hard to follow the routine and structures. The second type is hyper-active impulse, when children fidget, talk more than usual, and find it hard to stay still for long durations. The third type is a combination of the first two types, where the child is attentive and hyper-active as well (Norvilitis, 2015). According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2022), ADHD is diagnosed by a mental health professional when there is a continuous pattern of inattention, impulsivity, disruptiveness, and hyperactivity that interferes with normal functioning and development of brain, resulting in lower quality of life and not explained by another mental disorder. Research conducted by Pievsky and McGrath (2017) suggests that ADHD affects the neurocognitive abilities of a person that includes working memory associated with motivation, reward, decision-making, and response time. Secondly, ADHD is diagnosed through psychological and neuropsychological assessment. Furthermore, research conducted by Blume et al. (2019) cited children with ADHD have delayed aversion, prior judgment, and deficient time management skills that result in anger and frustration. According to research conducted by Klein et al. (2014), children with a history of maltreatment, abuse, and neglect are at a higher risk of ADHD than the general population. A large number of children with a diverse childhood experiences significantly suffer from behavioral difficulties that may imitate or overlap with ADHD symptoms, anxiety issues, post traumatic disorder, speech and language difficulties, mental health issues, and increased risk of criminal activities. These children are diagnosed and reassessed in a multidisciplinary environment and often prescribed psychotropic medications to reduce impulsive and hyperactive behaviour. ACEs is commonly associated with the occurrence of ADHD, which results in criminal activities in young people. Many young offenders report symptoms of ADHD and ACEs. Therefore, early identification and intervention are essential to reduce the risk of ongoing criminal activities, as cited by Barra et al. (2020). Similarly, Crouch et al. (2021) explained the close relationship between a diverse childhood experiences and ADHD. Exposure to abuse and discrimination results in toxic stress associated with poor mental and physical health, resulting in dysfunctional and disruptive behaviour. Furthermore, studies show that many young offenders at the earlier stage of crime development suffer from ADHD and ACEs.

Barriers

According to Nasen (2020), early identification of SEN is essential to narrowing the gap between children with additional needs and those without them. However, there are major challenges, including a lack of staff training, children attending early years settings for a short duration or attending multiple settings, the time required to engage with parents and outside agencies, long waiting times to reach medical professionals, and funding constraints. Similarly, the process of identifying and supporting children with additional needs is a cycle of assessments, planning, teaching, and reassessment linked to the allocation of budget. A large population of children in mainstream schools who do not meet the set criteria are not diagnosed but still need the additional support cited by Smeets and Roeleveld (2016). Banks, Shevlin, and McCoy (2012) stated that teachers overidentify children with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) from inactive households, which leads to lower expectations in relation to attainment and engagement in school. Similarly, teachers from disadvantaged schools under-identify children with emotional and behavioural difficulties due to their socio-economic status, whereas they are the ones who need it most. Therefore, it is presumed that teacher identification of additional learning needs is influenced by socio-economic factors cited by Anders et al. (2011). According to research conducted by Greenway and Edwards (2021) explained teaching assistant (TA) are an important part of assessment, planning and observation cycle, however lack of TA training, time, resources, workload and insufficient acknowledgement of their knowledge, experience and skills have a major impact of children with ADHD. On the contrary, lack of understanding of ADHD results in discrimination, stigmatization and acts as a barrier to build positive relationships between children and practitioner. Furthermore, children with ADHD using their diagnosis to avoid learning leads to negative emotions for children with ADHD resulting in disciplinary action, peer rejection, risk of poor performance and exclusion from school results in more chances of receiving a special education service.

Strategies

Lego therapy is a professional motivational intervention for children with ADHD. It is used for a range of behavioural difficulties, including social and communication issues, and also provides children with an opportunity to practice sharing, turn-taking, and social interaction (Boylan, 2019). According to Evans and Bond (2021), Lego Based Therapy is a small group focused intervention individual to a child's needs, Furthermore it allows children to role play like parts supplier, builder, taking turns, and following the instruction to reach a shared goal. Lego therapy session run by a therapist conating a large variety of lego to support the developmental needs of children with additional needs. It have a positive impact on negotiation, tolerance, fine motor skills, emotional development and self esteem (Challenging Behaviour Support, No Date).

Conclusion

Every child has a right to an inclusive education devoid of any form of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010, the Children's Act 1989, the Children's Act 2004, the Children's Act 2006, the Rights of Children and Young People (Wales) Measure 2011, and the UNCR. According to Welsh Government guidance on Inclusion and Pupil support (2016), it is a duty of educational institutions to facilitate and accommodate the needs of children with additional learning needs. ADHD is a psychiatric disorder common in around 3%–6% of children in the UK. It affects the social and emotional skills of a child, causing impulsive and disruptive behaviours usually diagnosed by medical professionals. Various factors effects the early diagnosis of ADHD including lack of understanding, staff training and socio-economic status etc. Lego Based Therapy is an early intervention play based strategy to provide support and improve the social and emotional skills of children (Hammerness, 2009).

References

ADHD UK (No date) *About ADHD*. Available at : <https://adhduk.co.uk/about-adhd/> (Accessed: 16.05.2023).

Anders, et al. (2011). “*The Influence of Child, Family, Home Factors and Pre-school Education on the Identification of Special Educational Needs at Age 10.*” *British Educational Research Journal* 37: 421–441.

Boylan, G. E. (2019) *An Exploration of Interventions for Children with Attention Difficulties*. Available at: https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/188962886/FULL_TEXT.PDF (Accessed: 16.05.2023).

Blume. et al. (2019). *The interplay of delay aversion, timing skills, and impulsivity in children experiencing attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms. ADHD Atten Def Hyp Disord* **11**, 383–393 (2019). <https://doi-org.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/10.1007/s12402-019-00298-4> (Accessed:15.05.2023).

Barra, S. et al. (2022) ‘*ADHD symptom profiles, intermittent explosive disorder, adverse childhood experiences, and internalizing/externalizing problems in young offenders*’, *European archives of psychiatry and clinical neuroscience*, 272(2), pp. 257–269. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00406-020-01181-4> (Accessed:16.05.2023).

Barr, A. et al. (2022) ‘*A mixed methods evaluation of the acceptability of therapy using LEGO® bricks (LEGO® based therapy) in mainstream primary and secondary education*’, *Autism research*, 15(7), pp. 1237–1248. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1002/aur.2725> (Accessed:15.05.2023).

Banks, Joanne & Shevlin, Michael & McCoy, Selina. (2012). *Disproportionality in special education: Identifying children with emotional behavioural difficulties in Irish primary schools*. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. 27. 219-235. 10.1080/08856257.2012.669111 (Accessed: 18.05.2023).

Children's Act (2004) Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents> (Accessed: 18.05.2023).

Children's Act (2006) Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/20/contents> (Accessed: 18.05.2023).

Crouch, E. *et al.* (2021) 'Examining the Relationship Between Adverse Childhood Experiences and ADHD Diagnosis and Severity', *Academic pediatrics*, 21(8), pp. 1388–1394. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acap.2021.03.009> (Accessed: 18.05.2023).

Challenging Behaviour Support (2022) *Lego Based Therapy*. Available at: <https://challengingbehavioursupport.org.uk/programme/lego-based-therapy/> (Accessed: 6th January 2022).

Deuncey, M. (2016) *Additional Learning Needs (ALN) in Wales*. Available at: <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/27858/1/16-059-Web-%20English.pdf> (Accessed: 18.05.2023).

DuPaul, G.J., Stoner, G. and Reid, R. (2014) *ADHD in the schools: assessment and intervention strategies*. Third edition. New York, New York: The Guilford Press (Accessed: 18.05.2023).

Dey, S., Rao, A.R. and Shah, M. (2012) 'Exploiting the brain's network structure in identifying ADHD subjects'. *Frontiers in systems neuroscience*, 6, p.75. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnsys.2012.00075> (Accessed: 18.05.2023).

Evans, V. and Bond, C. (2021) 'The implementation of Lego®-Based Therapy in two English mainstream primary schools', *Journal of research in special educational needs*, 21(2), pp. 111–119. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1471-3802.12504> (Accessed: 18.05.2023).

Greenway, C. & Edwards, A. R. (2021). *Teaching assistants' facilitators and barriers to effective practice working with children with ADHD: a qualitative study*. *British Journal of Special Education*. 48. 10.1111/1467-8578.12377 (Accessed: 19.05.2023).

Smeets, E. & Roeleveld, J. (2016) *The identification by teachers of special educational needs in primary school pupils and factors associated with referral to special education*, *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 31:4, 423-439, DOI: [10.1080/08856257.2016.1187879](https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2016.1187879) (Accessed: 18.05.2023).

Hammerness, P.G. (2009) *ADHD*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press

Klein, B., G. Damiani-Taraba, A. Koster, J. Campbell, and C. Scholz, '*Diagnosing Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in Children Involved with Child Protection Services: Are Current Diagnostic Guidelines Acceptable for Vulnerable Populations?*', *Child: Care, Health & Development*, 41.2 (2015), 178–85 (Accessed: 19.05.2023)

NHS (2022) *Learning Disabilities*. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/learning-disabilities/> (Accessed: 12.05.2022)

Nasen (2020) *IDENTIFYING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN THE EARLY YEARS: PERSPECTIVES FROM SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS COORDINATORS*. Available at: <https://nasen-prod-asset.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/identifying-special-educational-needs-in-the-early-years.pdf> (Accessed: 15.05.2023)

NHS (2021) *Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)*. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/> (Accessed: 18/05.2023)

Scaccia, A. (2016) *How to Identify and Treat Antisocial Behavior in Children*. Available at: <https://www.healthline.com/health/parenting/antisocial-behavior-in-children> (16.05.2023)

Snap Cymru (No date) *What is ALN?* Available at: <https://www.snapcymru.org/get-support/what-is-aln/#:~:text=Additional%20Learning%20needs%2C%20often%20referred,children%20of%20the%20same%20age> (Accessed: 12.05.2023)

UK Government (1996) *The Education Act*. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents> (Accessed: 12.05.2023)

UNICEF (no date) *A Summary of The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Available at: https://www.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/UNCRC_summary-1_1.pdf (Accessed: 17.05.2023).

Rights of Children and Young Person (Wales) Measure 2011. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/2/contents> (Accessed: 19.05.2023)

Welsh Government (2021) *The Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021*. Available at: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-03/210326-the-additionallearning-needs-code-for-wales-2021.pdf> (Accessed: 11th January 2022)

Welsh Government (2021) *Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/additional-learning-needs-and-education-tribunal-walesact> (Accessed: 17.03.2022).

Welsh Government (2015) *Inclusion and pupil support*. Available at: https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-05/guidance-inclusion-and-pupilsupport_0.pdf (Accessed: 20.03.2023).

Welsh Government (2015) *Equality Act 2010*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance> (Accessed: 21.03.2023).

Welsh Government (2021) *Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/additional-learning-needs-and-education-tribunal-walesact> (Accessed: 17.03.2022).