

Abstract

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), one of the most prevalent childhood disorders today, is considered as a neurodevelopmental disorder, which causes significant distress and impairment in one's social, academic or occupational functioning. To be diagnosed with ADHD, one should be presented with at least 6 out of 9 inattentive symptoms and/or at least 6 out of 9 hyperactive/impulsive symptoms. Previous research have focused on the etiology, manifestation and impairment of ADHD. Only a handful of studies adopted a novel statistic approach, network analysis, in understanding the symptom profile of ADHD. Moving beyond classical categorical and dimensional approaches, conceptualizing the symptoms as a network of interacting features has the potential to reveal symptoms of clinical importance. The present study aimed to explore the symptom network structure in children and adolescents with ADHD and to compare the symptom network of different subgroups with respect to ADHD subtypes, school levels and genders. The results suggested that, among all 18 ADHD symptoms, "*fidgets with hands and feet*", "*driven by a motor*" and "*fails to give close attention or makes careless mistakes*" appeared more frequently and had more associations with other symptoms. Also, the symptom network and symptom's centrality varied considerably across gender and age groups, which implied that certain symptoms might carry particular clinical and/or neurobiological significance.