

THE FREQUENCY AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS OF DEPRESSION COMORBIDITY IN ADULTS WITH ADHD

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BACKGROUND AND AIM: ADHD, a prevalent childhood neurodevelopmental disorder, is marked by inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity. Adults with ADHD often face higher rates of psychiatric comorbidities, with depression affecting up to 50%. This co-occurrence significantly reduces quality of life and complicates treatment. Understanding ADHD-depression comorbidity is vital for effective clinical management. This study examines the frequency and factors associated with depression in adults with ADHD.

METHODS: The study included 358 individuals diagnosed with ADHD at Selçuk University's Adult Neurodevelopmental Disorders Clinic. Sociodemographic and clinical data were collected, and diagnoses were confirmed through the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-5. Participants completed the Adult ADHD Rating Scale, Wender Utah Rating Scale, Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale, Mind Excessively Wandering Scale, and Suicidal Ideation Scale. Ethical approval was obtained from Selçuk University's Local Ethics Committee.(2025/83)

RESULTS: The mean age of participants was 23.78 years, with 51.1% (n=183) being female, and an average education level

of 14.68 years. Depression comorbidity was present in 28.5% (n=102) of adults with ADHD, with a higher prevalence among females (55.9%, n=57) than males (44.1%, n=45). ADHD patients with depression comorbidity showed significant associations with smoking ($\chi^2=4.8$, $p<0.05$), additional psychiatric comorbidities ($\chi^2=65.7$, $p<0.001$), and suicide attempts ($\chi^2=19.7$, $p<0.001$). No significant relationships were found with alcohol use, substance use, or other medical conditions. Additionally, no differences were observed in self-report scales or other scale evaluations between those with and without depression comorbidity.

CONCLUSIONS: This study highlights the prevalence of depression comorbidity in individuals with ADHD, particularly among women, aligning with existing literature. Depression comorbidity is linked to psychiatric disorders, smoking, and suicide attempts, suggesting that emotional regulation difficulties and impulsivity may foster maladaptive coping strategies. The cross-sectional design limits causal inferences, necessitating future longitudinal studies.

Keywords: ADHD, depression, comorbidity