




Letter to the Editor | Editöre Mektup

EVALUATION OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS ADMITTED TO AN ADULT PSYCHIATRY OUTPATIENT CLINIC

BİR ERİŞKİN PSİKİYATRİ POLİKLİNİĞİNE BAŞVURMUŞ OLAN ÇOCUK VE ERGENLERİN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ

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ABSTRACT

Psychiatric disorders in childhood and adolescence are gradually increasing and more diagnosed. However, there are not enough physicians to treat psychiatric disorders in this age group. Especially in rural areas, this task falls on adult psychiatrists. In this study, we aimed to evaluate the cases admitted to the district state hospital for a period of one year.

Keywords: Child and adolescent psychiatry, adolescent, outpatients, retrospective study, forensic case

ÖZ

Çocukluk ve ergen dönemindeki psikiyatrik bozukluklar giderek artmakta ve daha fazla tanı konulmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, bu yaş grubundaki psikiyatrik bozuklukların tedavisi için yeterli sayıda hekim bulunmamaktadır. Özellikle kırsal kesimlerde bu görev erişkin psikiyatri hekimlerine düşmektedir. Biz bu çalışmada, ilçe devlet hastanesine bir yıllık sürede başvurmuş olan olguların değerlendirilmesini amaçladık.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çocuk ve ergen psikiyatrisi, ergen, ayaktan hastalar, retrospektif çalışma, adli olgu



Dear Editor,

The number of diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), substance use disorder (SUD) and major depressive disorder (MDD) reported in childhood and adolescence is gradually increasing.¹⁻³ However, compared to other childhood diseases, child and adolescent mental disorders do not attract enough attention from health systems. Access to child and adolescent psychiatrists is still difficult, except for provincial and large district centers. In places where child and adolescent psychiatrists are not available, adult psychiatrists can intervene in psychiatric disorders in this age group.¹ Our aim in this study is to examine the sociodemographic and clinical characteristics of the cases who admitted to the adult psychiatry outpatient clinic of a district state hospital.

This was retrospective, cross-sectional and descriptive study. All cases under the age of 18 who admitted to the adult psychiatry outpatient clinic of the Kahta State Hospital between June 1, 2019 and June 1, 2020 were included in the study. Sociodemographic and clinical data of the cases were accessed through the patient registry system. All psychiatric diagnoses were according to the fifth edition of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5).⁴ Approval was obtained from the Adiyaman University Non-Interventional Ethics Committee for this study (Decision Date: 20/10/2020, Decision Number: 2020/9-30). In statistical analysis, descriptive data and continuous variables were given as mean±standard deviation, and categorical variables as frequency and percentage. Chi-square test was used in comparison of independent variables in categorical data and independent sample t test was used for numerical data. Statistical significance level was accepted as $p < 0.05$. Seventy-three cases admitted to the adult psychiatry outpatient clinic on the specified dates. Twenty-one (28.76%) of the cases were female and 52 (71.14%) were male. While the mean age was 15.47 ± 1.74 years in females, it was 14.96 ± 1.65 years in males ($p = 0.241$). The mean age in total was 15.10 ± 1.68 years. The median age was 15 years; the minimum age was 12 years; the maximum age was 17 years. Health insurance of 42 cases were “Yeşil Kart”; of 21 cases were “Sosyal Sigortalar Kurumu-SSK”; of 5 cases were “Bagkur”; and 5 cases had paid entrance. In terms of diagnosis; There were 13 cases with mental retardation, 6 cases with MDD, 5 cases with psychotic disorder, 3 cases with bipolar disorder, 8 cases with ADHD, 6 cases with generalized anxiety disorder, 3 cases with stuttering, 8 cases with ASD, 6 cases with SUD. The diagnosis of 15 cases was general psychiatric examination (GPE). ASD, SUD, MDD, and GPE diagnoses were significantly higher in males ($p < 0.05$). In 18 cases (2 females, 16 males) the reason for admission was forensic. In 14 of these forensic cases, the reason was “realizing and distinguishing”, the reason was “guardianship” in 3 cases and was article 32 of the Turkish Penal Code one of them. Forensic admission was higher in males than females ($p = 0.004$). Thirty-nine cases had a history of

psychotropic drug use. There was no significant difference between males and females in terms of health insurance ($p = 0.340$) and the history of psychotropic drug use ($p = 0.250$).

The absence of a child and adolescent psychiatrist in the hospital and the proximity of the hospital where child and adolescent psychiatrists are located to our district hospital affects the profile of the cases in this age group. Psychiatric cases with agitation and forensic cases are more frequently admitted to the adult psychiatry outpatient clinic of the hospital in the child and adolescent age group. Examination of child and adolescent psychiatry cases under the age of 18 is not routinely performed in the hospital where the study was conducted, except for emergency and forensic cases. In this sense, based on these data, it is not appropriate to comment on the child and adolescent psychiatry patient profile in the hospital or district. This study shows that male gender was the majority, the number of forensic cases constituted one fourth of all admissions, the most common reason for forensic admission was “realizing and distinguishing”, and the most common psychiatric diagnosis was mental retardation. Comparison of the data of this study with the data of similar studies to be conducted in the future will provide a better clarification on the current topic. Further prospective studies may provide more detailed consideration of the variables.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Approval was obtained from the Adiyaman University Non-Interventional Ethics Committee (Decision Date: 20/10/2020, Decision Number: 2020/9-30).

Conflict of Interest

None

Author Contribution

MHO: Concept, design, data collection and processing, literature review, analysis and interpretation, writing the study.

Financial Disclosure

None

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