

Explore the Parent's Acceptance and Follow-Up Care among Attention – Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Children in a Tertiary Care Centre, Chennai

**Christina Anthonysamy¹, Venkatesh Mathan Kumar Vasudevan²,
Shankar Shanmugam Rajendran³, Anbalagan Marudhan⁴, Jeyalakshmi
Lakshmanan⁵, Gomathi Sivaprakash⁶, Elilarasi Mani⁷**

^{1, 6, 7}Post Graduate, ²Professor, ³Principal, ⁴Assistant Professor, ⁵Nursing Tutor

^{1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7}College of Nursing, Madras Medical College, Chennai-03 (Affiliated to the Tamil Nadu Dr. MGR Medical University, Chennai)

²Department of Mental Health, Institute of Mental Health, Kilpauk, Chennai - 10

Corresponding Author: Shankar Shanmugam Rajendran

Abstract

Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a common neurodevelopmental disorder typically diagnosed in childhood. Characterized by symptoms of inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity, ADHD can significantly impact a child's academic performance, social interactions, and overall quality of life. .

Objective: To explore the parents' acceptance and follow-up care among attention deficit hyperactivity disorder children.

Materials and Methods: In the present study, the researcher adopted a phenomenological qualitative research design with 5 samples using a non-probability purposive sampling technique. The tools include Socio-Demographic Data for parents and children, and a semi-structured interview schedule.

Results: The qualitative findings reveal five key themes: 1) **Initial Awareness of ADHD**, 2) **The Journey to Diagnosis** 3) **Acceptance and Understanding** 4) **Treatment and Support** 5) **Long-term Impact on Family Dynamics**.

Keywords: Parental acceptance, Follow-up care, Attention deficit hyperactive disorder children.

Introduction:

Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a complex neurodevelopmental disorder that significantly affects children, not only impacting their academic and social functioning but also placing considerable emotional and psychological demands on their families, particularly their parents. Parental acceptance of an ADHD diagnosis is a critical factor in determining the effectiveness of treatment and long-term care. Parental acceptance of an ADHD diagnosis is not only a personal journey but also one that is shaped by societal influences, access to resources, and the quality of healthcare support.

Acceptance is the foundation for effective follow-up care, which is essential for managing the complexities of ADHD in children. By addressing the barriers to acceptance and improving parental education on the importance of sustained care, healthcare providers can help ensure that children with ADHD receive the comprehensive support they need to succeed in both their academic and social lives.

Background of the study:

According to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), & MedAlertHelp, current global statistics on ADHD for 2024 indicate that about 5% of children and 2.5% of adults are diagnosed with the disorder. In India, the prevalence of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is estimated to be between 5% to 10% among children, according to a study published by the Indian Journal of Paediatrics in 2022. In Tamil Nadu, the prevalence of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) among children is estimated to be around 8.5%, according to a study published in 2022 by the Department of Paediatrics at Madras Medical College. In India, the prevalence of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is estimated to be between 5% to 10% among children, according to a study published by the Indian Journal of Paediatrics in 2022.

Need for the study:

The need for this study on attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) among children is underscored by the increasing prevalence and recognition of ADHD as a significant mental health concern worldwide. This study aims to fill the gaps in existing literature, providing valuable insights that can inform healthcare policies and improve the quality of care for children with ADHD. Research indicates that early intervention can lead to better outcomes for children with ADHD, making it imperative to understand the experiences of parents as they navigate diagnosis and treatment. Moreover, exploring the emotional and psychological aspects of ADHD can lead to a more comprehensive approach to care that not only addresses the child's needs but also supports families in their journey. By focusing on the Indian scenario, this study aims to contribute to a growing body of knowledge that can enhance awareness, reduce stigma, and ultimately improve the support systems available for children with ADHD and their families.

Statement Of The Problem

“Explore the Parents acceptance and Follow-up Care among Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder children in a Tertiary care Centre in Chennai”.

Objectives:

To explore Parents acceptance and Follow-up Care among Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder children in a Tertiary care Centre in Chennai.

Assumption

This study assumes that the emotional experiences of parents with children diagnosed with ADHD significantly impact their acceptance of the diagnosis and their participation in follow-up care.

Research Question

How do parents perceive and accept the diagnosis of ADHD in their children, and what are the factors influencing their follow-up care?

Delimitation:

1) Limited to mothers of ADHD children only. 2) The study period is limited to 4 weeks. 3) Limited size sample.

Research Methodology**Research Approach:**

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative research approach.

Research Design:

The phenomenological design was used to explore the Parent's acceptance and Follow-up Care among Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder children in a Tertiary care Centre in Chennai.

Setting of the study:

The study was conducted among parents of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder children in a Tertiary care Centre in Chennai at the Institute of Child Health, Egmore in Chennai.

Duration of the study:

The study was conducted for 4 weeks.

Study Population:**Target Population:**

Parents of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder children at selected pediatric tertiary care centre in Chennai.

Accessible Population:

Parents of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder children at selected pediatric tertiary care Centre in Chennai meeting the inclusion criteria and are also available at the time of the study.

Sample:

The sample for the study was Parents of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder children at selected pediatric tertiary care centre in Chennai.

Sample Size:

In this study sample size consists of 5 Parents of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder children at selected pediatric tertiary care centre in Chennai.

Sampling Technique:

Non-probability Purposive sampling technique.

CRITERIA FOR SAMPLE SELECTION:**Inclusion criteria:**

1)Parents of Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder children. 2)Parents who speak and understand Tamil and English language. 3)Parents who were willing to participate. 4)Parents who were cooperative with the study.

Exclusion criteria:

1)Parents of children with other disorders. 2)Parents of children with physical disability 3)Parents who are participants in other studies.

Data collection instruments:**Demographic variables:**

PARENTS: Age, Education, Occupation, Educational , Monthly Family Income, Religion, Residential Place Of The Parents, Type Of Family, And Type Of Marriage.

CHILDREN: Age, Sex , Birth Order, Number Of Children in the Family, And The Length Of Time Since The Child Received Their Diagnosis.

Development and Description Of Tool**Section -A**

Questionnaires consist of demographic variables of Parents and children.

Qualitative Method-Section-B

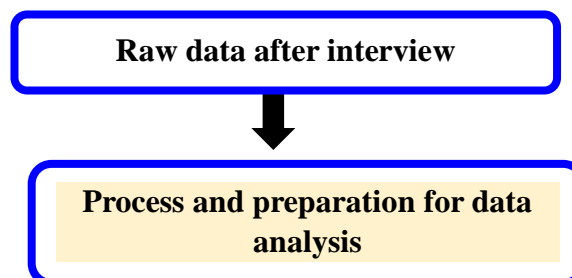
1)One-to-one interview schedule2)Audio recording for 10-20 minutes

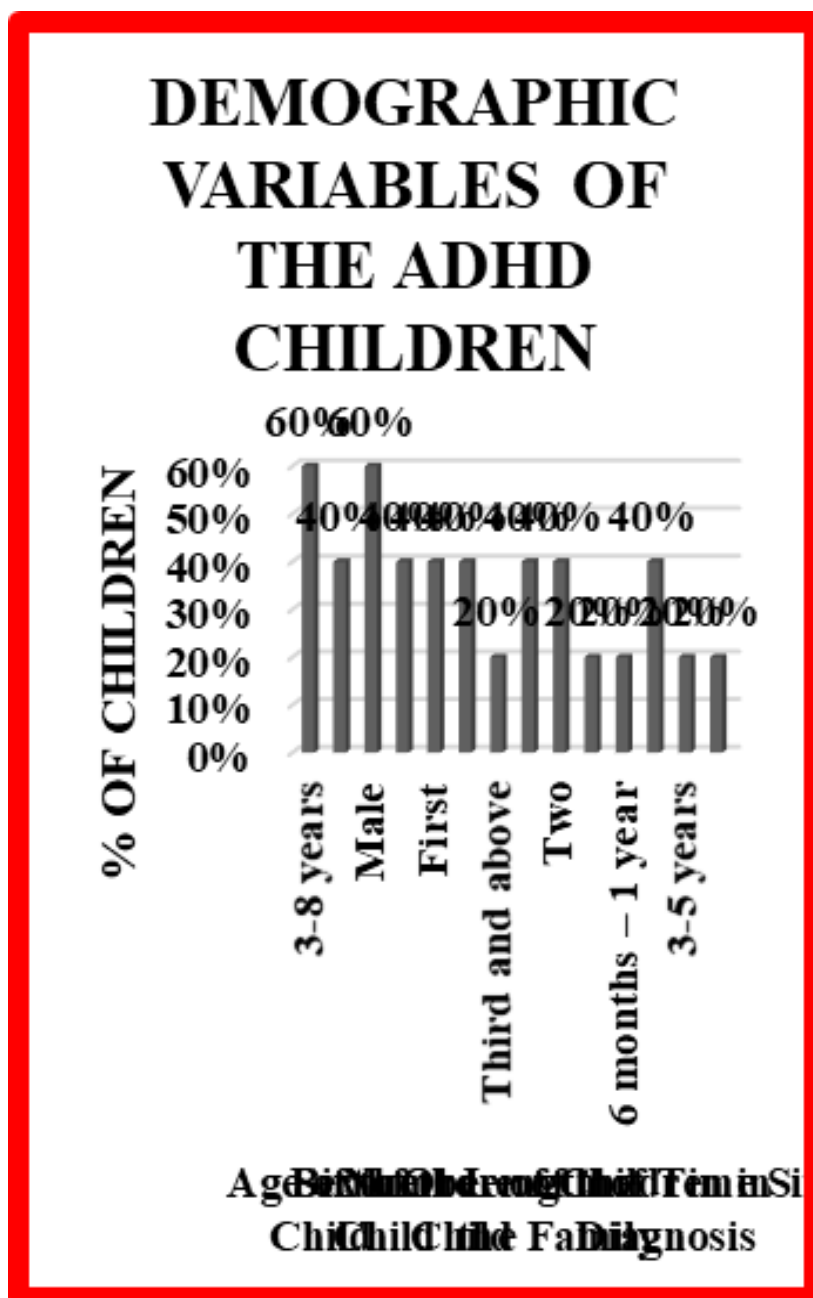
Reliability and Validity Of the Tool:

The validity of the tool was assessed using content validity. Content validity was determined by experts from Nursing and paediatricians. .The reliability of the tool was assessed by using the inter-rater reliability method.

Ethical Consideration

The study was carried out after obtaining an ethical clearance from the ethical committee and the Director of the Institute of Child Health.

Thematic Content Analysis Presentation



ANALYSIS AND RESULTS:**1, Theme - Initial Awareness of ADHD****Subtheme - Early Behavioural Signs**

Parents noticed unusual behaviours in their children that hinted at potential ADHD, prompting concern and confusion.

- *“When my child was just 3, I noticed he would get overly excited and couldn’t sit still.”*
- *“Her tantrums were different; they were intense and lasted longer than other kids’.”*

Subtheme - Emotional Reactions

Parents expressed a mix of emotions upon realizing their children’s behaviour might indicate ADHD, often feeling anxious and worried.

- *“I felt my heart drop when the doctor mentioned ADHD; it was like a cloud came over me.”*
- *“At first, I felt a sense of disbelief. How could this be happening?”*
- *“I was terrified thinking about how this would affect her future.”*

Subtheme - Seeking Answers

In search of clarity, parents began gathering information and advice from various sources, including doctors and support groups.

- *“I started Googling every symptom, trying to make sense of it all.”*
- *“I joined a parent support group online to share experiences and gather information.”*

2) Theme - The Journey to Diagnosis**Subtheme - Navigating the Healthcare System**

Parents expressed frustration and confusion while seeking an official diagnosis for their children, often feeling overwhelmed by the system.

- *“Getting an appointment felt like an impossible task; I had to wait months.”*
- *“I felt lost in a maze of referrals and paperwork; it was exhausting.”*

Subtheme - Advocacy and Support

Many parents learned to advocate for their children’s needs, often pushing for assessments and treatment plans.

- *“I became determined to speak up; my child needed me to fight for him.”*
- *“I learned to ask the right questions during appointments; it was empowering.”*

Subtheme - The Impact of the Diagnosis

Receiving the diagnosis was a pivotal moment, leading to mixed feelings of relief and new challenges for parents.

- *“I was relieved to have a name for the struggles, but it also felt heavy.”*
- *“Hearing ‘ADHD’ felt like a label, and I wasn’t sure how to process it.”*

3) Theme Acceptance and Understanding**Subtheme - Overcoming Denial**

Parents described their initial resistance to accepting the diagnosis, often holding onto hope that their child would outgrow the symptoms.

- *“I kept telling myself it was just a phase; he’d get better with time.”*
- *“At first, I didn’t want to accept it; I thought, ‘This can’t be my child.’”*

Subtheme - Education and Awareness

Many parents engaged in learning about ADHD to better understand their child's experiences, which aided in their acceptance.

- *“I read books and articles; knowledge helped me feel more at ease.”* - Participant 2
- *“Joining workshops made a huge difference; I started seeing my child differently.”*

Subtheme - Emotional Healing

As parents accepted the diagnosis, they began to experience emotional healing, leading to a more positive outlook.

- *“Once I accepted it, I felt a weight lift off my shoulders.”*
- *“Acceptance brought me peace; I felt more connected to my child.”*

4)Theme - Treatment and Support

Subtheme - Exploring Treatment Options

Parents researched various treatment options for their children, weighing the pros and cons of each.

- *“We tried medication, but I was nervous about the side effects.”*
- *“I looked into therapy options and found it comforting to have that support.”*

Subtheme - Collaboration with Educators

Many parents highlighted the importance of working with teachers and school staff to support their child's educational needs.

- *“Collaborating with his teacher was key; they helped tailor a plan for him.”*
- *“I felt grateful when the school acknowledged my child’s needs.”*

Subtheme - Support Networks

Parents found solace in connecting with other families dealing with ADHD, fostering a sense of community.

- *“Finding a local support group changed everything; I felt understood.”*
- *“Sharing experiences with other parents was comforting; we learned from each other.”*

5)Theme - Long-term Impact on Family Dynamics

Subtheme - Strengthening Family Bonds

While ADHD presented challenges, many families reported that navigating these difficulties ultimately strengthened their bonds.

- *“We learned to communicate better as a family; it brought us closer together.”*
- *“Going through this has shown us how resilient we are as a family.”*

Subtheme - Managing Stress and Conflict

Parents expressed how ADHD created stress and tension within the family, often leading to conflicts.

- *“There were days when I felt overwhelmed, and it strained our relationships.”*
- *“I worried about how my child’s behaviour affected our family’s harmony.”*

Subtheme - Celebrating Progress

Despite the challenges, parents found joy in their children's progress, celebrating milestones together.

- *“Every small victory felt like a huge win for our family.”*
- *“I was so proud when my child completed a school project.”*

Discussion

The initial awareness of ADHD, marked by early behavioural signs and emotional reactions, reflects findings from Mesfin and Habtamu (2024). The journey to diagnosis, involving healthcare navigation and communication barriers, relates to Wong and Wong's (2021) insights on parental uncertainty. Acceptance and understanding resonate with Ching’oma et al. (2022), emphasizing the need for support networks amid stigma. Treatment and support, highlighted in Gavin et al. (2023), stress the importance of home-school collaboration. Lastly, the long-term impact on family dynamics parallel’s themes of family stress and economic challenges found in these studies.

Limitations

1)Limited sample size of 5 participants.2)Geographic scope restricts generalizability.3)Qualitative design lacks statistical rigor.4)Potential interviewer bias in responses.5)Time constraints may miss long-term experiences.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights the challenges faced by parents, particularly mothers, in accepting and managing ADHD in their children. Through qualitative analysis, key themes emerged regarding the emotional and psychological impact of ADHD on families, as well as the necessity for effective support systems. Despite the limitations of the small sample size and geographic constraints, valuable insights were gained regarding parental perceptions and coping strategies.

References

1. Danielson ML, Bitsko RH, Ghandour RM, et al. The National Prevalence of Diagnosed Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder among U.S. Children and Adolescents,2022. *Pediatrics*. 2024
2. Ayano G, Melaku TE, Gashaw AB, et al. The global prevalence of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in children and adolescents: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Neurosci Biobehav Rev*. 2023
3. Banaschewski T, et al. ADHD as a social construct: Consequences for diagnosis and treatment. *Eur Psychiatry*. 2023.
4. Salari N, Naderi F, Zare M, et al. The global prevalence of ADHD in children and adolescents: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMC Psychiatry*. 2023
5. Wardat MI, et al. Prevalence of Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in Children, Adolescents, and Adults in the Middle East and North Africa Region: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMC Psychiatry*. 2023.

6. Cénat JM, et al. Prevalence of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder among Black, Latino, and Asian youth compared to White youth: A meta-analysis. *J Psychiatr Res.* 2022.
7. Chung S, Choi Y, Kim Y, et al. Engagement and outcomes of behavioral treatment for ADHD inattentive type among Asian American families. *J Abnorm Child Psychol.* 2024.
8. Houmann T, et al. Early treatment responses and long-term outcomes in children with ADHD: A 3-year follow-up study. *Child Adolesc Psychiatry Ment Health.* 2024.
9. Xirui M, et al. Parental knowledge and attitudes regarding ADHD and its impact on medical visit status for school-aged children in Shanghai. *BMC Psychol.* 2024
10. Sarıkaya Erdil S, et al. Parental stress among parents of children diagnosed with ADHD: A comparative study. *Child Care Health Dev.* 2023.
11. Mesfin W, Habtamu K. Challenges and coping mechanisms of parents of children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: A qualitative study. *Psychol.* 2024.
12. Gavin H, et al. Parents' perspectives and experiences regarding homework challenges linked to ADHD: A qualitative study. *Child Care Health* 2023
13. Ching'oma A, et al. Experiences and challenges of parents caring for children with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder: A qualitative study in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. *BMC Public Health.* 2022.
14. Wong H, Wong S. Burden and coping strategies of parents of children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder in Hong Kong: A qualitative study. *BMC Psychiatry.* 2021
15. Akinola OI, et al. Parental knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in Nigerian population. *Southeast Asian J Trop Med Public Health.* 2022.
16. Ali A, et al. Impact of parental awareness and knowledge on the management of ADHD among children: A survey from Qatar. *Qatar Med J.* 2023.
17. Hoare P, et al. Parents' views on the management of their child's ADHD: A qualitative study. *Child Care Health Dev.* 2021
18. Haller A, et al. The influence of parental attitudes on parenting stress in families with children diagnosed with ADHD. *Child Psychiatry Hum Dev.* 2023.
19. Lee M, et al. The role of parental beliefs and knowledge in children's ADHD diagnosis and treatment adherence: A systematic review. *J Atten Disord.* 2023
21. Pérez-Pereira M, et al. Parental stress and strategies in families with children diagnosed with ADHD: The importance of the family environment. *J Family Psychology.* 2022.
22. Smith AB, et al. The impact of parental involvement in managing childhood ADHD: A qualitative study. *Psychol Health Med.* 2021
23. Zhang Y, et al. Parental strategies for supporting children with ADHD: A mixed-methods study in urban China. *BMC Pediatr.* 2023.