ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVES: This study investigates impairments and properties of risky behaviors among adults diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) from Europe (UK, Sweden, Australia, and Denmark), Japan, and the US.

METHODS: Data are from a web-based survey conducted by Kantar Health among adults who self-report having been diagnosed with ADHD. Data were gathered during October December 2012. Participants were asked questions related to social, family, educational, and work-related impairments and risky personal behaviors previously shown to be common among adults with ADHD. Chi-square tests of categorical variables were used to test for significant differences between non-US and US participants.

RESULTS: A total of 326 European, 108 Australian, 84 Japanese, and 100 US survey respondents reported having received a diagnosis of ADHD from a healthcare professional. Over 92% of respondents in each region agreed that ADHD had a negative impact on their career success. From 23 to 47% of respondents across regions reported a supervision or being expelled some time during school. Approximately one third of respondents reported having had job-related accidents or injuries requiring medical attention during this period (E:35%, A:32%, J:30%, and US:20%; p<0.05 for each region vs. US). Approximately one half of study participants from Europe (47%), Australia (55%) and the US (44%) reported illegal drug use at some time in the past, with around 10-20% reporting citations for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs (E:13%, A:18%, J:16%, and US:9%) and one tenth serving time in prison (E:12%, A:9%, J:21%, and US:11%). Concern about exposure to a sexually transmitted disease was reported by 30-40% of participants (E:39%, A:40%, J:39%, and US:30%).

CONCLUSIONS: ADHD adults from Europe, Australia, Japan, and the US report various impairments and risky behaviors possibly related to their condition.

BACKGROUND

• Children with ADHD often continue to have symptoms, particularly those associated with inattention, into adulthood.1

• A multi-country study estimated the prevalence of ADHD among employed adults aged 18-44 to vary between 1.7%, with a mean of 3.4%.2

• Adults with ADHD frequently present with: a high prevalence of other mental disorders, —impairment in school, workplace, and social environments, —“nfly-self-destructive" behaviors contributing to further medical problems, or a high number of accidents and/or injuries, and —high rates of healthcare resource utilization.

• Many mental healthcare professionals may not be fully aware of the impact and consequences of ADHD among the adult population in their countries.3

• Due to the longer history of diagnosis and treatment of ADHD in adults in the US, characteristics of adults with ADHD in the US are a useful comparison group for characterizing ADHD in adults in other parts of the world.4

OBJECTIVES

• This cross-sectional survey compares impairments and properties of risky behaviors among adults diagnosed with ADHD in Europe, Australia, Japan, and the US.

METHODS

Study Design and Data Source

• This study is based on the analysis of survey data collected in the Europe (UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Denmark), Australia, Japan, and the US.

• Participants were asked to indicate which from a list of health conditions they had experienced within the past 12 months. Those indicating they had experienced ADHD were then asked to indicate whether or not they had received a diagnosis for the condition from a physician. Those answering in the affirmative comprised the Adult ADHD cohort analyzed in this study.

RESULTS

Table 1. Sociodemographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
<td>35.8 (10.9)**</td>
<td>32.7 (10.9)*</td>
<td>37.1 (12.2)*</td>
<td>40.7 (12.5)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>51%*</td>
<td>53%*</td>
<td>68%*</td>
<td>33%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married/living with partner</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College or higher education %</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>23%*</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Income ≤ 20,000 euros %</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>18%*</td>
<td>11%*</td>
<td>33%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed %</td>
<td>49%*</td>
<td>57%*</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significantly different from US, p<0.05

Table 2. Risky Behaviors and Illegal Acts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per cent who have ever used illegal drugs</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>15%*</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent who have served time in prison</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significantly different from US, p<0.05

Figure 3. ADHD’s Impact on Relationships (% reporting negative impact)

• Differences in ADHD’s impact on health, achievement, and self-esteem among adults with ADHD.

• Differences in ADHD’s impact on employment, education, and relationships among adults with ADHD.

CONCLUSIONS

• Adults from Europe, Australia, Japan, and the US with self-reported diagnoses of ADHD reported numerous functional impairments and a high likelihood of risky behavior.

• In this survey, adults with ADHD from Europe, Australia, and Japan more frequently reported having been in accidents and that their disorder had negatively impacted their work performance, relationships with others, and their overall physical health compared with US ADHD respondents.

• The profile of functional impairment and risk taking behaviors associated with ADHD reported by respondents in this survey was consistent with the published literature.

References

