Identification of Markers Differentiating Anxiety from ADHD in a School-Aged Population

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The purpose of this research was to identify a differential diagnosis method between Anxiety disorder and ADHD, leading cause of behavioral issues in school-aged children. They have symptoms that overlap between these disorders, but there are different root causes. Multivariate Analyses of Variance (MANOVAs) and a discriminant analysis were conducted on the scores from the tests of children diagnosed with Anxiety disorder and ADHD and their relatives. The previously collected data-set from the following Neuropsychological tests were used in this research: Child Behavior Checklist (Achenbach), Conners' Rating Scales (Conner's), Conner's Continuous Performance Test (CPT-II), Personality Inventory for Children (PIC-2), Weschler Intelligences Scales for Children (WISC-IV), and Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning (WRAML-2). The results from the MANOVAs show that the Achenbach, Conners', and CPT-II tests are significant in differentiating between Anxiety disorder and ADHD. The results of Univariate Analyses of Variance (ANOVAs) on the Achenbach, Conners', and CPT-II tests show that neuropsychological markers based on school competence, social relationships, emotional overindulgence, sustained attention, and core characteristics, allow differentiation of Anxiety disorder and ADHD. The discriminant analysis of personality-based neuropsychological markers through the discriminant function X=-.732 (Conners' Parent Anxiety T-score) + .658 (Conners' Parent Impulsive Hyperactive T-score)+.530 (Conners' Teacher Emotional Overindulgent T-score) with centroids of .248 for ADHD and –1.097 for Anxiety, can be applied by neuropsychologists during diagnosis to help differentiate between Anxiety disorder and ADHD.

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