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COMPARISON OF THEORY OF MIND AND ALEXITHYMIA IN ADULT ATTENTION DEFICIT AND HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER AND OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER

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ABSTRACT

Aim: The overarching aim of this study is to better understand the theory of mind and alexithymia in adult ADHD and OCD patients. **Method:** In this study a sample of thirty patients with OCD, thirty patients with adult ADHD and thirty controls were recruited. Inclusion criteria were age between eighteen and fifty and a score above thirteen on the Yale-Brown obsessive-compulsive scale (Y-BOCS) for patients with OCD. Exclusion criteria included past or current diagnosis of substance abuse and psychotic disorders. All participants were assessed with the Reading the mind in the eye task (RMET), Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20), and Yale-Brown Obsessive-Compulsive Scale (YBOCS). **Result:** Healthy group in comparison with the OCD and ADHD groups, showed significantly higher scores in theory of mind. There were no significant differences between two clinical groups. In comparison to ADHD and OCD group, the healthy group showed significantly lower scores in alexithymia. Furthermore, alexithymia scores were lower in the OCD group compared to the ADHD group. **Discussion:** Adults with ADHD showed higher levels of alexithymia than those with OCD, potentially affecting emotional regulation and social functioning. Both groups also had reduced theory of mind abilities compared to controls, likely due to underlying executive and emotional processing deficits. **Conclusion:** Alexithymia is more common in OCD and ADHD due to shared brain mechanisms affecting emotional awareness and theory of mind.

Keywords: Theory of mind, Alexithymia, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, Adult Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder.