

Abstract

Background: The literature suggested that caregiver stress is high in families having children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and it affects patient-caregiver interaction, posing difficulties in clinical management of this common child and adolescent psychiatric disorder. However, very few local studies have been conducted, and we lacked well-validated culturally-appropriate instrument to measure this phenomenon.

Objectives: To validate the Chinese version of the Disruptive Behavior Stress Inventory (DBSI) and examine the local prevalence and profile of caregiver stress in families having children with ADHD

Method: The Chinese version of the DBSI was developed. Ninety-six patients with ADHD and their caregivers were recruited from a child psychiatric out-patient clinic. The C-DBSI and the Parenting Stress Index/ Short-form (PSI/SF) were administered for measuring the construct of caregiver stress. The Alabama Parenting Questionnaire (APQ) and the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) - Parent version for measuring parenting style and severity of ADHD symptoms were administered. The validity and reliability of DBSI were examined stringently, and prevalence of caregiver stress was estimated by the PSI/SF.

Results: Content and face validity of C-DBSI satisfied the expert panel. Concurrent validity was significant, with a moderate correlation strength between the Stress Experience ($r_s = .59$, $p < .01$) and the Stress Degree scales ($r_s = .58$, $p < .01$) of the C-DBSI and the PSI/SF.

Construct validity was significant, with a moderate-high correlation strength between the Stress Experience ($r_s = .66, p < .01$) and the Stress Degree scales ($r_s = .71, p < .01$) of the C-DBSI and the CBCL. The C-DBSI had high internal consistency for the Stress Experience ($r_s = .95, p < .01$) and the Stress Degree scores ($r_s = .97, p < .01$), and had a satisfactory test-retest reliability. In this study, the group with more severe ADHD symptoms was associated with higher caregiver stress.

Conclusion: The C-DBSI is a reliable and valid instrument to measure caregiver stress in ADHD in local clinical setting. However, future study is recommended to further examine the sensitivity and specificity of the C-DBSI, using a larger sample. In this study, caregiver stress is significantly and positively correlated with severity of ADHD symptoms. Future longitudinal study is recommended to investigate the effects of treatment and reduction of ADHD symptoms on the level of caregiver stress.

Key words: Caregiver stress, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Hong Kong