

VIII. Prevalence of Psychopathology in Intellectually- Intact Adults with Autism

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Psychiatric Comorbidity and Functioning in a Clinically Referred Population of Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Comparative Study

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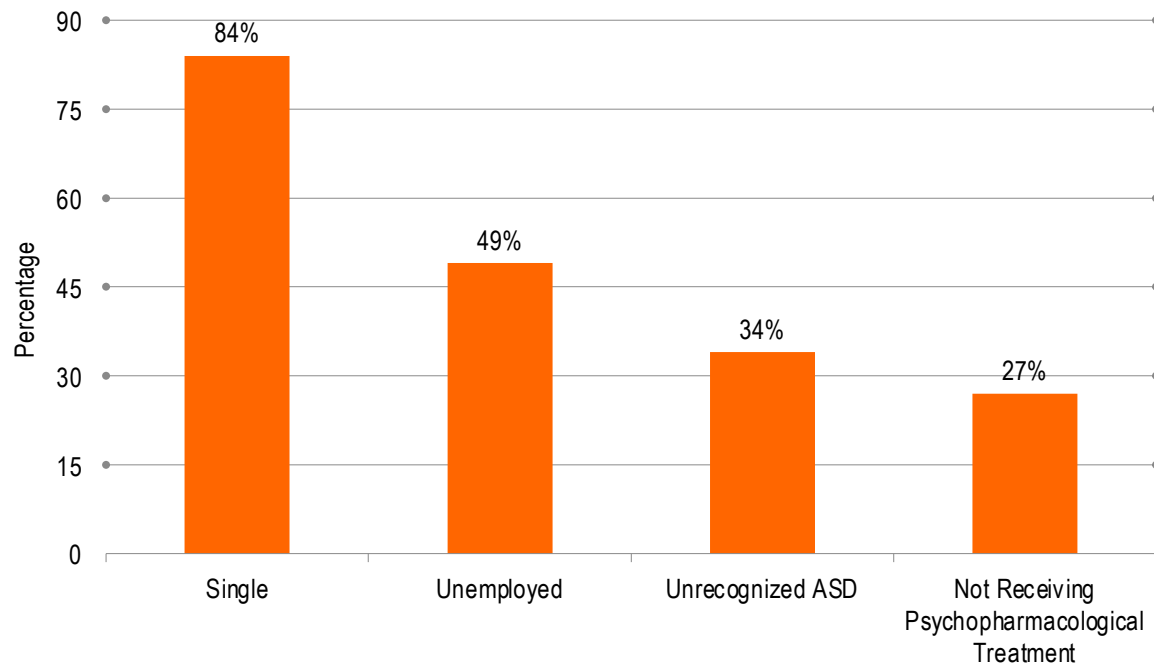
Abstract To systematically examine the patterns of psychiatric comorbidity and functioning in clinically referred adults with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Psychiatrically referred adults with and without ASD were compared on measures assessing for psychiatric comorbidity and psychosocial functioning. Sixty-three adults with ASD participated in the study (mean age: 29 ± 11 years). Adults with ASD in their lifetime suffered from a higher burden of psychiatric disorders (6 ± 3.4 vs. 3.5 ± 2.7 ; $p < 0.001$) including major depressive disorder and multiple anxiety disorders, and were functionally more impaired with a significant proportion having received both counseling and pharmacotherapy. Adults with ASD have high levels of psychiatric comorbidity and dysfunction comparable to a clinically referred population of adults without ASD.

Keywords Autism spectrum disorders · Psychiatric comorbidity · Adults

Introduction

Autism spectrum disorders (ASD) are characterized by a variable presentation of problems with socialization, communication, and behavior, and are estimated to affect more than 1 % of children and adolescents in the general population (*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* 1994; Kogan et al. 2009). Although ASD is well characterized in pediatric populations (Joshi et al. 2010; de Bruin et al. 2007; Wozniak et al. 1997; Simonoff et al. 2008), the prevalence and clinical characteristics of this lifelong

Characteristics of Intellectually-intact Adults with Autism

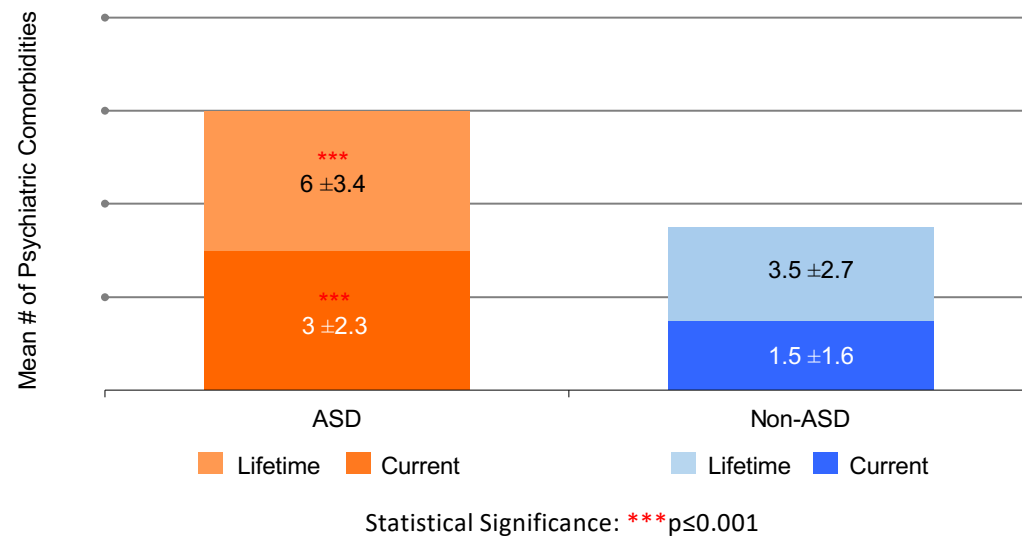


Intellectually intact adults with Autism are often single and unemployed



Burden of Psychopathology in Psychiatrically Referred Adults with ASD

Number of Psychiatric Comorbidities

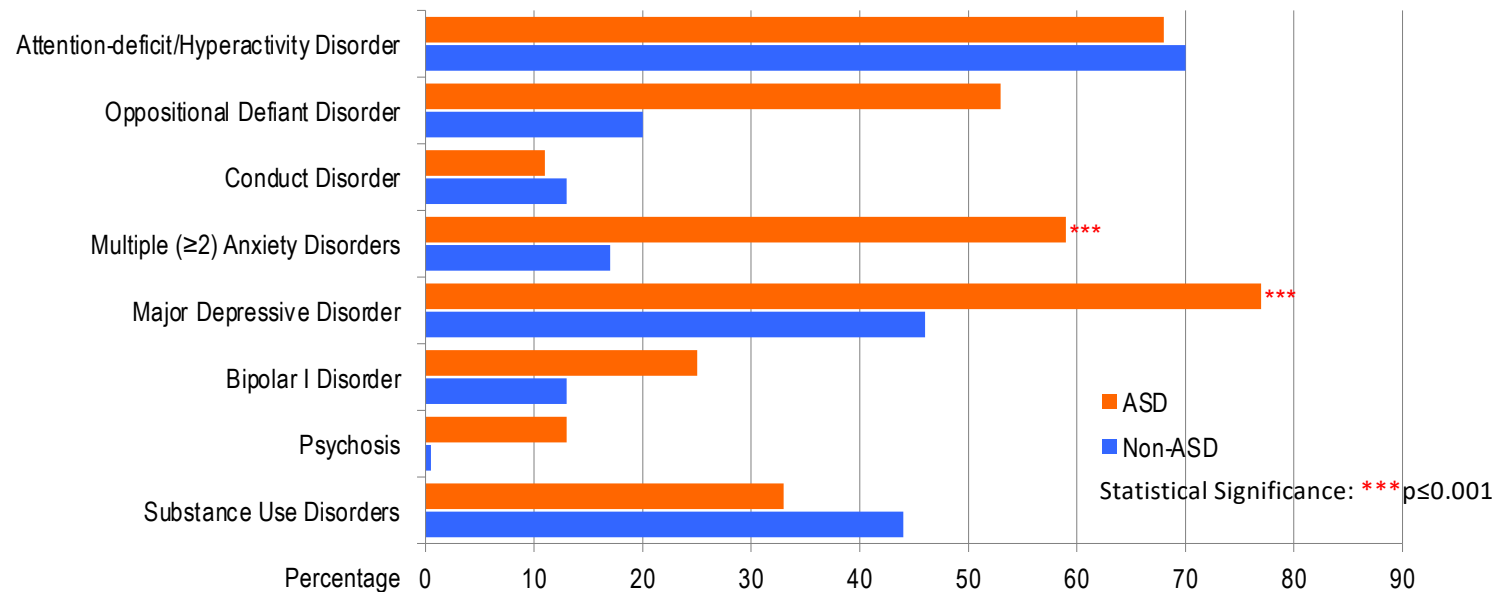


Greater burden of psychiatric conditions in adults with Autism



Psychiatric Comorbidity in Psychiatrically Referred Adults with ASD

Lifetime Psychiatric Comorbidity

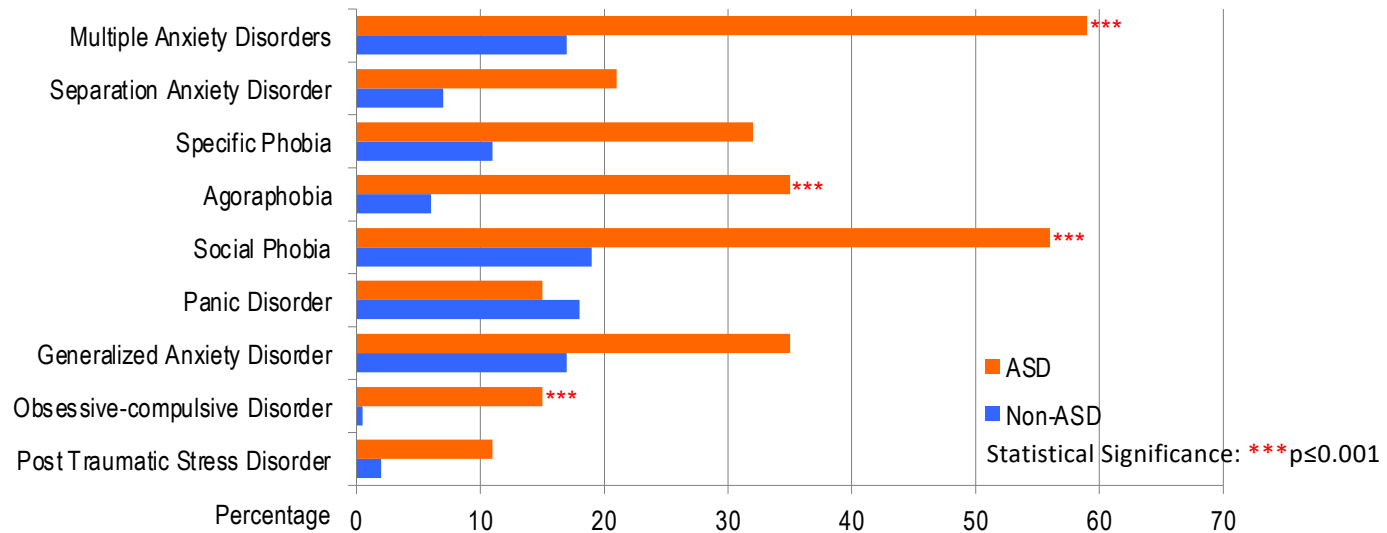


Psychiatrically referred adults with Autism suffer from psychiatric conditions similar to those without Autism



Anxiety Disorders in Psychiatrically Referred Adults with ASD

Lifetime Psychopathology: Anxiety Disorders

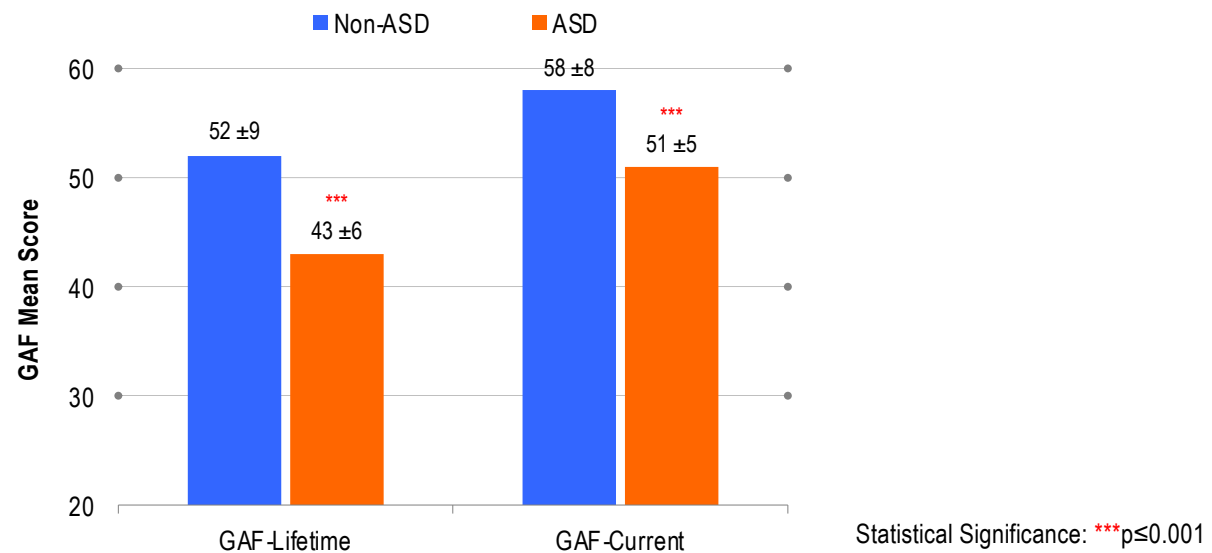


Adults with Autism suffer from Anxiety disorders at a higher rate than expected



Level of Functioning in Psychiatrically Referred Adults with ASD

Global Assessment of Functioning



Global functioning of adults with Autism is worse than expected