

Major depressive disorder in a Kenyan youth sample: relationship with parenting behavior and parental psychiatric disorders

Abstract:

Studies on mental health problems during childhood and youth development phases have reported that families of children diagnosed with a depressive disorder tend to be dysfunctional. These dysfunctions have been shown to be mediating factors for children to develop psychiatric disorders in the future. **OBJECTIVE:** This study was designed to investigate whether perceived parenting behavior and parental psychiatric disorders have any relationship with youth presenting with major depressive disorder. **Methodology** The study sample had a total number of 250 purposely selected youth attending the Youth Clinic at Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi. **RESULTS:** This study found associations between major depressive disorders (MDD) in the youth and co-morbid psychiatric disorders among the youth: conduct disorder (OR = 2.93, 95% CI 1.04 to 8.26, $p = 0.035$), any anxiety disorder (OR = 2.41, 95% CI 1.20 to 4.87, $p = 0.012$), drug abuse (OR = 3.40, 95% CI 2.01 to 5.76, $p < 0.001$), alcohol use (OR = 3.29, 95% CI 1.94 to 5.57, $p < 0.001$), and suicidal behavior (OR = 5.27, 95% CI 2.39 to 11.66, $p < 0.001$). The results also indicate that a higher proportion of youth between 16 and 18 years had major depressive disorder than the youth below 16 years or above 18 years of age (OR = 2.66, 95% CI 1.40 to 5.05, $p = 0.003$). Multivariate analysis shows that both rejecting maternal behavior (AOR = 2.165, 95% CI 1.060 to 4.422, $p = 0.003$) and maternal MDD (AOR = 5.27, 95% CI 1.10 to 14.76, $p < 0.001$) are associated with MDD in youth. **CONCLUSION:** Negative maternal parenting behavior and maternal depressive disorder are associated with major depressive disorder in children.