

Abstract

Background. Scarce knowledge about what factors that attribute to the adult outcome of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). In the current study, we proposed the autism symptomatology as one of the factors interfering the ASD adult outcome by exploring the relationship between the autistics symptoms and psychosocial outcome among individuals with high-functioning autism (HFA) in Hong Kong. Both higher-order (total score) and lower-order (subscale) forms of ASD symptomatology and later outcome would be considered when clarifying the associations related to autistics traits and the domains of psychosocial outcome of HFA adults.

Methods. The theoretical construct of ASD symptomatology, as assessed with the total and subscale score of self- and parent-report Chinese versions of Autism Spectrum Quotient (AQ), were related to two levels structure of the psychosocial outcome in 87 cases with clinically identified with ASD (aged 22-40 years). In this relationship, we assessed the significant level of the Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation (r) for higher-order and lower-order scores of self- and parent-report AQ and the interviewed-based psychosocial outcome scores to identify the specific outcomes among HFA adult being affected by autistics symptoms.

Results. When focusing on the total score of parent-report AQ and adult outcome, positive association was found between autism symptom severity and psychosocial outcome in adulthood, suggesting that more ASD symptoms related to poorer outcome. Nevertheless, no significant relationship was presented between self-report AQ and adult outcome. Moreover, zooming in on the components of psychosocial functioning, the ASD symptoms impacted mainly on friendship and linguistic functioning of HFA individuals.