

Dissertation Chapter – Introduction

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**Introduction**

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a mental disorder from which three to five percent of young children suffer. Some of the issues that such children show include deficiency in attention, impetuosity, and hyperactivity. Every often, the individuals who are affected by ADHD have difficulties with learning (McBurnett & Pfiffner, 2008). One can describe an ADHD patient as an individual who has a continuous exhibition of disruptive manners that cannot be elucidated by other psychiatric disorders. The disorderly behavior of such a person is higher in degree than that of his/ her age mates. Individuals suffering from the condition are usually impatient and keep fidgeting and twitching. They can also lose attention easily. Such children experience mood fluctuations and social incompetence. Therefore, they are incapable of sustaining companionships and interactions with peers. Usually, the following disorder can be diagnosed at the age of five or seven years, but medical specialists suggest an instant analysis if parents or guardians suspect that their child could be suffering from ADHD (McBurnett & Pfiffner, 2008). An early diagnosis is important in order to avoid the escalation of the ADHD symptoms, which may affect the child's development.

Although the ADHD symptoms begin to show during the early childhood, the problem diagnosis process is quite challenging and difficult. For instance, a physical test for ADHD does not exist. Therefore, medical professionals use a list of symptoms of ADHD so as to make an official diagnosis. The World Health Organization's International Classification of Diseases 10 (ICD 10) and the American Psychiatry Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual IV (DSM-IV) outline the diagnostic criteria that can be used when dealing with the condition (Stahl, Mignon, & Muntner, 2010). The diagnosis of ADHD also faces challenges since its symptoms

closely resemble those of other conditions, such as deafness and compulsive disorders. In addition, the presence of such conditions as Asperger's syndrome, dyspraxia and dyslexia masks the disorder, thus resulting in a late diagnosis as the symptoms are similar. Sometimes, when the parents and guardians of children suffering from ADHD are not aware of the condition usually accuse their children of being inattentive and careless in school. In order to diagnose such a condition, it is necessary that the child expresses inattention and hyperactivity signs for a minimum of six months (Stahl, Mignon, & Muntner, 2010). It is easy to notice the inability of such a child to pay and maintain attention even in the issues that the society deems easy to follow. In addition, the errors that such a child makes in the school works or other activities can be described as careless.

Such a child frequently makes thoughtless mistakes in his/her activities. It is also easy to notice that a child disregard the instructions given to him/her, and, as a result, he/she performs poorly in school, as well as, other activities. A child can also avoid activities that involve intensive thinking and attention, which result in poor completion of chores. He/she can also face difficulty in organizing his/her undertakings and responsibilities. It is also common for a child with such an disorder to lose various things, such as school equipment or toys. It is very easy to distract such a child from his/her activities by irrelevant information. A child can forget instructions after a short period. Medical professionals look for the activities, such as fidgeting and always squirming, in order to identify impulsivity and hyperactivity. The sensation of restiveness is expressed through the individual's continuous activities where a child runs and climbs all over even in the inapt circumstances. A child is always talking and moving unless when he/she is asleep. Such a child interjects others and lacks patience in waiting for his or her opportunity to do a given task. In addition, once a child is allowed to do a certain task, he/she

cannot do it for long; his/her attention is easily diverted to other activities. When making a diagnosis of ADHD, doctors must ascertain that the indicators are observed prior to the child's seventh birthday and that the signs must be evident in the child's activities both in school and at home (Lougy, DeRuvo & Rosenthal, 2007). It is also essential to offer proof of negative impacts on the child's social functioning and schoolwork. The diagnosis also requires close working of a child's psychiatrist and psychologist.

After a child is diagnosed with ADHD, it is essential to start treating the child instantly. According to various health experts, ADHD needs various approaches so as to address the condition fully. It is important to consider the individual needs of the child, in addition to behavioral, medical and teaching support. The child's response to the approaches should be closely monitored in order to apply the procedure that is most successful. The most used strategies incorporate medicines, therapies, and self-help strategies. In addition, the diet can help determine whether the occurrence of symptoms will lessen or increase. The exclusion of food additives, sugar and caffeine can reduce the intervals of hyperactivity. Furthermore, such a kid needs foods rich in omega 3-fatty acids, minerals, and vitamins. It results from the low levels of crucial minerals and vitamins in the immune systems of a child. The parents should also set up guidelines on the behavior that is acceptable at home. A child should also be cautioned by the parents about unacceptable behavior, such as disruptions and inattentiveness. In addition, the parents ought to get involved into the support groups consisting of other parents whose children suffer from ADHD.

In addition, a child should also spend quite a good amount of his/her time in school. The environment should also be supportive to the recovery of a child. It should be actively involved in the child's therapy process. The teacher of a child ought to maintain a structured and orderly

classroom that does not have many distractions. It is a way of boosting the child's levels of concentration. In case such conditions cannot be provided, a child should have individual teaching as it assists in improving his/her focus in schoolwork and activities. Therefore, the teacher is a fundamental factor in the recovery of a child diagnosed with ADHD. He or she should assist a child with all the school activities, including organizational skills, reading, speech therapy, and other needs of a child (Lougy, DeRuvo & Rosenthal, 2007). It is evident that the progress of a child relies on of the cooperation of various people. In other instances, medical professionals can prescribe drugs that can treat or improve the condition of a child. An educational psychologist is instrumental in guiding the therapy sessions and advising when a medical doctor ought to be consulted.

Depending on the symptoms expressed by a child, certain medicines are prescribed by the specialists. A child ought not to experience any side effects of the medications. Most of the doctors prescribe methylphenidate, dexamphetamine and atomoxetine for the children suffering from ADHD. The medications pose a risk as they have various side effects, including irritability, weight loss, headaches, and insomnia (Lougy, DeRuvo & Rosenthal, 2007). The main purpose of the drugs is to create a balance in brain's chemicals, which contribute to ADHD. It is important to strategize on the ways of ensuring that the side effects are controlled. For instance, the medicine should be taken with food to avoid various appetite troubles and stomach disorders. A child should be given healthy snacks before bedtime. A regular bedtime routine should be established in order to counter sleeping problems. In addition, a child should not be given caffeinated drinks, which may increase insomnia. A child's bedroom should have a sleeping environment and not one that encourages other activities, for instance, doing homework or

playing (Lougy, DeRuvo & Rosenthal, 2007). However, in case insomnia is persistent, a child should be given medication with the guidance of a doctor.

Behavioral and psychological therapy can help a child in understanding the ways of dealing with his/her condition. It assists in the reduction of impulsivity. A child should also be trained in coordination through the integration of sensory motor. Such a child should also receive assistance in acquiring social skills. He or she should learn subtle rules of communication, which can assist in making relationships. Such a child should be assisted in having things done. A child should also be assisted in adapting to the nature of his/her condition and symptoms. It is also important for the parents, guardians, teachers, and people around a child to understand that he/she is not defying the instructions intentionally. Therefore, whenever a child is involved in a given task, there should not be any distracters around him/her. In addition, the family members ought to act as role models through practicing the behavior that they want a child to develop. Such a child will follow the established daily routines with a few reminders and repetitions. It is also vital to have different visual reminders, which assist the child in acquiring a given behavior. Researchers have identified that children with ADHD enjoy and learn more using visual features. Therefore, the used reminders should be colorful (Heininger & Weiss, 2001). Most of the children suffering from ADHD are appealed by new things. As a result, the parents should use new sounds and events whenever they would like their child to learn new things or even when he/she repeats old ones (McBurnett & Pfiffner, 2008). In case a child misbehaves, the caution by the parent should be immediate so that the child learns the consequences of a given action or behavior. It is evident that children suffering from ADHD can lead normal and successful lives if it is diagnosed and attended early in life.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Even though there have been numerous researches on ADHD, the precise causes of the disorder are not well known. However, according to Tannock (1998), there are two major theoretical explorations of the issue. They are cognitive research and genetic one.

### **Cognitive Research**

In the past, cognitive research put its focus on the impulsiveness as the main feature of ADHD. It concentrated on the likelihood that a dysfunctional reaction inhibition system, which is situated in the pre-frontal cortical of the brain, is the neuropsychological mechanism that leads to the condition. In accordance with this perspective, children suffering from ADHD can often be categorized as experiencing problems in inhibiting or delaying their behavioral responses. Alternatively, the nature of the dysfunction within their systems can be described as a failure in the activation of the inhibitory control system, or there is typically a great delay in the process of triggering the system. The main areas that the inhibitions affect include internalized speech, reconstruction, working memory, and motivational appraisal. As a result of the child's difficulties with the executive functions, he/she faces challenges in school, where there is usually an emphasis on the necessity for self-regulation, recall, passive listening, as well as secondary behavior, which begin in the earliest phases of learning. Most individuals dealing with these children, including teachers and caretakers, should understand that such children should have the ability to concentrate, follow rules, and recall. As a result, most of the children suffering from ADHD face rejection both socially and academically while at school.

### **Genetic Research**

According to the report by Levy and Hay (2001), ADHD is common in the relatives of kids with ADHD with biological ties than in those without ADHD. However, the researchers faced difficulty as they could not control the environmental factors shared by the family

members, which might also be triggers of the development of the following disorder. The problem is, however, addressed through the twin and adoption studies that have expressed a greater incidence of ADHD among identical twins than that observed in the non-identical twins. In addition, studies comparing the occurrence of ADHD in the families with biological parents and those that have adopted a child also seem to support the argument on genetics and heredity. Molecular-genetic research has also shown evidence that point towards the genetic defects in the dopamine system, which is vital in movement regulation and attention control. Therefore, although genes may influence the predisposition relating to various behavioral outcomes, they do not predict behavior.

### **Background of the Study**

The studies related to ADHD can be traced back more than 200 years in the medical literature (Palmer & Finger, 2001). Most of these literatures entail the clinical aspect of the condition. In addition, the studies have not concentrated on the racial and ethnic aspect of the ADHD. It is revealed that between two and eight percent of the preschool and kindergarten kids in the USA have ADHD (Egger, Kondo & Angold, 2006). The initial factor that plays a critical role in the management of ADHD is its diagnosis. Consequently, the identification of the procedure utilized in the diagnosis of the condition in regard to different races is of great significance. The condition is non-discriminative in the fact that it affects people regardless of their ethnicity or race. It is acknowledged as the most common mental health condition among children. When ADHD is diagnosed in a child when he/she goes to a kindergarten, he/she can receive specialized educational services (Scheffler et al., 2009). Once a child receives these treatments, over time, he/she will be able to improve behavioral functioning and academic performance. The identification of risk factors for the diagnosis of ADHD, especially as early as

kindergarten, is very essential in informing the screening, monitoring and delivery of treatment by pediatricians, mental health experts, and preschool and school-based staff at the age when the efforts can generate the maximum results.

However, the existing knowledge in regard to the factors associated with the young children's risk of being diagnosed with ADHD. For instance, clinic-referred samples have been analyzed by the researchers (Biederman, Petty, Evans, Small, & Faraone, 2010). Generalizability to the diverse population of the U.S. children, particularly the ethnic minorities, is limited since most clinic-referred samples consist of Caucasian children (Brassett-Harknett & Butler, 2007). Only a few studies have investigated nationally representative samples on ADHD (Sciberras, Ukoumunne & Efron, 2011). According to the investigation conducted by Braun et al (2006), ethnic minorities were underdiagnosed with ADHD. Some of the risk factors associated with ADHD diagnosis include drug use, smoking during pregnancy, low-quality home environment, low paternal education, and maternal depression. However, such studies that use the large-scale samples also have limitations in methodologies, incomplete knowledge of the socio-demographic conditions, family history, birth, gestational and other home characteristics that occurred in the early life. All these factors could predict the probability of the ADHD diagnosis in children by the time they join kindergarten. It is especially important to diagnose the disorder in children before they go to the kindergarten as the academic and behavioral difficulties often persist into the early elementary years (Morgan, Farkas & Qiong, 2009). The timing of the onset of ethnic disparities in the diagnosis of ADHD is largely unknown. It is especially in regard to whether and to what magnitude the inequalities are mediated by the socio-demographic conditions, family history, birth, as well as gestational and other home characteristics. Societal mechanisms and

racial inequalities that can contribute to the development of ADHD among the U.S. children have yet to be empirically explored (Bailey et. al., 2010).

### **Child Protection Services**

The study will focus, primarily on the children in the Child Protective Services. It is a common understanding that it is the role of the entire society to raise children and prepare them for adulthood. Therefore, parents cannot argue that since it is their child, they can do whatever they want with him or her. As a result, when parents mistreat their child, it is the role of the people around them to report on such cases to the police or the social workers. If it is proved that the child is abused or mistreated, the parents may be deprived of the child's custody, and the child is taken to the Child Protection Services. Such a child requires protection, as a result, of his/her vulnerability. In many cases, children with ADHD fall victims of mistreatment and abuse. It is primarily due to their hyperactivity and impulsivity. Therefore, there are cases when such children are taken under the care of the Child Protective Services. The study will focus on such children since previous studies have, mostly, focused on the children who live with their parents.

### **Ethnic Inequalities in the Diagnosis of ADHD**

It is highly possible that there may be very few ethnic minority children who have been diagnosed with ADHD. Consequently, their needs for treatment and interventions may be unmet. According to the research conducted in 2009, the number of children of the African-American ethnicity who were diagnosed with ADHD was about two-thirds, to the number of white children diagnosed with ADHD in the same age bracket. It happened even in the scenarios where the children had similar symptoms (Miller, Nigg & Miller, 2009). Limited access to health care may be one of the factors that lead to the difference in the diagnosis statistics between the ethnic minorities and majorities. In addition, when the minorities visit doctors, they receive little

information on the importance of ADHD screening. The inability to converse in English, and negative social-cultural views concerning disability and the resultant potential stigma have also contributed to the disparity (Hervey-Jumper, Douyon, Falcone, & Franco, 2008).

It is essential to examine the disparities facing the ethnic minorities and put the focus on a national level where the minority children should be well represented. The sample used should be easy to replicate in other parts of the world. Some studies propose that ethnic inequalities in the diagnosis of ADHD occur in the older school-aged population, but whether and to what extent they occur as early as the kindergarten entry is not known. The establishment of the time when the disparities occur can ensure that the racial or ethnic minority children with ADHD are diagnosed appropriately and that they also receive treatment by the time when they enter school. However, in order to make accurate estimates of the racial or ethnic disparities in the diagnosis of ADHD, it would be important to have control of the statistics of many influences that may work as mix-ups. They should include the minority children's higher exposure to low maternal education, single-parent families, low-birth weight, and low-house hold income (Froehlich et al., 2007). For instance, the control for the social economic status (SES) is essential since the lower SES tends to increase the risk of a disability referral, especially the diagnosis of ADHD.

### **Problem Statement**

ADHD has become an issue of concern in the modern society. In 2006, about 4.5 million children between three to seven years were diagnosed with ADHD (Ryan, Katsiyannis & Hughes, 2011). Since the prevalence of the disorder is on the increase and it is affecting many children, it is important to establish an effective form of treatment. Children with ADHD suffer either at home, as well as school. Their academic performance is usually below that of their peers, and they are unable to engage in various school extra-curricular activities. In addition, the

children who have been diagnosed with ADHD and are in the care of the children protective services also have a high likelihood of failing. The child protective services (CPS) systems are designed in order to identify and protect the victims from any forms of victimization or mistreatment (Bae, Solomon, Gelles, & White, 2010). Often, children with ADHD suffer mistreatment and victimization within their homes or at school. As a result, there has been an increased occurrence of parents being reported to the departments of the child protective services on their failure to take care of their child.

ADHD is associated with the issues such as low-attention span, hyperactivity, and aggression. When an individual is dealing with such a child, he or she should understand the child's condition and be patient. However, impatience among the parents, caregivers and guardians may prompt mistreatment of the child. Some people feel as though the child were disrespectful or failed to follow certain instructions on purpose. As a result, they may punish the child or express aggression towards him or her. There are cases where children suffering from ADHD have been tied up or chained due to their hyperactivity. Such actions do attract the Child Protection Services. In addition, there are cases where the parents may fail to follow the guidelines concerning the child's therapy. It may be a problematic to visit a psychologist or to give the child the required medication. Such cases involve negligence on the part of the parent or guardian, which attracts the attention of the Child Protective Services. If it emanates that a kid is mistreated or neglected by a parent, the Child Protection Service can take the custody of such a child. The main purpose is to protect the vulnerable child from mistreatment and abuse. Since there is an increase in such cases, many children with ADHD are under the upkeep and protection of the Child Protective Services (CPS).

The specific problem is that children suffering from ADHD are at the risk of early school failure (Mautone, Lefler & Power, 2011). There is a high occurrence of such children starting school, too often, with failure. If it were possible to determine the potential of individuals at birth, schools would be irrelevant. However, schools are to broaden the opportunities and develop the potential of every child. However, other factors determine whether a child can succeed in the traditional school setting. One of these factors is having a child who has been diagnosed with ADHD. Such a child cannot perform in a similar way with normal children in the same age bracket. The failure rates of these children are about two times or three times those of other children. It is also evident that before adolescence, about 50% of these children will have repeated at least one grade. According to some studies, about 35% of children with ADHD drop out of school over time, and only 5% of them complete college. It is also indicated that by the time these children reach the age of 11, about 80% of them are usually behind in the school activities, including mathematics, spelling, reading, and writing. Even the children with ADHD who have normal to superior intelligence indicate chronic and severe underachievement.

In addition, such children are faced with suspensions and expulsions from school. The children's hyperactivity, impulsivity and inattention interfere with their academic performance. Since ADHD affects people of all races, it is not possible only to focus on a single race. In addition, regardless of the race, parents may mistreat their children. Consequently, there is an extensive variety of the ethnic groups in the Children Protective Services (CPS). The majority groups comprise the African-Americans, Hispanics, and Caucasians. In addition, ADHD can impact the performance of the children in academic work regardless of their ethnicity. The traditional school settings make it an ordeal for most children with ADHD. Since their enrolment into the kindergarten, their inability to control responses and inhibit behavior create constraints

in their attempts to meet the typical demand of the school, such as self-control and self-direction. It becomes almost impossible for them to sit still until they are given permission to get up. They are also unable to raise their hands before talking, be attentive to whatever the teacher is saying, complete repetitive work within a limited time, follow directions, and become organized and independent. Therefore, when all these aspects are included, a child with ADHD, especially those within the Child Protective Services, should be assessed accordingly by specialists. It is more so in relation to various ethnicities.

### **Importance of the Study**

This research proves its importance in three main areas. Firstly, the study will provide the information that could be used by mental health professionals, school districts, and the Child Protective Services. Since ADHD is an issue that touches on these institutions, the outcomes of the study will prove to be useful to them. In this sense, school districts will understand the importance of the specialized educational systems for the children with ADHD. Additionally, it will pay attention to the significance of ensuring that children of all ethnicities should be screened as early as possible. Previous research has shown that the ethnic minorities have fewer children getting screened with ADHD due to diverse reasons. Once the school districts understand it, they will improve on their screening practices, as well as train the teachers to identify the signs of ADHD in children. All this should be done without racial discrimination or prejudice.

The medical professionals should also get vital information on the current statistics on children and ADHD. They should also understand the gap on the diagnosis of children with ADHD that needs to be filled. The healthcare professionals should understand the importance of conducting clinical studies on the ethnic minorities in relation to ADHD. The Child Protective

Services should benefit from the study outcomes as they will learn about the problems that the children with ADHD under their care are facing while in school. The Child Protective Services (CPS) should only support and rescue vulnerable children, but also focus on their individual needs in relation to academic performance. They should also assist in gathering the information on the impact of ADHD on children's academic performance, especially the ethnic minorities.

Secondly, this study will provide some suggestions and recommendations that could be used by the individuals and agencies who deal with the children with ADHD in order to improve training, create effective policies and practices, or connect related research to better service this population. It relates to the different agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, whose activities focus on ensuring that the lives of children with ADHD are of similar standards and quality to those of the other children. It will also enlighten the agencies that ADHD is a condition that, if well managed, a child can live an ordinary life and be successful. The study will also provide vital recommendations to such agencies and individuals on creating awareness of ADHD. Just like any other disabilities, ADHD can affect any child. Therefore, the agencies should ensure that people are aware of its symptoms and the best ways of handling such children. It will also provide information on the importance of early identification of individuals suffering from ADHD. The study will also give some insight into the previous errors that the institutions and individuals committed and suggest the ways how such errors could be avoided in the future. It will also propose better approaches to deal with the given scenarios and circumstances.

Thirdly, this study will create awareness of the impact that ADHD has on this population's academic success. With this study being a possible benefactor to so many agencies and individuals involved with children in the Child Protective Services, it can lead to breakthroughs in the areas in which the professionals have never thought they could make. Upon

the identification of the impact of ADHD on the children's academic performance, special systems could be developed to ascertain that the children receive the high-quality education, and as a result, they could end up becoming successful in the ways that are not imagined. The children could open up and see by themselves how their actions based on the variables studied impact them as a whole in the academic arena. After making use of the availed information, they will be able perceive their situation from a new perspective and understand what is required of them. Additionally, parents and caregivers should also understand the importance of assisting their children so that they can accomplish their objectives and attain their full potential. The data can be used as a tool to correct a poor academic success rate by addressing the variables that were shown to be significant in lowering the rate. With the improvement in academic success, milestones of achievement can be reached and solidified. Therefore, the study is important to the entire society and is in line with the global ambitions of attaining equality, despite the limitations that may be in the way.

### **Proposed Research Method**

The study will employ the ex-post facto research design, which is under the quantitative research method. The ex-post facto research focuses on the conditions that have already occurred. It uses the collected data to investigate the relationship between the conditions and the behaviors (Leedy & Ormrod, 2012). It can be used in order to conduct research that involves the society when it is unacceptable or impossible to control or change the physiognomies of the human participants. It can substitute factual investigational research. The following research can also test the hypothesis regarding the correlational relationships or cause and effect where it is unethical or impractical to apply quasi-experimental or true experimental designs (Nestor & Schutt, 2012). In its implementation, the study method shares some of the simple rationality of

investigation with experimental research, even though it studies the previously occurred facts. For instance, there are various attempts made to explain consequences based on precursor conditions, test claims using the statistical proposition testing methods and determine a variable's influence on another variable.

In social science context, the ex-post facto research can be used to establish the probable relationships through making an observation on a condition or state of affairs. It also searches back in time for the credible causative factors. The research uses the data that has already been collected by other scholars or researchers. However, it is not necessary for the data to have been collected for study purposes. It can be perceived as an experimental research that is conducted in reverse. Rather than taking similar groups and exposing the groups to unlike treatments so as to note the variances in the variables, this research starts with different groups and moves backwards in search of the factors that generated the changes. In this manner, the study method can convert a non-experimental study design into a virtual investigational study. Therefore, it is an approach of finding out or determining possible previous circumstances, which the researcher cannot manipulate.

However, similar to other research methods, the ex-post facto research has its advantages and limitations (Nestor & Schutt, 2012). Some of the advantages include the availability of data that is needed for the study as it has already been collected. The procedure of getting authorization to commence the research is less involving, as compared to the procedure of enrolling the study participants.

Finally, since the data that needs to be utilized in the study has already been collected, it requires less time to conduct the entire study, as compared to conducting an actual study and collecting the needed data. However, it has various limitations. For instance, there is a limitation

in the generalization of the study results since the sample cannot be considered to be random. In addition, most studies or the previously collected data do not reveal the details about participants who dropped out of the study. It is also possible to have confounds in the variables of the studies due to the lack of random assignment to treatment.

The population under investigation will involve the children who have been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and who are under the custody of the Children Protective Services (CPS). The sample will be derived from the convenience sampling technique. The sample of the following study will include 90 children who are in elementary school. In order to have equality in the diversity, there will be three groups which will include 30 Caucasian children, 30 African-American children, and 30 Hispanic children. The instruments in which the children ADHD diagnosis will be gathered from are their current Psychological Evaluations. These psychological evaluations were conducted by a licensed psychologist. The collection of data will utilize various records and forms, including discipline referrals, the children's attendance records, standardized test scores, children's report cards, and high-risk placement referrals provided by the schools.

The analysis approach will be conducted through the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. This software will be used to calculate the data and give meaning to the categories through a numerical response. It will allow either supporting or refuting the hypothesis. A statistician will be used to assist in giving true value and meaning to the numerical outcome to determine an accurate and quality analysis.

### **Research Questions (and Hypotheses-if quantitative)**

- (1) Is there a significant difference in behavioral problems among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services?

- (2) Is there a significant difference in school attendance among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services?
- (3) Is there a significant difference in grades among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services?
- (4) Is there a significant difference in referrals to the high-risk services among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services?
- (5) Is there a significant difference in the standardized school testing scores among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services?

#### **Research Objectives**

- (1) To investigate whether there is a significant difference in behavioral problems among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services;
- (2) To determine whether there is a significant difference in school attendance among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services;
- (3) To find out whether there a significant difference in grades among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Child Protective Services;
- (4) To find out whether there is a significant difference in referrals to the high-risk services among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services;
- (5) To investigate whether there is a significant difference in the standardized school testing scores among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services.

### **Statement of Hypothesis**

#### **Null Hypothesis 1**

There is no statistically significant difference in behavioral problems among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services.

#### **Alternative Hypothesis 1**

There is a statistically significant difference in behavioral problems among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services.

#### **Null Hypothesis 2**

There is no statistically significant difference in attendance among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services.

#### **Alternative Hypothesis 2**

There is a statistically significant difference in attendance among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services.

#### **Null Hypothesis 3**

There is no statistically significant difference in grades among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services.

#### **Alternative Hypothesis 3**

There is a statistically significant difference in grades among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services.

#### **Null Hypothesis 4**

There is no statistically significant difference in referrals to the high-risk services among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services.

#### **Alternative Hypothesis 4**

There is a statistically significant difference in referrals to high-risk services among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services.

#### **Null Hypothesis 5**

There is no statistically significant difference in the standardized school testing scores among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services.

#### **Alternative Hypothesis 5**

There is a statistically significant difference in the standardized school testing scores among the African-American, Hispanic and Caucasian children with ADHD in the Children Protective Services.

### **Overview of Research Design**

The commonly used research designs include descriptive, explanatory and exploratory research designs. Descriptive design needs a clear investigation phenomenon before the collection of data so as to portray a given event or situation. The explanatory design focuses on explaining the link between common variables with quantitative methods for the collection of data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2012). However, this study will use the exploratory design as it aims at exploring the impact of ADHD on the academic performance of different ethnicities. This design is usually effective in when tackling a research problem in which there are inadequate previous studies (Leedy & Ormrod, 2012). Although there are studies in the impact of ADHD on the academic performance of children, there is very little information on the effect on different ethnicities. Therefore, this design will be effective in the exploration of the issue.

### **Definition of Terms**

#### **Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder**

It is a mental disorder characterized by continuous exhibition of disruptive manners that cannot be elucidated by other psychiatric disorders. The patients express hyperactivity and inattentiveness.

#### **Hyperactivity**

It is a condition characterized by an individual being overly active, above the normal activity level.

#### **Impulsivity**

It is a condition where an individual acts, in a way, which shows that they did not have forethought about their actions.

#### **Child Protection Services**

They are agencies that have a responsibility of rescuing children from mistreatment and abuse.

#### **Ethnicity**

It is an individual's background, and it is related to sociological factors.

### **Assumptions and Limitations**

The study is based on various assumptions. It is assumed that the factors affecting the performance of the students in various ethnicities are reliant on the impact of the ADHD. The study also assumes that the previously collected data will be valid. It is also assumed that the information, even though it was collected in the past, it is valid, and will be of assistance in the study. Additionally, the study makes the assumption that the Child Protective Services provide a comfortable environment for the children. The study also has various limitations. The study

depends on the information provided by the schools and the Child Protective Services only. It becomes difficult to find vital information about the parents, which could shed light on the reasons for the limited diagnosis of the children from minority ethnicities. The study is also limited to the using the information provided by the schools and Child Protective Services only.

### **Summary**

The research paper will focus on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Its concentration will be on the ADHD in different ethnic groups. The number of children suffering from ADHD globally is high. One of the main areas that ADHD affects in the children is their performance in school. Academic excellence relies heavily on attentiveness. ADHD children lack attentiveness and cannot focus on a single issue for a long time. Consequently, it is vital to concentrate on its effect on the children and its diagnosis status among different children. In addition, the study will focus on the children who are in Child Protective Services. The study sample will include 90 children, 30 Caucasians, 30 African Americans, and 30 Hispanics. Previous research has shown that ADHD lowers the performance of the children.

The research is important since it will assist in three main areas. First, it will provide vital information which the medical experts, Child Protective Services and school districts can use. It will provide them with current statistics on the importance of studying ADHD in relation to ethnicity. The study will also create awareness about ADHD and its effects. The study will recommend ways to solve the problems. The research will use the ex-post facto design that utilizes information that has already been collected. Therefore, the study will not collect new data. Solving the problem will also use the exploratory design, which is essential in studying a field that has less information previously studied. The study will have several limitations and assumptions. It is limited to the data available in the Child Protective Services and schools.

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