

Taq transmission specific to our population. We must however, remain cognizant of the strong component of consanguinity while interpreting these results. Intra family marriages are extremely common in certain tribes and ethnic communities in this part of the world. Therefore, it is quite plausible that genes for certain traits including cognitive characteristics get concentrated in families. A multivariate analysis where the family history of ADHD is considered would thus be a vital inclusion in such a study design.

It has been seen in preliminary studies done at our institution and also abroad that a huge proportion of ADHD cases exist concurrently with reading disorders such as dyslexia. The degree of overlap between ADHD and dyslexia has been reported to be 35%(2). The combined subtype of ADHD is one of the most common ones as shown by Indian and Pakistani data(3-4). The co-morbidity of ADHD and dyslexia is so common that diagnosis of either disorder should involve assessment for the other. All children with ADHD in this study should ideally have undergone a psychometric assessment to evaluate for the presence of a learning disability. Though Intelligence Quotient (IQ) evaluation was included in the initial evaluation of these subjects, evidence to show that IQ scores play a major role in identifying children with learning disability is limited. The children with co-morbidity could therefore have been a part of the exclusion criteria or could be separately analyzed for atypical or new polymorphisms. The tools used for screening of these disorders need to be suited and validated according to the local languages. A multilingual India creates even more problems in finding a universal tool for screening such children(5). Incorporation of the above suggestions in a study design will help in a better understanding of ADHD.

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Reply

Though it is true that "intra family marriages are common in certain communities and tribes in this part of the world", this is not so common in most of the Indian population. Nevertheless, we checked for the consanguinity status for all the families included in our study, including 3 Muslim probands out of 41 ADHD cases, and found the consanguinity status to be negative in all cases. Further, we have not noticed any single case of familial ADHD, where we can look for concentrated cognitive characteristics.

Co-morbidity of ADHD and dyslexia is indeed a common observation and we excluded

such ADHD cases from our study. Only “classical ADHD” cases were selected.

Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) was used for IQ evaluation of the children. WISC is a common test to evaluate a child’s cognitive and intellectual functioning and is an important tool for diagnosing learning disability(1). IQ status of the subjects was used to discriminate between mentally challenged individuals (with IQ <75) and normal children/ adolescents with poor scholastic achievements (IQ >75). The diagnosis of ADHD was based on DSM-IV- TR, the Conners’ Parents and Teachers Rating Scale and WISC. Subjects for the association study were selected as per the criteria in *Table I*.

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TABLE I: *Criteria for Selection of Study Subjects.*

DSM-IV	IQ (WISC)	Conners’ rating	Diagnosis
Qualified	>75	<12	Specific learning disability
Qualified	>75	>12	ADHDL

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What Should be Done When Authors do not Respond

Studies, Views *etc.* are published in scientific journals to inform others regarding some new techniques, information or clarifications, which is routed through the Editor of the concerned journal. This correspondence is published as ‘Letter to Editor’ and ‘Response’ from the author(s).

But sometimes the authors do not respond to such correspondence. What recourses are available to the Editor? But the Editor may publish the queries or the counterpoints and state: “No response received from the authors despite several reminders’. But sometimes this

may not suffice. I would like to elaborate this by the recent example.

Two ‘Letters to Editor’ published in the September, 2005 issue of Indian Pediatrics(1,2) regarding one study raised some ethical issues(3). Editor’s note under both letters(1,2) stated: “No reply received from Agarkhadekar, *et al.*, despite several reminders”. This merits consideration by the scientific community.

Let us look at the current controversy. A study entitled “Avoidance of Food Allergens in Childhood Asthma” by Agarkhadekar, *et al.* was published in India Pediatrics(3). In the Abstract the authors had stated: “These results indicate that food avoidance may help in asthma control in children”. This statement