A Meta-Analysis of the Relationship Between Three Common Psychopathologies - ADHD, Anxiety, and Depression - and Indicators of Little-c Creativity

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Abstract

There is a long-standing controversy over the relationship between psychopathology and creativity. Yet there is a lack of evidence regarding the relationship between common psychopathologies and indicators of little-c, or everyday, creativity among laypeople. To make sense of this connection, we conducted a meta-analysis using 89 studies to reveal the overall relationships between the most common psychopathologies and little-c creativity and uncover the source of variance in the relationships. The 89 studies involved 35,271 participants and the common psychopathologies: attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, anxiety, and depression. Results indicated that the overall mean effect size was not different from zero ($r = -.06$, $k = 261$, 95% confidence interval $[-.15, .02]$) with substantial heterogeneity. Variability of effect sizes was examined by five moderators: assessment of psychopathology, assessment of creativity, age, gender, and intelligence of participants. Specifically, the moderator analyses showed that effect sizes varied by assessment of both psychopathology and creativity as well as level of intelligence.