Comparing and Exploring the Sensory Processing Patterns of Higher Education Students With Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Autism Spectrum Disorder.

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE:
Research regarding sensory processing and adults with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is limited. This study aimed to compare sensory processing patterns of groups of higher education students with ADHD or ASD and to explore the implications of these disorders for their college life.

METHOD:
The Adolescent/Adult Sensory Profile was administered to 28 students with ADHD and 27 students with ASD. Students and professionals were interviewed.

RESULTS:
The majority of students received scores that differed from those of the general population. Students with ADHD received significantly higher scores than students with ASD in relation to sensation seeking; however, there were no other major differences.

CONCLUSION:
Few differences exist between the sensory processing patterns of students with ADHD and ASD; however, both groups differ significantly from the general population. Occupational therapists should consider sensory processing patterns when designing supports for these groups.