Creativity in ADHD: Goal-Directed Motivation and Domain Specificity

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Abstract

Objective:
This research aimed to provide explanations for the inconsistent findings regarding creativity in ADHD.

Method:
In Study 1, we assessed real-world creative achievements and intrinsic motivation during idea generation in adults with ADHD and compared these with controls. In Study 2, we manipulated competition during idea generation to investigate effects on idea originality in adults with ADHD versus controls, and assessed creativity in specific domains.

Results:
Adults with ADHD reported more real-world creative achievements. We did not observe differences in intrinsic motivation during idea generation between groups, but adults with ADHD generated more original ideas when competing for a bonus. Moreover, adults with ADHD rated themselves as more creative in specific creative domains.

Conclusion:
Our findings suggest that goal-directed motivation may drive the enhanced real-world creative achievements of people with ADHD. Moreover, people with ADHD may selectively engage and excel in creative domains that fit their skills and preferences.