Abstract

Objective: The objective of this study was to compare children with ADHD with children without ADHD on frustration tolerance and to examine the role of oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) in frustration tolerance within the sample.

Method: Participants included 67 children ages 10 to 14 years-old with (n = 37) and without (n = 30) Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (4th ed.; DSM-IV) ADHD who completed the Mirror Tracing Persistence Task (MTPT), a validated computerized behavioral measure of frustration tolerance.

Results: Children with ADHD were more likely to quit this task than children without ADHD, demonstrating lower levels of frustration tolerance. There were no differences in frustration tolerance between children with ADHD + ODD and those with ADHD – ODD. Moreover, ODD did not moderate the relationship between ADHD and frustration tolerance.

Conclusion: Our results suggest that low frustration tolerance is directly linked to ADHD and not better accounted for by ODD. This research highlights specific behavioral correlates of frustration in children with ADHD.