Attention and Executive Function in Children Diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Comorbid Disorders.


OBJECTIVE:

The goal of this study was to examine the relationship between comorbid disorders and executive function (EF) in children diagnosed with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

METHODS:

Three hundred and fifty-five, 6-12 year old children clinically diagnosed with ADHD were included in the study. Comorbid anxiety disorders, Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) and Conduct Disorder (CD) were examined. The EF domains were assessed using the Conners' Continuous Performance Test (CPT), Wisconsin Card Sorting Test (WCST), Tower of London (ToL), Finger Windows (FW) and Self-Ordered Pointing Test (SOPT).

RESULTS:

The findings indicate that children with comorbid anxiety disorders performed worse in domains measured by CPT and prior to controlling for age and sex, by FW. However, once sex was controlled for the results for FW were no longer significant. Children with CD obtained lower scores on WCST. Furthermore, a significant sex by CD interaction was observed.

CONCLUSION:

These results indicate that comorbid disorders should be carefully examined as they play a significant role in EF performance and subsequently in the day-to-day functioning of children with ADHD.