Attention deficit / hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and Entrepreneurship

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Abstract

Several empirical papers have reported an association between attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and facets of entrepreneurship. While much research has documented that adults with ADHD often are impaired in the occupational domain and have difficulties maintaining full-time employment, these recent papers intimate that entrepreneurship may represent an attractive occupational option for adults with ADHD. Indeed, adults with ADHD whom are entrepreneurs anecdotally report benefitting in their entrepreneurial endeavors from their ADHD. From this perspective, symptoms and traits associated with ADHD might be beneficial, not impairing. This review paper discusses ADHD theory and clinical characteristics of adults with ADHD and how both may translate to entrepreneurship. The existing data that have been published on the association between ADHD and entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial orientation are then reviewed. These data suggest that hyperactivity symptoms (and not inattentive symptoms) may be more responsible for the reported associations between ADHD and aspects of entrepreneurship. At this point, the research on ADHD and entrepreneurship is too nascent to propose practical implications. Rather, potential future research directions and policy recommendations are forwarded.