Adaptive behavior and learning in children with neurodevelopmental disorders (autism spectrum disorders and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder). Effects of executive functioning

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Abstract

INTRODUCTION:
Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) present difficulties in adaptive functioning and learning, possibly associated with failures in executive functioning characteristic of both disorders.

AIM:
To analyze the impact of executive functioning in the adaptive behaviors of socialization and daily life and in learning behaviors in children with ASD and children with ADHD.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS:
The participants were 124 children matched in age and intellectual quotient: 37 children with typical development, 52 children with ASD and 35 children with ADHD. Parents reported on their children's adaptive behaviors, while teachers provided information on learning behaviors and executive functioning in daily life.

RESULTS:
There are significant differences between the groups with ASD and ADHD with the typical development group in all domains evaluated. In addition, the group with ASD had worse socialization skills while persistence in learning was more affected in children with ADHD. Finally, the metacognitive index of executive functioning predicted the socialization and persistence of children with ASD. On the other hand, the index of behavioral regulation and the educational level of the parents predicted the socialization skills in children with ADHD.

CONCLUSIONS:
The results highlight the need to include differentiated executive strategies in the intervention of children with ASD and children with ADHD.