Abstract

Cognitive impairments constitute a core feature of attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders (ADHD), but are infrequently assessed in the clinical setting. We have previously demonstrated the ability of an objective cognitive battery, the Screen for Cognitive Impairment in Psychiatry (SCIP), to differentiate adult ADHD patients from healthy controls in five cognitive domains. Here, we further characterize these subtle cognitive deficits by conducting additional univariate analyses on our ADHD dataset to assess the contributions of various demographic characteristics on SCIP performance and to determine correlations between SCIP scores and scores on other measures evaluating illness severity, perceived cognitive deficits, and overall functioning. Age and years of education were moderately associated with performance on the SCIP and/or its subscales in our ADHD cohort. The SCIP global index score was moderately correlated with clinician-rated measures of illness severity and weakly associated with clinician-rated overall functional status. Intriguingly, overall SCIP performance was only weakly associated with patient self-reported measures of cognitive functioning. Of practical importance, small-to-moderate associations were consistently observed between performances on two subscales of the SCIP and the other measures evaluating illness severity, overall functioning, and patient self-reported cognitive functioning (the working memory and visuomotor tracking subscales). Thus, these data demonstrate that the SCIP, particularly the working memory and visuomotor tracking subscales, is sensitive enough to detect cognitive deficits in adult patients with ADHD, and that these deficits are correlated with functional impairments. Furthermore, these data highlight the importance of integrating both objective and subjective evaluations of cognition in adult ADHD.