

A meta-analysis of malingering detection measures for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder

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Psychol Assess. 2018 Oct 25.

doi: 10.1037/pas0000659

Abstract

This meta-analysis compares stand-alone and embedded performance and symptom validity tests (PVTs and SVTs) for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) malingering detection in college students. Simulation design studies utilizing college student samples were included ($k = 11$). Analyses consisted of measures designed or previously used for malingering detection. Random-effects models were constructed to provide aggregated weighted effect sizes (Hedges' g), indicating the difference between genuine ADHD and simulation groups. Overall PVTs (stand-alone and embedded) produced a large effect size ($g = 0.84$, 95% confidence interval [CI; 0.72, 1.13], $p < .001$), whereas overall SVTs (stand-alone and embedded) produced a medium-effect size ($g = 0.54$, 95% CI [0.44, 0.65], $p < .001$). Stand-alone PVTs ($g = 0.98$, 95% CI [0.84, 1.12], $p < .001$) outperformed embedded PVTs ($g = 0.66$, 95% CI [0.51, 0.80], $p < .001$). The stand-alone SVT ($g = 0.66$) and embedded SVTs ($g = 0.54$, 95% CI [0.43, 0.65], $p < .001$) produced medium-effect sizes. These findings support stand-alone PVTs and suggest that performance-based measures should be included in ADHD evaluation batteries, which may consist solely of symptom self-report measures.