Navigating Investigative Interviews with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Plat, I., Meechan, M., & Eastwood, J. – Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

BACKGROUND

Investigative interviews are key to investigations and legal proceedings (O'Mahony et al., 2012). However, some groups face additional difficulties in this context and provide inaccurate and unreliable statements (Herrington & Roberts, 2012), which can lead to miscarriages of justice. One such group is people with ADHD. This neurodevelopmental disorder is characterized by difficulties with sustaining attention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity (O'Mahony et al., 2012; Mies et al., 2018; Gudjonsson et al., 2008), and can include restlessness (Weyandt et al., 2003; Gudjonsson et al., 2008; Young & Cocallis, 2021), feelings of uneasiness (Yang et al., 2013; Saccaro et al., 2021), hesitancy, and uncertainty in memory (Gudjonsson et al., 2007). However,

research exploring ADHD in the context of investigative interviews often explore symptoms in isolation and disregard the internal experience of the individual.

PURPOSE & AIM

ADHD is prevalent among the forensic population (i.e., 26.7%; Young & Cocallis, 2021). Thus, informing best interviewing practices with this population is imperative.

Aims:

- **Explore ADHD challenges while accounting for symptom co-occurrence**
- Explore participants' **internal experiences** and self-reported challenges
- **Identify which symptom may be driving the challenges** faced by this population

RESEARCH QUESTION:

How do individuals with ADHD-like symptoms feel, think, and engage during an investigative interview, and how do the symptoms impact their participation throughout the interviewing process?

METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

- n = 28 (N = 35, excluded n =7)
- 51.1% were women
- Age: M = 22.57 (SD = 11.51)
- **13.8% had an official ADHD diagnosis**
- **20.7% (n = 6) qualified as having ADHD consistent symptoms on our ADHD measure**
- 3.4% took their prescribed ADHD medication on the day of the experiment

PROCEDURE & MEASURES

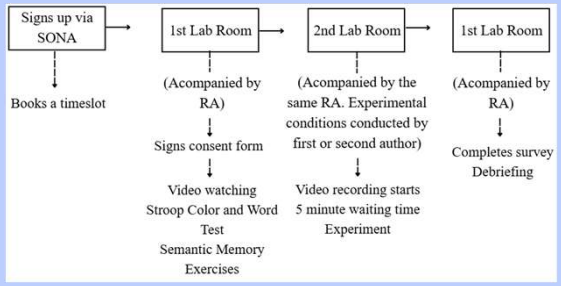


Figure 1: Schematic overview of the experiment

Survey items:

- State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (state items only)
- Post-Mock Interview Questionnaire (developed by the first and third authors. Measures mental effort, engagement during the interview, anxiety/stress, compliance, restlessness, behavioral inhibition, and memory confidence/trust. Includes open- and closed-ended questions)
- Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale
- Demographics

RESULTS

MEASURE 1 - Within Interview Data

- **No significant group difference** in information type, amount and accuracy (see Table 1).

κCompliance: .53; κFree Recall: .84, κConfabulation: .90, κProbing: .73 (Inter-rater analysis performed on 25% of the sample)

RESULTS Cont'd.

MEASURE 2 - Post-Interview Data

Anxiety:

- **Moderate positive relationship between ADHD severity and anxiety score, $r(26) = .41$, $p = .03$, 95% CI [0.04, 0.68]**
- No group differences, $t(26) = -1.8$, $p = .08$, 95% CI [-10.99, .74].

Internal experience:

- Fisher's exact test indicated **no group differences** in reported challenges during the interview, $p = .67$, κQ1: .9 [b]
- Fisher's exact test indicated **no group differences** in reported improvements to the interview, $p = .29$, κQ2: 1 [b]

[b] *Inter-rater analysis performed on full sample*

CONCLUSION

Although tentative, thus far it appears there are no group differences in participants' accounts, reported challenges, and interviewing needs. However, greater ADHD severity is associated with higher in-the-moment anxiety following the interview.

Data collection is ongoing. With a larger sample, **we intend to run an exploratory factor analysis on closed-ended items of the Post-Mock Interview Questionnaire to gain additional insights,** in hopes of informing future best interviewing practices.

Interview Information	Non-ADHD Consistent Group M	Non-ADHD Consistent Group SD	ADHD Consistent Group M	ADHD Consistent Group SD	t(26)	p	Hedges' g	95% BCa CI
Total Details at Free Recall	20.91	5.99	20	8.41	0.30	.77	6.72	-7.21; 7.10
Total Details after Probing	23.14	6.1	18.83	4.45	1.11	.054	6.02	0.92; 8.67
Total Inaccuracies at Free Recall	1.82	1.18	1.67	1.51	0.26	.79	1.29	-1.23; 1.25
Total Inaccuracies after Probing	4.5	3.86	4	1.78	0.31	.76	3.67	-1.543; 2.50
Total Compliant Statements	0.73	0.99	0	0	t(21,000) = 3.46[a]	.03	.91	0.30; 1.19
Total Compliance Corrections	0.50	0.6	0.50	0.84	0	1.0	.67	-0.83; 0.61
Total Confabulation Statements	0.41	0.66	0	0	t(21,000) = 2.88[a]	.02	.62	0.14; 0.68
Total Confabulation Corrections	1.09	0.92	1.83	0.75	-1.81	.08	.92	-1.48; -.08

Table 1: Independent Samples T-test on Participants' Interview Account
Note. Bonferroni correction applied, α = .004
[a] Values obtained from the "equal variances not assumed" row

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