

INTRODUCTION

Definition of ADHD:

- Neurodevelopmental disorders characterized by inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsiveness
- Symptoms interfere with daily functioning and development

Adolescent Challenges with ADHD:

- Increased academic expectations & greater independence
- More complex social environments
- These factors can intensify ADHD-related impairments
- Academic performance difficulties
- Challenges in peer relationships and social interactions
- Critical period for identity development, emotional regulation, and formation of social networks

Common Deficits in Adolescents with ADHD:

- Executive functioning impairments
- Emotional regulation difficulties
- Behavioral control challenges
- Reduced educational success
- Poor social adjustment

Purpose of Literature Review:

- Examining both academic and social domains provides a more comprehensive understanding of adolescents functioning with ADHD
- Examine the impact of ADHD on academic performance, social functioning
- Relationship between ADHD and academic outcomes
- Influence on peer relationships and social functioning
- Identification of evidence-based interventions
- Highlight interventions that improve academic and social outcomes for adolescents with ADHD

METHODS

Study Design & Purpose:

- Qualitative literature review examining the impact of ADHD on adolescent academic performance and social functioning
- Identify evidence-based interventions for adolescents with ADHD
- Comprehensive synthesis of current research
- Identification of patterns and gaps in literature

Data Sources:

- PsycINFO
- PubMed
- Google Scholar
- Salem State University databases

Search Criteria:

- Peer-reviewed empirical studies and systematic reviews
- Publication years: 2020–2025
- Focus on adolescent populations, emphasis on academic outcomes, social functioning, and intervention effectiveness
- 10 articles met inclusion criteria of longitudinal studies, experimental interventions, and systematic reviews

Key Themes Identified:

- Executive functioning deficits
- Emotional regulation challenges
- Peer relationship difficulties
- Co-occurring psychological conditions
- Characteristics of effective interventions
- School-based interventions
- Social skills interventions
- Mindfulness-based approaches
- Family-based interventions

Limitations:

- Potential selection bias
- Reliance on existing published studies
- Possible exclusion of emerging or unpublished research

Future Directions:

- Further research needed to explore gaps and patterns in ADHD-related adolescent studies

RESULTS

Executive Functioning & Academic Outcomes:

- Core ADHD deficits: planning, organization, working memory, self-monitoring, inhibitory control
- Strongly linked to poorer academic performance and classroom behavior
- Common challenges: task initiation, time management, attention, incomplete work
- Impacts teacher perceptions and level of academic support

School-Based Predictors of Success:

- Structured school interventions improve academic, behavioral, and social outcomes
- Key targets: organization, time management, behavioral regulation
- Success factors: student engagement, teacher support, consistent implementation
- Leads to improved task completion and academic achievement

Emotional Variability & Academic Functioning:

- Greater emotional fluctuations in adolescents with ADHD
- Linked to reduced attention, motivation, and engagement
- Contributes to inconsistent academic performance
- Highlights importance of emotional regulation in interventions

Peer Relationship Difficulties:

- Challenges with impulse control, social cues, and emotional regulation
- Outcomes: peer rejection, conflict, social isolation
- Associated with lower self-confidence and increased vulnerability
- Social skills deficits (e.g., interrupting, miscommunication) worsen outcomes

Emotion Recognition & Social Functioning:

- Difficulty recognizing facial expressions and regulating emotions
- Leads to misinterpretation of social situations and peer conflict
- Overexpression of positive emotions may appear disruptive
- Emotional processing deficits contribute to social challenges

Anxiety, Bullying & Social Behavior:

- Co-occurring anxiety increases risk of bullying involvement (victim or perpetrator)
- Heightened emotional sensitivity affects decision-making
- Leads to more negative peer interactions
- Importance of addressing comorbid conditions

Behavioral Risks & Social Adjustment:

- Poor social adjustment linked to increased risk of substance use
- School-based training can reduce risky behaviors
- Focus on decision-making and behavioral regulation improves outcomes

School-Based Interventions:

- Improve academic performance and classroom functioning
- Include behavioral strategies, organization training, reinforcement systems
- Most accessible and widely implemented support approach

Social Skills Interventions:

- Group-based programs moderately improve peer relationships
- Include role-play, communication training, supervised interaction
- Help build effective interpersonal skills

Mindfulness-Based Interventions:

- Improve attention, emotional regulation, and stress management
- Promote self-awareness and reduce impulsiveness
- Emerging evidence supports complementary treatment

Family-Based Interventions:

- Improve communication, emotional regulation, and family functioning
- Combine mindfulness, relaxation, and family therapy strategies
- Emphasize importance of support across home environments

Common Elements of Effective Interventions:

- Behavioral management strategies
- Organizational skills training
- Parent/family involvement
- Consistent reinforcement systems
- Multi-component approaches show strongest outcomes

Interaction of Academic & Social Impairments:

- Academic and social difficulties are interconnected
- Executive functioning and emotional regulation affect both domains
- Shared challenges impact school performance and peer interactions

Characteristics of Effective Interventions:

- Multi-component (school, family, skill-based) approaches
- Focus on executive functioning and emotional regulation
- Consistency across settings (home and school)
- Promote long-term skill development and improved adolescent outcomes

CONCLUSIONS

Overall Conclusion:

- ADHD significantly impacts both academic performance and social functioning in adolescence

Key Contributing Factors:

- Executive functioning deficits
- Emotional variability
- Social processing difficulties
- These contribute to challenges in classroom performance, peer relationships, and behavioral adjustment

Implications for Intervention:

- Emphasis on early, structured, evidence-based interventions
- Importance of support across multiple environments

Collaboration Needs:

- Schools, families, and mental health professionals must work together
- Coordinated efforts improve outcomes for adolescents with ADHD

Future Research Directions:

- Examine long-term effectiveness of interventions
- Develop culturally responsive and individualized treatments
- Investigate integrated approaches targeting both academic and social functioning

Final Takeaway:

- Integrated, multi-setting interventions are essential for providing consistent and effective support for adolescents with ADHD

REFERENCES



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- Dawn Stahura