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Working memory functioning in children with ADHD, aged 6 to 11 years.

Marconi, Daniela C.

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RESEARCH REPORT DETAILS

Surname: Marconi

First name: Daniela

Student no.: 0617310H

Supervisor: Esther Price

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Education is becoming an area of particular importance, specifically in developing countries, such as South Africa. Consequently, teachers are becoming more cognisant of children at risk of developmental disorders such as ADHD. It has been suggested that working memory (and short-term memory) is deficient in children diagnosed with ADHD. Moreover, it has been noted that the inability to utilise the working memory system (and short-term memory system) efficiently may be linked to poor academic attainment. It has also been suggested that working memory and IQ are strongly related. Owing to these assertions, this research focused on the differences between short-term and working memory capacities of children with ADHD and those without an ADHD diagnosis, over and above that which can be explained by IQ. Moreover, this research looked at the differences in verbal and visuo-spatial short-term and working memory between children diagnosed with ADHD and those without ADHD, over and above that which can be explained by IQ. **Method:** Ninety-two children ages 6 to 11 from several remedial and mainstream schools were included in the study sample. **Results:** Findings suggested global short-term and working memory capacity deficits for children diagnosed with ADHD. Moreover, verbal and visuo-spatial short-term and working memory impairments were noted in those with ADHD. Lastly, it was suggested that spatial reasoning deficits might account for the observed differences in IQ found between those with and without an ADHD diagnosis. **Conclusion:** Working memory and short-term memory appear to be impaired in children diagnosed with ADHD.

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