Gender Effects on Self-Awareness of Executive Functioning Deficits in Adolescents with ADHD
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Objective: Recent studies have demonstrated that children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) often display an inflated view of their executive functioning (EF) abilities. This study examines whether there are gender differences in self-awareness of executive functioning.

Method: Participants (free of comorbid psychological disorders) included 22 control (male: n = 9) and 35 (male: n = 26) ADHD subjects, aged 11–16. Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Functioning Self and Parent (BRIEF-SR/PR) forms were collected for each subject from an archival database at a private Neuropsychology Clinic. Discrepancy scores were calculated for each domain by subtracting the adolescent’s T-score from the parent’s T-score. Positive discrepancy scores indicated the adolescent reported fewer difficulties than the parent.

Results: Interaction between ADHD and gender was assessed using a MANOVA. Discrepancy scores in Metacognition Index (MI) were significantly more positive for children with ADHD compared to controls (p = .04). Discrepancy scores for Behavior Regulation Index (BRI) were significantly more positive for males than females in both the ADHD and control groups (p = .026). The ADHD and gender interaction effect showed no significance on reported discrepancy scores for MI, BRI, or GEC.

Conclusion(s): Within the MI domain of EF, adolescents with ADHD tend to endorse fewer difficulties when compared to parent reports. Within the BRI domain EF, males tend to endorse fewer difficulties than parents. Lack of self-awareness in both genders may create barriers in treatment aimed at improving EF. This study suggests that males have less self-awareness of their behavioral regulation.