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## ADHD and Youth Violence: A Critical

### Appraisal of the Literature

#### Critical Appraisal: Violent ADHD Youth

##### Research Problem & Rationale for Study

A lack of research exists on the topic of ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) and its link to youth violence. As someone who lives with ADHD, this was an important topic for me to delve into. As I began to search deeper into the problem, I noticed the research surrounding this topic contained errors or flaws in the methodology. This is not to say the information is invalid, but rather to point out errors to make improvements for future research. After collecting a variety of sources, I compared individual differences and commonalities.

##### Methods

Secondary research was the main source of information for this study. The studies were gathered and then disassembled to review only the most valuable information. An initial review brought the sources down to approximately 19 current and relevant articles. The main search for the material was conducted online via the Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC) Library's online EBSCO Discovery System.

##### Results/Findings

The results indicate that there are many areas of overlap between youth violence and its association with ADHD. Certain characteristics of ADHD are more prone to induce violent youth. Some of the side effects of ADHD, specifically social, further escalate violent tendencies.

##### Conclusions / Recommendations

The main recommendation this research provides is to ensure that certain aspects are considered when conducting future research. This includes: variances in gender, the diagnosis process of ADHD, the collection of violence statistics, and family dynamics.

# JIBC Research Brief

## Structured Abstract

**Introduction:** ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) is a common childhood disorder that typically involves youth with a heightened inability to focus or concentrate. This paper was written to examine the relationship between ADHD and youth crime, but more specifically to address the gaps in contemporary literature and areas of future research. Additionally, many factors associated with ADHD are also identified as indicators of youth violence. The culmination of these factors and the gaps in the research presented an opportunity to further explore this issue.

**Methods:** To gain an understanding of the research, secondary sources were gathered and analyzed. A literature review was the vessel used to gather relevant material for further dissection. The Justice Institute of British Columbia's online EBSCO Discovery System was the main search tool to locate available research. Additional databases were also queried, including, Google Scholar, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, and the National Criminal Justice Reference Services. Two different search strategies were utilized to gather material.

**Results/Findings:** The results of this study indicate that there are still considerable gaps in the research and flaws in the methodology. One of the major themes surrounded the lack of research on females with ADHD. Additionally, when females are researched their results are mixed with males resulting in an improper analysis of results. This, along with other differences has led to research gaps that require future exploration.

**Discussion:** The discussion section was speculative and focused on areas where an increase in research would benefit the body of research. Comorbidity and mental health are areas where future research is needed. Further, anxiety and depression have been linked to ADHD, indicating that ADHD may be connected to other mental health disorders. The level of violence committed was also identified as an area requiring future research. Differences in ethnicity, type of violence and the collection of violence statistics were all areas that caused variances in this field of research.

**Practical Applications:** The intended consequence of this research is to increase awareness of ADHD and the effects it can have on a youth's development. The social effects are the main concern, as these seem to guide youth towards deviance more than the other side effects. A secondary purpose was to provide insight into the lack of strategies to address these issues.

## References:

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