

## COVID-19's Impact on the Use of Media, Educational Performance, and Learning in Children and Adolescents with ADHD Who Engaged in Virtual Learning

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**Abstract :** Objective: A literature review was performed to examine the existing research on COVID-19 lockdown as it relates to ADHD child/adolescent individuals, media use, and impact on educational performance/learning. It was surmised that with the COVID-19 shut-down and transition to remote learning, a less structured learning environment, increased screen time, in addition to potential difficulty accessing school resources would impair ADHD individuals' performance and learning. A resulting increase in the number of youths diagnosed and treated for ADHD would be expected. As of yet, there has been little to no published data on the incidence of ADHD as it relates to COVID-19 outside of reports from several nonprofit agencies such as CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder ), who reported an increased number of calls to their helpline, The New York based Child Mind Institute, who reported an increased number of appointments to discuss medications, and research released from Athenahealth showing an increase in the number of patients receiving new diagnosis of ADHD and new prescriptions for ADHD medications. Methods: A literature search for articles published between 2020 and 2021 from Pubmed, Google Scholar, PsychInfo, was performed. Search phrases and keywords included "covid, adhd, child, impact, remote learning, media, screen". Results: Studies primarily utilized parental reports, with very few from the perspective of the ADHD individuals themselves. Most findings thus far show that with the COVID-19 quarantine and transition to online learning, ADHD individuals' experienced decreased ability to keep focused or adhere to the daily routine, as well as increased inattention-related problems, such as careless mistakes or lack of completion in homework, which in turn translated into overall more difficulty with remote learning. To add further injury, one study showed (just on evaluation of two different sites within the US) that school based services for these individuals decreased with the shift to online-learning. Increased screen time, television, social media, and gaming were noted amongst ADHD individuals. One study further differentiated the degree of digital media, identifying individuals with "problematic " or "non-problematic" use. ADHD children with problematic digital media use suffered from more severe core symptoms of ADHD, negative emotions, executive function deficits, damage to family environment, pressure from life events, and a lower motivation to learn. Conclusions and Future Considerations: Studies found not only was online learning difficult for ADHD individuals but it, in addition to greater use of digital media, was associated with worsening ADHD symptoms impairing schoolwork, in addition to secondary findings of worsening mood and behavior. Currently, data on the number of new ADHD cases, in addition to data on the prescription and usage of stimulants during COVID-19, has not been well documented or studied; this would be well-warranted out of concern for over diagnosing or over-prescribing our youth. It would also be well-worth studying how reversible or long-lasting these negative impacts may be.

**Keywords :** COVID-19, remote learning, media use, ADHD, child, adolescent

**Conference Title :** ICCCPP 2022 : International Conference on Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry

**Conference Location :** Vancouver, Canada

**Conference Dates :** May 23-24, 2022