

Infants' First Year Development and Familial Liability of
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Clinical Psychology

University of Newcastle

November 2019

Declarations

Statement of Originality

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying subject to the provision of the Copyright Act 1968.

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to my supervisors Prof. Frini Karayanidis and Dr. Linda Campbell for their support and supervision. Also thank you to staff and research students who contributed to the broader dataset.

Thank you to my fellow Master of Clinical Psychology 2018-2019 cohort. Without each one of you, it would be uneasy for me to complete the clinical training. It has been an absolute honour to work with you all as psychologists.

Thank you to my family for the unconditional love and support to make this project happened. Mum, dad and Rebekah, you are my role models in life who have always inspired me to be a better me. To my husband, David, you are my shelter and back up. Thank you for always encouraging me to chase my dream.

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Manuscript formatted for the Development and
Psychopathology (see Appendix A for Instructions to
Authors for this journal)

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Abstract

Infants' First Year Development and Familial Liability of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Previous literature has demonstrated high heritability in Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and identified some early risk factors in later development of ADHD, including language ability, motor skills and temperament. Emerging evidence has further suggested the possible link between ADHD and poor cognitive functioning and sensory processing. However, little research has done on the relationship between familial ADHD liability and the expression of those early risk factors during infancy. This study explored how familial ADHD liability associated with infants' behaviours at their first year of life. Infants were categorized into ADHD and control group based on their parental history

of ADHD. Standardized assessment and parental reports were used to examine infants' cognitive functioning, sensory processing, communication, motor ability and temperament. Results indicated that there were no significant differences in behavioural outcomes between infants with and without familial ADHD liability at both 6 and 12 months of age. These results suggested that familial history of ADHD was not a good predictor to detect early differences of cognitive functioning, sensory processing, communication, motor ability and temperament in infancy. Future research is necessary to fully understand the manifestation and pathogenesis of ADHD.

Keywords: Infant, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Familial Liability, Cognitive Development, Sensory Processing