



University of Wales
Trinity Saint David
BIRMINGHAM

Module name:

Methods and Search Strategy Academic Poster

Student name: Tahira Aziz

Student ID: 2216458

Module code: (BMHP6020_BIRM)

Women Diagnosed with ADHD After the Age of 30 in the UK: Experiences, Diagnostic Barriers and Service Provision

01 Introduction and Research Aim

This chapter outlines the methodology used to investigate the experiences of women diagnosed with ADHD after the age of 30 in the UK. A secondary research approach was adopted to critically evaluate and synthesise existing literature.

Secondary research enables researchers to examine a broad evidence base while avoiding the ethical and practical constraints associated with primary data collection (Booth, Sutton and Papaioannou, 2016).

Research Aim: To critically explore the experiences of women in the United Kingdom diagnosed with ADHD after the age of 30, examining diagnostic barriers, psychosocial impacts, and the effectiveness of UK health and social care services.

03 Searching for Information

The search process involved identifying key concepts, selecting databases, applying keywords, screening titles and abstracts, and reviewing full texts against inclusion criteria. PRISMA guidelines informed the search process to ensure transparency and reproducibility (Page *et al.*, 2021). Following screening, ten studies were identified, with five core studies selected for detailed thematic analysis.

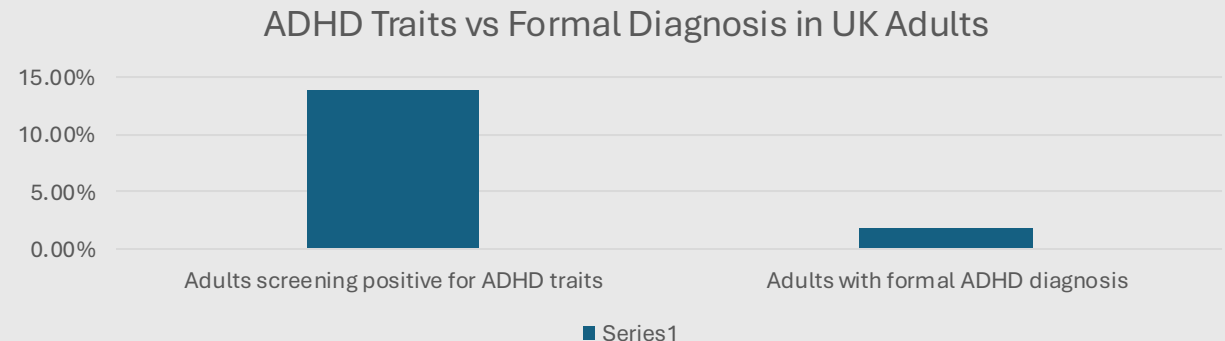


02 Search Strategy

A search strategy is a structured and systematic process used to identify relevant literature and minimise bias (Booth, Sutton and Papaioannou, 2016). Electronic databases including Google Scholar, PubMed, PsycINFO and CINAHL were searched using terms such as “ADHD AND women”, “late diagnosis AND ADHD”, “ADHD AND masking” and “adult women ADHD UK”. Boolean operators (AND/OR) were used to refine searches and increase relevance (Page *et al.*, 2021).

04 Bar Chart on ADHD Traits vs Formal Diagnosis in UK Adults

National data indicate that approximately 13.9% of UK adults screen positive for ADHD traits, yet only 1.8% report receiving a formal diagnosis, highlighting significant underdiagnosis (NHS Digital, 2023). Women are particularly vulnerable due to internalised symptoms and masking behaviours that reduce symptom visibility (Attoe and Climie, 2023; Wurth *et al.*, 2025).



05 Research Validation and Analysis

Research validation refers to ensuring that evidence is credible, reliable and appropriate for the study (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). The CRAAP framework was used to assess Currency, Relevance, Authority, Accuracy and Purpose of selected sources. Although secondary research provides access to extensive evidence, findings remain dependent on the quality of existing studies (Aveyard, 2019). Thematic analysis was conducted using Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six-step framework. Three themes emerged: **diagnostic barriers and gender bias**, **psychological and social impact**, and **healthcare provision and service access**. These themes were consistently reported across studies examining women diagnosed later in life (Baig and Kahya, 2025; Young *et al.*, 2021).



06 Inclusion Criteria

- Peer-reviewed journal articles
- English-language studies
- Adult women diagnosed with ADHD
- UK or comparable healthcare contexts
- Studies published within the last 10 years where possible



07 Exclusion Criteria

- Child-only populations
- Non-peer-reviewed literature
- Articles not fully accessible
- Studies unrelated to adult ADHD in women

C	Currency: The timeliness of the info
R	Relevance: How the info fits your needs
A	Authority: The source of the info
A	Accuracy: Reliability and correctness of the info
P	Purpose: The reason the info exists

08 Ethical Considerations

Ethics in secondary research refers to the responsible use and analysis of existing data while maintaining academic integrity and transparency (Aveyard, 2019).



Research Standards

- University ethical guidelines were followed.
- Ethical approval was not required as no participants were involved.

Privacy and Confidentiality

- No personal or identifiable data were collected.
- All information came from published sources.

Respect for Intellectual Property

- All sources were correctly cited and referenced.
- Plagiarism was avoided.

Objectivity

- Findings were reported accurately and without bias.
- Different perspectives were considered.

Data Integrity and Reliability

- Only credible and peer-reviewed sources were used.
- The CRAAP framework was applied to assess quality.

Reference List:

Aveyard, H. (2019) *Doing a Literature Review in Health and Social Care*. 4th edn. London: Open University Press.

Attoe, D.E. and Climie, E.A. (2023) 'Miss. Diagnosis: A systematic review of ADHD in adult women', *Journal of Attention Disorders*, 27(7), pp. 645–657. doi: 10.1177/10870547231161533.

Baig, S.K. and Kahya, H.H. (2025) 'The experiences of women navigating a late ADHD diagnosis in the UK', *Advances in Mental Health*, pp. 1–25. doi: 10.1080/18387357.2025.2524513.

Booth, A., Sutton, A. and Papaioannou, D. (2016) *Systematic Approaches to a Successful Literature Review*. 2nd edn. London: Sage.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) 'Using thematic analysis in psychology', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), pp. 77–101. doi: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.

NHS Digital (2023) *Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder*. Available at: <https://digital.nhs.uk> (Accessed: 18 June 2026).

Page, M.J., McKenzie, J.E., Bossuyt, P.M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T.C., Mulrow, C.D., Shamseer, L., Tetzlaff, J.M., Akl, E.A., Brennan, S.E., Chou, R., Glanville, J., Grimshaw, J.M., Hróbjartsson, A., Lalu, M.M., Li, T., Loder, E.W., Mayo-Wilson, E., McDonald, S., McGuinness, L.A., Stewart, L.A., Thomas, J., Tricco, A.C., Welch, V.A., Whiting, P. and Moher, D. (2021) 'The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews', *BMJ*, 372, n71. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2019) *Research Methods for Business Students*. 8th edn. Harlow: Pearson.

Wurth, P., Fuermaier, A.B.M., Strand, A.H. and Thorell, L.B. (2025) 'Diagnosis acceptance, masking and perceived benefits and challenges in adults with ADHD and ASD: Associations with quality of life', *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 16. doi: 10.3389/fpsyt.2025.1668780.

Young, S., Asherson, P., Lloyd, T., Absoud, M., Arif, M., Colley, W.A., Cortese, S., Cubbin, S., Doyle, N., Morua, S.D., Ferreira-Lay, P., Gudjonsson, G., Ivens, V., Jarvis, C., Lewis, A., Mason, P., Newlove-Delgado, T., Pitts, M., Read, H. and van Rensburg, K. (2021) 'Failure of healthcare provision for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder in the United Kingdom: A consensus statement', *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 12, p. 649399. doi: 10.3389/fpsyt.2021.649399.