

the principal researcher: the first with the master's student to discuss coding issues and the second with another researcher to reach a consensus on certain themes. Nvivo was used to obtain the Kappa coefficient (Cohen, 1960). This nonparametric test was used to quantify the agreement between the principal researcher and the master's student in the qualitative data. This coefficient is between -1 and +1. Coefficient between 0.40 and 0.60 is average, from 0.60 is satisfying, and above 0.80 is excellent. The more the coefficient is closer to 1, the more the judges have a high degree of agreement. The interrater reliability (IRR) obtained was excellent ($k = 0.90$). Reports on each of the categories were produced to select the quotes that best represented the perceptions of the participants.

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Students reported difficulties in managing their emotions related to their learning. Some tended to exaggerate situations or push the “panic button” easily, anticipate the future, and let themselves be overcome by more negative emotions. One student reported what she experiences when she feels overwhelmed by emotions caused by academic tasks:

It’s really like the level in an overflow rising when I have a lot of assignments to do and can’t see my way clear. I know I will manage, but, for now, it’s just too much; just overload and then (gagging noise). [Female, ID 103]

In addition, the stress generated by tests seemed quite important for some students, even to the point of causing memory lapses in some. One student mentioned that she was not performing up to her potential because of this:

I had an examination in the only subject I thought I knew fairly well. But the exam didn’t go well because I had lost a lot of self-confidence and had big blanks during the exam. It looks like I forgot just about everything and I was really

one student mentioned that “motivating myself to do the task is always difficult because there are always a thousand distractions” [Female, ID 101]. Students also had a strong tendency to procrastinate: they would start tasks at the last minute, even if it were something important such as studying for an exam or completing a long assignment.

Indeed, students reported having difficulty being still. One mentioned that “it’s stronger than me. I’ll jiggle a leg. It’s like overflowing with energy. I’ve got energy to spare” [Male, ID 102]. For other students, this agitation was more mental than physical. For example, one student mentioned that: “I still get fidgety legs. It is incredible, but it’s a lot less worse; it’s really more in my head” [Male, ID 105]. Many students find sitting for a long period of time difficult. One also reported an impact on concentration: “If I sit too long, I just have to fidget. It looks like I’ve lost control; I have a lot of tics. Since I move around a lot, I get distracted, too” [Female, ID 115]. According to one relative, having several classes in a day also increased a student’s physical agitation: “When he had several classes the same day, he not only had trouble concentrating but just sitting still” [Female, ID 205]. Another student [Female, ID 126] reported that her agitation increased when she didn’t exercise: “I’ve had a harder time sitting still since starting CEGEP because I had to really cut back on sports since I have less time than in high school.” One student indicated that she sometimes said whatever comes into her head without thinking about the consequences: “The words just come out faster than I can control” [Female, ID 115]. Others reported talking a lot and,

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mentioned that their diagnosis severely undermined their self-confidence because they had the feeling, for example, of not being “equal to the others in the group.” Another student brought this comparison to students without ADHD which appears to affect her self-esteem:

What affects me the most and hurts me the most—I don't know—but maybe it's that it affects my self-esteem and that colors everything else. I want to study more...because I feel like I'm not really [good] enough, specifically because, if I compare myself to others, I have to work harder. [Female, ID 110]

For other students, what affected them most about their ADHD was the feeling that they needed the medication to function in everyday life. As one student explained: “What I find really annoying about having ADHD is that I need to take a pill. I'm not myself without it” [Female, ID 129]. Another student expressed embarrassment with his symptoms of hyperactivity: “Sometimes, I'm so embarrassed to tell people I have ADHD. Sometimes, I just want to say I have ADD, because I don't consider myself hyperactive” [Male, ID 125]. Such perceptions appear to be strongly influenced by the opinions of others: “Based on my personal experience, we consider hyperactive people as—I don't know how to say it—as aggressive and taking up a lot of space. They aren't necessarily liked” [Male, ID 125].

Two students mentioned that “school is not adapted” for people with ADHD. One mentioned that having ADHD in college “is very difficult every day. Even now, with the success I'm having, it is still extremely painful” [Male, ID 111]. While recognizing the major difficulties encountered at school by her child, a parent explained that ADHD has also had positive impacts:

In fact, having ADHD at school, I think, got her through some very difficult times and times where she almost lacked confidence. Her ADHD has made her the she is today... So, in the end, her ADHD has really helped her work hard and become the person she is. [Female, ID 203]

Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to elicit greater understanding of how ADHD affects the student in the college or university environment. Interviews with participants provided a better understanding of the academic difficulties experienced

by college students with ADHD, which seem to be closely related to deficits in executive functions. The close relationship between executive functions when difficulties arise shows the complexity of what they experience. Their points of view also help contextualize in detail what they are going through.

How Does ADHD Affect Students in Their Studies?

Many of the difficulties reported by participants relate to problems implementing learning and study strategies. Students find it difficult to maintain their attention and remember what they read, to take notes while they listen to the instructor, to prepare for exams, and to plan and write their assignment on time. These difficulties and others can be explained by the close relationship between executive functions when difficulties arise (Barkley, 2012). For example, college and university classes require students to draw upon working memory and attention skills (Bauerlein, 2011). The results of our study show, however, that

ceptions, as other factors in the students' lives might have influenced their perceptions. The fact that some students in our study were enrolled in and benefited from the adapted services of their institutions might have influenced how they perceived their experiences. Similarly, a large majority of the students were taking ADHD medication. We know that medication has a positive influence on the academic sphere by attenuating negative impacts (Weyandt et al., 2017). Therefore, our results might be influenced by this variable. No data were collected to verify whether the students receiving medication adhered to their doses or whether they took the medication only during the week or during the examination period. Lastly, the study was designed and structured to capture a "moment in time." Ideally, a full picture of the experience of a college student with ADHD would include multiple interviews over several years. This timespan would allow researchers to have a more complete picture of the difficulties experienced by students on their pathway to postsecondary education. This would yield a better idea—in "real time"—of the functional impairments that might emerge throughout a student's academic career and which might influence their experiences. Despite these limitations, we believe that this study is important because it is one of the few that qualitatively analyzes how ADHD affects students in their schooling. In addition, this study involved postsecondary students in the Province of Quebec (Canada) which is a population that has received little research attention. In addition, collecting information from relatives and counselors ensures a comprehensive understanding of the academic experiences of the students with ADHD and contributes to the richness of analysis and data triangulation.

Implications for Practice and Research

The results of this study have many implications. Although modest, this study constitutes an important contribution to the literature by presenting the unique perspective of French-speaking Canadian students with ADHD about their condition. In particular, they reported significant functional impairments academically. Institutions need to be aware of these impairments because results reflect more complex problems related to the inclusion of students with ADHD. Although some students seem to be functioning quite normally on the surface, their distress is unquestionable. Indeed, even though they reported having succeeded in school, it can still be extremely painful to live with that condition in postsecondary education. Efforts should be made to develop a more inclusive learning environment. For ODS counselors, it is also

essential that they assess and describe the functioning of students, thereby improving decisions on accommodations (Weis et al., 2019) and service offering.

postsecondary education. For instructors, it might be appropriate to adopt the principles of universal design for learning (UDL) (Rose & Meyer, 2006), which could benefit all students and not just those with ADHD. UDL offers several ways that specifically target deficit in executive function in students with ADHD. Overall, several approaches are effective in improving ADHD in students with ADHD. Nevertheless, it is essential to keep in mind that the most important thing is to help students transition from intent to action. Thus, ODS and instructors have a key role to play.

With respect to students' negative perceptions of their ADHD, it might be appropriate to support them in developing a better understanding of their diagnoses and inform them of supportive measures. Thus, there should be efforts to offer interventions that allow students to get to know themselves (e.g., strengths, needs, etc.), to accept themselves, to understand the impacts of the disorder, and to identify their needs. These are all essential skills in succeeding in postsecondary education

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