

Qualitative Analysis of Temporal Experiences for College Students with Learning Disabilities and Attention Disorders

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Background & Introduction

- Students with Learning Disabilities (LD) face diagnostically related struggles with time.
- Studies have shown that organization and time management skills are difficult for students with LD [1].
- Time is especially challenging for students with LD transitioning from high school to college [1].
- These difficulties can be misinterpreted by others [2].
- Overall, there is a lack of research explaining and interpreting time further than the management of time.

Purpose

The purpose of this analysis is to identify experiences related to temporal challenges and strategies used by students with LD to navigate these challenges.

Methods

- The undergraduate students were involved in a larger study to develop university supports for students with LD (CS³LD project)
- Participants: 52 undergraduate students with LD.
- Data are transcripts and field notes from 30 facilitated group discussions with undergraduates with LD held monthly over four years.
- Data were repeatedly read and codes reduced into themes using constant comparison of the data to categories/themes.

Figure 1. Student Quotes

Temporal Challenges

- "...it usually takes me twice as long to get something done as a student [with] an LD." Participant 1
- "...I have to spend a lot more time on virtually everything...reading to studying to shopping...that is very frustrating and hard to compensate for other than just spending more time on things." Participant 2

Strategies

- "I usually plan it out by writing it in my planner, making sure everything is color coded. So each class has a different highlight color and each activity has a different color as well." Participant 3
- "We are able to solve, we're able to fill in that missing piece of the puzzle and see what a normal person can't solve." Participant 4

Misconception

- "She viewed it as like I was doing this on purpose...by not being fast enough" Participant 5

Support

- "My mentor seems to really care...near exams she was helping me go through holistic ways to approach test anxiety." Participant 6

Conclusion & Discussion

Diagnostically related temporal challenges for college students with Learning Disabilities (LD) extend beyond time management obstacles. Temporal challenges, both current and future oriented, are impacted by misconception from others. Challenges are worsened for students with LD when attempts to compensate lead to unsuccessful experiences. Students with LD utilize strategies that can help in dealing with these struggles through forming Habits and Routines as well as Reframing disability related needs. In addition to personal strategies, positive supports enhance students ability to use strategies effectively. Students have expressed ways to reframe these struggles in a way to lessen misconception from others. Understanding experiences related to time can inform interventions for transitioning undergraduate college students with LD.

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Results

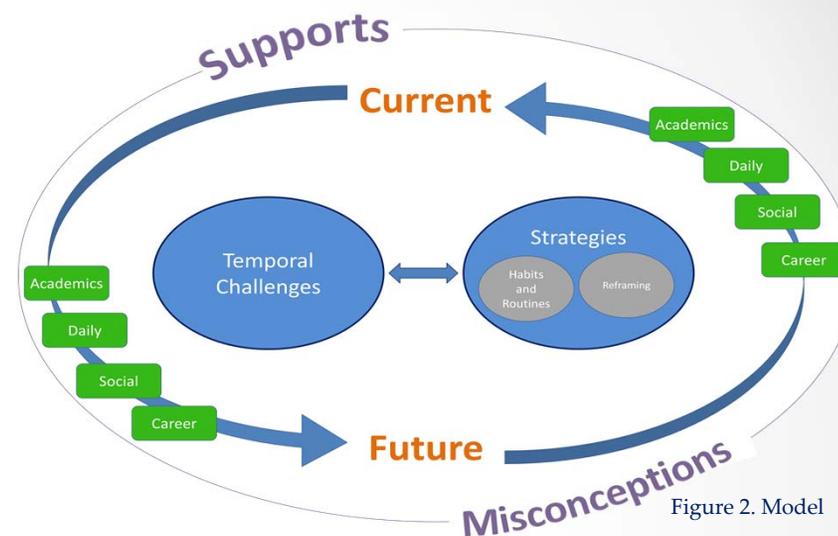


Figure 2. Model

Figure 3. Themes Definitions

Temporal Challenges	Current: time constraints related to the students' everyday life demands. Future: time related to planning ahead (academics, daily routines, career, social engagement).
Strategies	Reframing: how students reframe their disability to increase personal understanding and how they explain it to others. Habits and Routines: how students stay on task and prioritize academic and social demands.
Supports	People and services in their environment that facilitates the use of strategies.
Misconceptions	People misunderstanding LD.

References

- [1] Skinner, M. E., & Lindstrom, B. D. (2003). Bridging the gap between high school and college: Strategies for the successful transition of students with learning disabilities. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth*, 47(3), 132-137. doi: 10.1080/10459880309604441
- [2] Doyle, N., & McDowall, A. (2015). Is coaching an effective adjustment for dyslexic adults? *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 8(2), 154-168. doi: 10.1080/17521882.2015.1065894

