Investigating the Neuroscience Behind ADHD and its Educational Impacts for College Students

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As a neuroscience and education double-major, finding avenues to bridge these two disciplines has

become a strong research interest of mine. This project was my first attempt at doing so, where I investigated

the neuroscience behind ADHD as well as its educational impacts for college students. Specifically, I focused

on students who did not get diagnosed (or were still trying to) until college and how that process works, as well

as the obstacles many face while doing so and how to alleviate them. The purpose driving this research was to

cultivate conversations about ADHD and conduct research that would ultimately culminate in a guidebook for

Bowdoin students including resources for those seeking an ADHD diagnosis.

To gather information for this guidebook, I was fortunate enough to engage in almost weekly

conversations with a different faculty member, staff member, student, or local professional to hear their

perspectives. Through these talks, I was able to hear perspectives from those working in psychology and the

BLCT, to those in the health center, to those in student and digital accessibility as well as our counseling

services. From these talks and the authenticity of the interviewees, I learned about how classes and their content

can be made more accessible for students with ADHD, study strategies that will not only benefit those with

ADHD but that also will help all students, and the first steps students may take as they start the diagnosis

process. Each conversation guided my research in considering what resources may be most important for

Bowdoin students as they consider and proceed with an ADHD diagnosis.

In addition to these informative conversations that guided my research, I was also able to learn more

about the neurological basis of ADHD through choosing and reading journal articles and virtually attending the

Annual International Conference on ADHD, which was put on by CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention

Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder). This incredible opportunity, which was possible thanks to this research award,

allowed me to hear some of the newest information and research about ADHD. Presentation topics ranged from

those about groups that often are under-diagnosed with ADHD, the neurophysiology behind ADHD, and

treatment options in addition to or besides medication. From this conference, I was able to take the information

that I learned and combine it with the personal interviews to create the guidebook.

One of my most important takeaways from this research process is the impact of ADHD personally and

professionally in addition to affecting people in their organizational and scheduling skills, which are correlated

with executive functioning. Through this project, I hope that the curated research presented in the guidebook

can support students as they navigate the diagnosis process and connect them with the incredible people and

additional resources that Bowdoin and the surrounding area have to offer. Thank you very much for this

wonderful opportunity to explore this research and create something to benefit future Bowdoin students!

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