NAVIGATING AND ACCESSING HIGHER EDUCATION: THE EXPERIENCES OF

COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH ATTENTION DEFICIT

HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

by

Lavon Flowers

A Dissertation Presented to the
FACULTY OF THE USC ROSSIER SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

August 2012

UMI Number: 3542247

UMI
Dissertation Publishing

UMI 3542247

ProQuest

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband and my girls; I love you!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the

one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked. Luke 12:48

I want to first thank my family who have proven to be pillars in the foundation of my success. To my husband, without your love and support I would not have been able to complete this journey. To Jordan and Kameron, always strive for success and remember you are powerful women. To my family, Mom and Dad, you instilled in me the desire to remain diligent in seeking my educational endeavors. A special loving thank you to my 'in laws', Jackie and Alfred, you are more than 'in laws' to me - you are my mom and dad.

I would also like to thank my grandmother and grandfather, Alleane and Cornelius Williams; you made sure I had a good educational foundation. I would like to give sincere thanks to my extended family and friends who have inquired, provided childcare and encouraging words throughout my doctoral journey. To my aunts, uncles, nephews and cousins; some of you are close and some far, but your prayers and uplifting thoughts have been essential to my success. My close friends, Trina, Shelley, Paula and Jewel; thanks for keeping me sane and making me stop and reflect on the process.

I am thankful to the supports that I was provided by the members of my USC family. My doctoral committee chair, Dr. Tobey, you have encouraged, embraced and supported me, I am forever thankful for the time, diligence and knowledge you provided to me. To my dissertation co- chairs Dr. Venegas, Dr. Baca and Dr. Fischer, you have gone above and beyond to providing me with much needed feedback and information on my topic. To all my USC cohort members that embarked on this journey with me,

through the ups and downs, long nights and long papers, we have gained a wealth of

knowledge and long lasting friendships, 'Fight On.'

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

Background: Studies conducted in the areas of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and students support services at the postsecondary level are very limited. Therefore, there is a need to conduct a study that examines the effects of supports services on students with ADHD. **Purpose**: The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of students with ADHD and their ability to access higher education. **Method**: Purposeful sampling of 10 students with ADHD enrolled at community college was selected to interview individually. **Results**: Research findings illuminate the complex ways that students with ADHD access higher education. **Conclusion**: Community colleges should increase outreach for students with ADHD and there should be continued training to instructors on how to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

CHAPTER 1

The Problem and its Underlying Framework

Technological networks such as Facebook, My Space and Twitter have become a norm in the daily life of many individuals. Through these networks, people connect with friends, find employment, market themselves, find companionship, and communicate ideologies, as well as many other forms of networking. Although technological networks are a new way for individuals to stay connected, the uses of networks have been in place for generations. Coleman (1988) provides examples of some of the different kinds of networks that exist. An example of the dynamics of the wholesale diamond market in New York City shows how networks are a critical function in many settings. In the example, merchants have the ability to take diamonds to look at privately; there is no guarantee to the merchant that the diamonds will not be substituted. This trustworthiness is due to close family ties. The merchants in the marketplace often have ties through family, community or religious affiliation. Therefore, if an individual substituted, stones they would be ostracized by the group, which would eventually impair their ability to do business in the community. The relationships of the individuals in the community and the network created "makes possible transactions in which trustworthiness is taken for granted and trade can occur with ease" (Coleman, 1988, p. S99). The network in this example can also be described as social capital. Throughout this study, the theory of Social Capital is used to show its importance as it relates to the success of students in their educational journey.

Background of the Problem

Students with disabilities often face an uphill battle when it comes to educational attainment. Disabled students have a difficult time meeting grade level standards because of factors related to their disability. Students with disabilities drop out of the K-12 setting at a rate of ~16% in comparison to none disabled students who have a dropout rate of ~8% (Chapman, Laird, Ifill, & KewalRamani, 2011). The lack of ability to compete with their grade level peers affects their ability to access higher education. It is well known that students with disabilities enter colleges and universities at much lower levels than other groups of students. There are approximately 707,000 students with disabilities in higher education (Raue & Louis, 2011). Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is one of the most common disabilities diagnosed, comprising from 3% to7% of the childhood population (Barkley, 1997; Weyandt & Du Paul, 2008). The National Center for Education Statistics (Raue & Louis, 2011) reports that, in 2008- 2009, students with ADHD accounted for 18% of the population of students with disabilities enrolled in postsecondary institutions.

Many of these students who have accessed higher education are not successful at completing their education. It is necessary that students with disabilities complete higher education programs. Economic data indicates that there are salary differences based on an individual's educational level; people who hold an associate's degree will make 39,506 a year, people with a bachelor's degree will make 58,613 a year, and those who hold a master's degree will make 70,856 a year in comparison to those with only a high school diploma who make 31,283 a year (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Based on the above stated information, completing some form of higher education is a true need for all

members of society. Higher education will undoubtedly lead to a greater quality of life for the student and an ability to be independent of family. Therefore, there is a definite need for educators to support students' access to higher education.

Studies conducted in the areas of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and student support services at the postsecondary level are very limited. Therefore, there is a need to conduct a study that examines the effects of support services on students with ADHD. Numerous researchers have shown that students with ADHD face academic problems that affect their ability to complete academic course work (Barkley, 1997; Glutting, Youngstorm, & Watkins, 2005; Shaw-Zirt, Popali-Lehane, Chaplin, & Bergmen, 2005; Reaser, Prevatt, Petscher, & Proctor, 2007; Weyandt &Du Paul, 2008). This has an effect on the ability of students with ADHD to access higher education. In recent years, there has been an increase of postsecondary participation by students with ADHD (Meaux, Green &Broussard, 2009). Therefore, there is a need for postsecondary institutions to plan how they will support this increasing population of students who they serve.

Statement of the Problem

At present, there is a body of knowledge that shows how social capital can be used to support students. However, there is a lack of research to the use of social capital and institutional agents as it relates to supporting individuals with disabilities (Stanton-Salazar, 1997). The articulation of the effects of institutional agents, or, as used in this study, support service personnel, has not been seen in literature as it relates to students with ADHD and their access and completion of higher education.

Further research is needed on support services at the college level. The literature shows that there needs to be a focus on information and strategies given to new and continuing college students to help them meet the challenges at the postsecondary level (Finn, Getzel, &Mc Manus, 2008). In addition, Wilson, Getzel, & Brown (2000) confirm that there are numerous program issues that need to be addressed to make support service programs more efficient and effective. Multiple researchers indicate that more research leading to understanding what skills and supports are needed to persist (Abrams & Jernigan, 1984; Karabenick & Knapp, 1991). A review of research shows a need for additional understanding on what forms of social capital, institutional agents, and support service programs provide students with improved success rates at higher education institutions.

There is true need for more scholarly work that investigates students with disabilities, specifically ADHD and their ability to navigate the postsecondary institutions they find themselves in. Therefore, looking at the impact of institutional agency and social capital will prove to be a critical piece to understanding the devices that can be used to sustain students with ADHD in higher education institutions. Barkley (1997), developed the hybrid model of executive function for ADHD, but found there is a continued need for theory driven research that could offer an improved understanding and treatment for individuals with the disorder. There is also a need for additional study on strategies for ensuring success of students at the college level (Shaw- Zirt, Popali-Lehane, Chaplin, & Bergman, 2005). Currently, information about the delivery of educational supports and student satisfaction of supports is not prevalent in the research (Stodden, Whelley, Chang, & Harding, 2001). Additionally, there is a an overall need to

understand the effects of support on the student with ADHD (Stodden, et al., 2001;

Shaw- Zirt, et al., 2005)

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of students with ADHD

and their ability to access higher education. This study was designed to ascertain an

understanding of a student's ability to access higher education for students attending

community college in an urban area of California. These students are on a transfer track

and have completed a minimum of 30 units at the community college level. The study

takes an in depth look at the use of institutional agency and social capital as it affects the

outcome of students with ADHD in education. In addition, it examines the multiple

individuals who play supportive roles, parent, peers, teachers, counselors and other

members of educational institutions, and how they elicit multiple outcomes for students

with ADHD. This was a qualitative study consisting of interviews.

Research Questions

Primary Research Question: How do educational practitioners improve access to

postsecondary education for students with ADHD?

1. What are the experiences of students with ADHD who have accessed higher

    education?

2. What perceptions do community college students with ADHD have of the role of the

    educational institution in their ability to access higher education?

3. What experiences do community college students with ADHD have in accessing

    social capital?

4. What are the experiences of community college students with ADHD in utilizing institutional agents?

In order to ground this study, the theory of Social Capital was utilized (Stanton-Salazar 1997, 2000, 2001, 2004; Lin, 1999, 2000). A review of literature provides an in depth understanding of the theory of social capital. This leads to the concept of institutional and empowerment agents that comes out of the work of Stanton-Salazar (2010).

Significance of Study

Countless reasons have been given throughout this study showing its importance. A foundation is provided for understanding students with ADHD at postsecondary institutions. With this gained understanding of students with ADHD, improvements to student support can be created for this increasing population of students. The improvements made through supports will increase course and graduation completion rates. Reviewing the information delivered in this study will bring an enhanced understanding of issues that students with ADHD face in their daily life as well as in academic institutions.

Individuals and institutions reading this study may gain an understanding of the importance of supporting students with ADHD. Due to this improved understanding, academic and social programs can be created to meet the unique needs of the students with ADHD. In addition, this study will provide a better understanding of the need for policy changes at the postsecondary level for students with disabilities. The policy of search and serve requires immediate attention. In the K-12 setting, "search and serve" is mandated by the Individuals with Disability Education Act (US Department of

Education, 2004); in the postsecondary setting, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) section 504 requires students to self-disclose their disability in order to seek services. The term "search and serve" refers to an institution looking for students who are not making adequate progress and creating a plan of action to meet the needs of these students (US Department of Education, 2004).

Methodology

The methodology utilized in this study is qualitative (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2006). This was done through interviews of participants that met the defined criteria. Interviews were conducted to gain an understanding of the perspective of the student with ADHD at postsecondary institution (Patton, 2002). This allowed participants to give personal accounts of their use of support services and institutional agents throughout their educational career.

Definition of Terms

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder- is "comprised of a deficit in behavioral inhibition…comprising 'two' primary symptoms…poor sustained attention and hyperactivity and impulsivity constituting a single impairment. As a result, three subtypes of the disorder have been proposed…predominately inattentive, predominately hyperactive-impulsive and combined types" (Barkley, 1997, p.65).

Social Capital - "resources embedded in a social structure which are accessed and/or in purposive action" (Lin, 1999, p. 35) and "relationships with institutional agents, and the networks that weave these networks into units" (Stanton-Salazar, 1997, p. 8).

Institutional agents - "an individual who occupies one or more hierarchal positions of relatively high-status and authority" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 2) and

"individuals who have the capacity and commitment to transmit directly or to negotiate the transmission of institutional resources and opportunities" (Stanton-Salazar, 1995, p. 117).

Empowerment agents - enable low-status individuals to see a closer correspondence between their goals and a sense of how to achieve them, to develop an awareness of what resources are necessary and how to acquire them in order to gain greater mastery over their lives and destinies…and to seek opportunities for working collaboratively to change the sociopolitical context" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 26-27).

Community College- "any institution accredited to award the associate's in arts or science as its highest degree (Kane and Rouse, 1999, p.64)" also "serves students seeking additional job skill, technical certification and enrichment opportunities (Hoachlander, Sikora, & Horn, 2003, p. 121); built on a mission of, "low tuition, convenient location, flexible scheduling, an open door admission policy, and programs and services designed to support at risk students with a variety of social and academic barriers to postsecondary success (Calcagno, Bailey, Jenkins, Kienzl and Leinbech, 2008, p. 632)."

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

Many students with disabilities are pursuing postsecondary education. For example, students with disabilities have entered postsecondary programs at a rate of 25 % (Getzel & Thoma, 2008). However, the completion rate in postsecondary education has not shown as much promise. At the postsecondary level, the course completion rate has dropped from 30% in 1986 to 20% in 2001 (Getzel & Thoma, 2008). During the same time period, an even greater decrease was seen in college completion rates, falling from 19% to 12% (Getzel &Thoma, 2008). Students with disabilities face enormous obstacles to accessing and completing higher education.   Furthermore, students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) who enter a postsecondary education face hurdles in their education that sometimes can seem insurmountable.

In the K-12 setting, schools are required by law (US Department of Education, 2004 & 2002) to ensure that children with disabilities receive educational support that would make accessing the general education curriculum attainable. Students are provided with accommodations, modifications and variations in course work. There is also a strong educational support component that ensures these students are able to be successful. With that said, these same practices are not put into use in the post-secondary setting (Trammell, 2003).

The purpose of this inquiry was to gain a better understanding of postsecondary institutions' ability to support students with ADHD in increasing course completion and graduation rates by addressing the difficulties faced by students, families and educational institutions and their ability to support students with ADHD. An essential element of this

chapter is the synthesis of the literature as it relates to the overall study. There three main topics discussed in this chapter are ADHD, support services, community college and the theoretical framework that was used in this study, social capital (Stanton-Salazar, 1997). These topics are examined critically by reviewing relevant literature to understand access to postsecondary education for students with ADHD. First, a discussion of the disability known as ADHD is undertaken. Then, there is an in-depth look at support services available to students at the postsecondary level. A thorough understanding of the community college system is then provided. Lastly, the theory of Social Capital is introduced as well as a supporting feature of this theory, the role of the institutional agent (Stanton-Salazar, 1997).

<div align="center">Understanding Individuals with Disabilities</div>

There are multiple definitions of the term disability depending on the situation in which it is used. In this study, there is a need to look at the definitions from the Americans with Disabilities Act (US Department of Justice, 2008) and the US Department of Education (2004). According to the US Department of Justice (2008, p.1) the term disability can be defined as:

- a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual;
- a record of such an impairment; or
- being regarded as having such an impairment

According to the US Department of Education (2004, p.1), the term "child with disability" can be defined as a child:

- with mental retardation, hearing impairments (including deafness), speech or language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this title as `emotional disturbance'), orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities; and

- who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

An understanding of both terms is necessary because students with disabilities are seen differently in the K-12 setting than they are in the postsecondary setting. The definition of disability under IDEA relates specifically to a disability that impairs an individual's ability to learn; this definition is specific to k-12 education (US Department of Education, 2004). In contrast, post-secondary institutions utilize the definition provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which is overarching and broad in its definition of a person with a disability (US Department of Justice, 2008).

In K-12 schools, there are a total of 680,164 students with disabilities in the state of California being served (CDE, 2009). Students with disabilities face educational issues that can often seem insurmountable. To serve students, K-12 schools created specialized programs designed to meet student needs. Students with disabilities are served in programs that are guided by the Individual Education Program (IEP). The IEP looks at a student's strengths and weaknesses, creates goals based on these strengths and weaknesses and provides accommodations, modifications and variations to curriculum so that the majority of these students are able to access general education curriculum (IDEA, 2004).

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity disorder

The students who were the focus of this study are those students who can meet an academically rigorous education when support systems are in place; these students are identified as having the disability known as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Barkley (1997), who is one of the field leaders in research related to ADHD, says the disorder comprises a deficit in behavioral inhibitions. There are three subtypes of this disorder, predominately inattentive, predominately hyperactive-impulsive, and combined type (Barkley, 1997). The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders provides the diagnostic criteria for ADHD (DSM-IV-TR, 2000). In order for an individual to be diagnosed with ADHD, s/he must have six out of eight of the symptoms characterized as inattention or impulsivity-hyperactivity for six months or more (DSM-IV-TR, 2000). These symptoms must be pervasive in nature, affect functioning, and occur in two or more settings (DSM-IV-TR, 2000). The disorder affects students in many ways, including poor academic achievement, school suspension or expulsion, poor peer and family relation, depression, aggression, anxiety, low self-esteem, poor social skills and substance abuse (Barkley, 1997; Shaw-Zirt, Popali-Lehane, Chaplin, & Bergman, 2005; Meaux, Green, & Broussard, 2009).

Gaining an understanding of the disability known as ADHD provided a foundation for this section of the literature review. Du Paul, Schaughency, Weyandt, Tripp, Kiesner, & Ota, (2001) showed that students with ADHD are at a higher risk than their non ADHD peers to not perform well academically and to underachieve. Reaser, Prevatt, Petscher, & Proctor, (2007) also showed that students with ADHD are less likely than their non ADHD peers to complete a postsecondary education. Initially, the

condition of ADHD was believed to be a childhood disorder which the child would grow out of by the time s/he reached adolescence (Weyandt & DuPaul, 2008; Glutting, et.al, 2005). However, current research indicates that students may continue to have problems with inattentiveness into adulthood, although the issues with hyperactivity usually subside in adolescence (Weyandt & DuPaul, 2008).

Inattentiveness is one of the strong reasons for students in postsecondary education to have lowered levels of success than their non ADHD peers (Weyandt & DuPaul, 2008). Understanding the needs of students with ADHD is necessary because students with ADHD are entering postsecondary programs at increased rates, with estimates that 1%-4% of college students have ADHD (Glutting, et.al, 2005).

High school is often the most difficult school experience for adolescents. There are increased pressures to succeed in classes and maintain adequate peer relationships while undergoing physical and personality changes (Litner, 2003). For adolescents with ADHD, these issues are compounded by the difficulties they faced due to their psychological disorders. In the high school setting, students with disabilities face a wide range of problems including academic difficulties, peer relationships and emotional issues related to ADHD (Litner, 2003). As students with ADHD enter high school, the pervasive behaviors such as hyperactivity that were exhibited in childhood begin to subside. The decrease in hyperactivity can often mask the fact that the symptoms of ADHD continue to affect the adolescent, especially as it relates to inattentiveness and impulsivity (Litner, 2003). As students grow and face difficult situations, they may also exhibit a new symptom characterized by a low frustration threshold (Litner
, 2003).

The student with ADHD can have social issues that often will affect their experience in the high school setting. This is often due to poor peer interactions and interpersonal relationships (Litner, 2003). These social issues will commonly create depression, loneliness and poor self-image for students with ADHD. Social issues for adolescents with ADHD are not only experienced in the school setting. These issues can also be translated to problems in the home. Barkley (1997) found that individuals with ADHD may exhibit oppositional defiant disorder, conduct disorder, bi-polar disorder and obsessive compulsive disorder. The above mentioned disorders will often have an effect on multiple aspects of an individual with ADHD, including peer relationships, familial relationships and work relationships (Barkley, 1997). These social factors often affect the entire life of the individual with ADHD. According to Litner, (2003) there is a higher likelihood of drug addiction, incarceration and unemployment for adolescents with ADHD as compared to their peer group.

The academic component in the high school is often a stress that many students have not experienced before. In the lower academic level programs, if a student does not meet the academic standards of the class s/he is often socially promoted (CDE, 2010). Generally, if one does not successfully complete a course at the high school level, repetition of that course is required for completion. Inattentiveness and impulsivity continue to affect the academic functioning of students with ADHD throughout their high school experience. Focus on academic outcomes becomes an increased factor at the high school level due to the fact that there are generally more students, non-academic activities, and multiple classes to attend; this often does not support the needs of students with attention issues (Litner, 2003). In order to meet the needs of students with academic

problems related to ADHD schools provide students with accommodation and modifications in the classroom including, but not limited to, preferential seating, extra time with a school staff member to support academic understanding, frequent communication about progress, organizational tools, extended time on assignments and small group instruction (CDE, 2009). The accommodations and modifications mentioned above have increased student academic performance at the K-12 setting, which has made many of these students eligible for admittance into post-secondary institutions.

As these students transition into college, difficulties faced in high school are coupled with those faced by first year college students. First year college students are often unprepared for the transition. There is a loss of parental support and supervision, newly found freedoms and distractions, flexibility in schedule and a rigorous academic caseload (Rabiner, Anastopolous, Costello, Hoyle & Swartezwelder, 2007). This creates a new set of problems for the young adults with ADHD. There is also an increase in poor decision making, smoking, drinking, illegal drugs and overall a lower quality of life for the student with ADHD (Meaux et. al, 2009). Students with ADHD at the postsecondary level also report having lowered levels of self-esteem due to their inability to adequately adjust to college (Rabiner, et. al, 2007). However, some researchers believe that students with ADHD who have accessed higher education have higher academic ability levels, have experienced educational success and have better compensatory skills than their non-disabled peers (Blase, Gilbert, Anastapolous, Costello, Hoyle, Swartzwelder, & Rabiner, 2009). There is, without a doubt, difficulty faced by all individuals transitioning into the college setting. However, for the student with ADHD, the difficulties are compounded.

The information presented in this section of the literature review shows that there is a gap in the supports received between the K-12 and the postsecondary setting.

<div align="center">Disability Support Services</div>

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) section 504 was revised in 1990 by federal legislation to support the needs of individuals with disabilities (US Department of Justice, 2008). Within this legislation, new regulations were made for higher education institutions, requiring them to provide services to individuals with disabilities. Prior to the enactment of ADA (1990) supports and services for individuals with disabilities was only required by institutions receiving federal compensation. Requirements for supports and services to students with disabilities were extended to private higher education institutions, due to federal grants and supports that private institutions accept, making them accountable to supporting students with disabilities (Leuchovius, 2003). The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) has a section that focuses on disability support services (Hunsinger, 2009). Although, there is a law mandating higher education institution support students with disabilities, it is only required that these institutions provide support to individuals who disclose their disability and request the support (Leuchovius, 2003). There is no current federal mandate for higher education institutions to search and serve students with disabilities. CAS (2009) showed how the focus of K-12 education is oriented toward success, while, in higher education, the orientation is towards access "result(ing) in students with disabilities who are not prepared to enter higher education as strong advocates for themselves (Hunsinger, 2009, p. 3)".

Services provided in the K-12 setting are mandated by the reclassification of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (US Department of Education, 2004). As stated in the previous section, students in the K-12 setting are required by federal law to receive educational supports based on the needs shown in their present level of performance (US Department of Education, 2004). The supports and services offered to these students vary depending on the extremity of their disability. Basic services and supports provided to students with mild disabilities in the K-12 setting include, speech and language therapy, counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, shortened assignments, extended time to complete assignments or assessments, and a range of other (Sweener, Kundert, May, & Quinn, 2002). The supports and services afforded to students in the K-12 setting have not prepared them for the lack of support that they will receive in the postsecondary setting (Tramell, 2003).

Services provided in the postsecondary setting are limited in comparison to those received at the K-12 setting. ADA section 504 requires that postsecondary institutions provide reasonable accommodations to students (US Department of Justice, 2008). The accommodations that an institution chooses to supply are not explicitly spelled out. Accommodations that are regularly used by institutions include, but are not limited to, "academic programming, examinations and evaluations, housing, and recreational facilities" (Barnard-Bark, Letchenberger, & Lan, 2010, p. 411). A large majority of postsecondary level institutions have disability support service centers that are set up to serve the needs of students with disabilities. Students are able to utilize these centers to gain assistance with academic, social, emotional and health related problems (CSULB, 2006). Although disability support service centers and academic accommodations are

available to students with disabilities, there continue to be issues and barriers to these students' success in postsecondary institutions. In a review of literature, the most notable issues and barriers relate to students' lack of seeking support and faculty implementing educational plans.

Students with disabilities in the higher education setting often do not seek support, which becomes the responsibility of the student in the postsecondary institution (Getzel and Thoma, 2008; Finn, Getzel and Mc Manus, 2008). As stated previously, students are not accustomed to having to seek out services independently. At the K-12 level, if a student has disability s/he is sought out by the school or support is requested by a parent. The responsibility of seeking support will often deter students from accessing the disability support service center. The student with disability must exhibit high levels of determination and advocacy in order to gain support that is needed. As indicated by disability support personnel, of the 9% of students in postsecondary institutions who indicate they have a disability, only 1-3% actually seeks the support (Barnard-Bark et al., 2010). Upon requesting support, students with disabilities must provide the institution with documentation of their disability and propose the educational supports that would best benefit their educational needs (Stodden, Whelley, Chang, and Harding, 2001). This is often a daunting task for the student with disabilities, which, in turn, causes them to not seek support they need to be successful. Students who have accessed support services have a positive relationship between the number of visits made and their grades in academic courses (Trammell, 2003). Therefore, it is necessary for students to obtain the services that they require to be successful in postsecondary institutions.

Implementation of student supports by staff and faculty outside of disability services is a problem that is faced at postsecondary institutions. Students have indicated that a lack of support by staff and faculty in postsecondary institutions was one of the greatest barriers that inhibited their educational progress (Barnard-Bark et al., 2010). The lack of support from staff can be attributed to a deficit in understanding and knowledge by postsecondary faculty and staff about student disabilities, lack of desire to adjust teaching to meet student need and a lack of understanding on how to meet the needs of students with educational differences (Barnard-Bark et al., 2010). Faculty have indicated a lack of understanding on how to properly and appropriately implement accommodations for students with disabilities and felt that there is a need for additional training (Murray, Wren, & Keys, 2008). Disability service directors have also indicated that it is difficult to get faculty to participate in professional development related to disability services and classroom accommodations (Salzberg, Peterson, Debrand, Blair, Carsey. & Johnson, 2002). Ensuring that faculty implements accommodations that the students are supposed to receive is also difficult for support service staff. Once a student has sought support for his/her disability, it is then required that they communicate their needs to staff and faculty (Stodden et al.., 2001). Studies have indicated that individuals with disabilities who receive the accommodations they are afforded under ADA have positive outcomes in terms of grades and student success in postsecondary institutions (Tramell, 2003). There are limited studies that have been completed in the area of disability services at postsecondary institutions. This study will add to the body of knowledge as it relates to disability services in higher education.

Community College

The community college, also known as junior college, was created in the late 19th century as a plan to separate the first two years of higher education that would provide students with the preparatory skills necessary to complete a bachelor's degree (Kane and Rouse, 1999). There were three phases to the growth of the community college system. The first phase was after World War II when enrollment in community college nearly doubled to support military service men that were given tuition vouchers under the GI bill (Kane and Rouse, 1999). There was a similar expansion at the community college after the Korean War (Kane and Rouse, 1999). The last phase of community college expansion was during the 1960's "when the first baby boomers began to reach college age, Vietnam War veterans began to return home, and Americans enrolled in college to avoid the military draft (Kane and Rouse, 1999, p.64)."

The community college system has allowed for the education of students who may not have had access to higher education. Students who attend community college are often students who would not gain entry into 4 year university after completion of high school or are older adults that are transitioning back into education (Bryant, 2001). The original purpose of the community college system changed with the inclusion of vocational, adult education, and community development programs (Kane and Rouse, 1999). Students at community college are either on a trajectory toward transferring to four year universities or completing a vocational program. The community college system has adapted to meet the needs of the population of students it serves. Community colleges previously solely mimicked the first two years of the university system (Kane & Rouse, 1999). Community colleges have responded to student need by creating remedial

classes, industry based classes, job training programs and contract training programs (Kane & Rouse, 1999). The ability of the community college system to adjust to meet the needs of the student and the labor market has led to positive financial outcomes.

There are financial advantages to students who complete either the transfer or vocational programs. Sixty-three percent of students who complete their community college programs reported salary increases in comparison to 29% of those who did not complete community college (Calcagno, et.al, 2008). There is a strong correlation between post college earnings and educational attainment. According to Bryant (2001), those who complete certificate programs have a 15% increase in earnings, those with associate degrees have an earnings gain of 11%, young vocational students had increased earnings of 19% and older vocational students had a 12% increase in earnings. This shows the importance for students to have success in the community college setting, no matter which academic program they pursue.

Community colleges have an open door policy in comparison to other colleges. The most stringent requirement for some community colleges is a high school diploma (Bryant, 2001). According to Bryant (2001), the open door policy may close due to the rising interest in postsecondary education and the declining availability of education resources. The open door policy was created to provide students at risk of not receiving higher education the opportunity to break down academic and social barriers.

The makeup of students in the community college is unique in comparison to other colleges. Women account for approximately 58 of those enrolled in community college; it is thought this is due to support given for parenting, financial aid and advising (Bryant, 2001). Minority students enroll at community colleges at greater rates than at

other educational institutions. Minority students comprise approximately 32% of the 47% that are enrolled in higher education (Bryant, 2001; Kane & Rouse, 1999). Community colleges also support students who have attended four year institutions. These "reverse transfer students" represent 16% of the community college students (Bryant, 2001, p. 83). There is also a tendency for varying ages of students at the community college. The majority of students who attend community college are between the ages of 20 and 49 and attend school part time (Bryant, 2001). The data on those who attend community college help with understanding how to support the students who attend these educational institutions.

Students who enroll in community college have a decreased likelihood of completing transfer requirements or vocational education program. According to Calcagno, Bailey, Jenkins, Kienzl and Leinbach (2008), after six years, only 36% of students had completed degree programs, 22% were still enrolled in school and the remaining 42% had differing amounts of postsecondary education, but no formal degree. The students who do transfer to 4 year universities do better than those students who go directly to the four year university (Bryant, 2001), with one fifth of the students receiving bachelor's degree being transfer students (Hoachlander, Sikora and Horn, 2003).

Persistence in the community college system is essential to student success. There are a multitude of factors that affect student persistence. According to Calcagno et al. (2008), "students who have stronger high school records, who come from higher income families, whose parents also went to college, who do not delay college entry after high school, who attend full time, and who do not interrupt their college studies are more likely to graduate (p.633)". It is necessary to understand how to support students who do

not fall into this category. As noted above, the students who attend community college are those who are often at risk. It was found that individual characteristics have a higher correlation to success than do institutional factors (Calcagno et, al.,2008).   Although the students' individual variables are the most important factor in the predictability of success, providing students with support may prove to increase academic persistence.

Theoretical Framework

The critical synthesis on how to improve course completion and graduation rates at postsecondary institutions continues in this section of the literature review by looking at the theoretical framework of social capital (Stanton-Salazar, 1997; Lin 1999). This section begins with a broad explanation of the term capital, as created by Marx and the multiple theories contained within capital (Lin, 1999). Second, there is an in depth explanation of the theory of social capital. Lastly, the problems associated with social capital are discussed. A thorough understanding of the social capital framework readers will uncover the positive and negative effects that it can have on students.

Capital is a term that is often used in the financial sector but has recently taken on new forms as it relates to individuals. The theory of capital was first introduced by Marx, where he showed that capital is created when there is a surplus made on an investment; this idea of capital is known as the "Classical Theory" (Lin, 1999). This theory is grounded in the idea of one class of society benefiting from a lower class group.   Out of the classical theory of capital came the neo capital theories, which include human capital, cultural capital and social capital. The human capital theory is when there is in an investment in an individual with an expected outcome (Lin, 1999). For example, a parent may invest in his/her child by enrolling them in golf lessons; the expected return on

investment for that individual is that there will be a return on that investment later in life. Cultural capital theory is when members of the dominant group benefit from only based upon their ability to be in that group (Bourdieu, 2008). For example, an Asian student is placed in advanced math class only based on preconceived notion of his culture, instead of student work. Social capital is based in the idea that capital can be gained by relationships (Lin, 2000). For example, a student may have a close relationship with the academic counselor and be placed in advanced placement classes based on this relationship. Social capital will be the focus of this study, mainly focusing on how the use of social capital can support students with ADHD throughout their educational experience.

Social Capital as stated above is comprised of the relationships that people have that can provide opportunity for advancement. This advancement can take multiple forms: political, economic, educational, just to name a few. Social Capital as a theory was a major component of the work of Bourdieu (2008) and Coleman (1988). Bourdieu (2008) showed how networks that an individual possessed could be translated into social capital. The amount of social capital that an individual can have depends completely on the amount of networks that this person has and the networks of the individuals with whom this person is connected (Bourdieu, 2008). The social capital that an individual possessed is not based on any work that the person has completed, but, rather, is based on familial or institutional connections created due to genetics (Bourdieu, 2008). Coleman (1988) provides multiple examples of how social capital is used in many cultural groups, including social capital of the wholesale diamond market, student activist, neighborhood dynamics, and the example provided below of mercantile relationships. In the example

given at the start of this work, Coleman (1988) provides an example of diamond merchants use of social capital to purchase and exchange goods. Structures included in social capital as described by Coleman (1988) includes obligations and expectations of those in the network, the information flow of the network, and sanctions that are placed on members of the network due to not following group norms. The work of Stanton-Salazar (1997) and Lin (1999) grew out of the work that Bourdieu (2008) and Coleman (1988).

Defining social capital as it was used throughout this inquiry will contain a combination of the work of Lin (1999) and Stanton-Salazar (1997, 2004). Social capital, as described by Stanton-Salazar (2004), is an interwoven network of individuals who "provide access to resources and forms of support that facilitate the accomplishment of goals" (p.18). Lin (1999) defines social capital as "resources embedded in a social structure which are accessed and/or mobilized in a purposive action" (p.35). Individuals who utilize social capital have improved status in society due to the supportive relationships and networks that are built (Stanton-Salazar, 2004). Social ties that are created due to increased social capital have the ability to increase resources for individuals and communities (Stanton-Salazar, 1997). The use of social capital in the above mentioned research has been related to ethnic minorities in school and work place settings. For the purposes of this research, a focus will be on how the theory of social capital is used to support people with disabilities in the educational setting.

Social capital has proven to be a theory that supports the needs of disenfranchised members of society by providing individuals with resources and relationships that would not have been previously accessible. Lin (2009) provides a basis for why social capital is

successful at improving the social economic and political welfare of a person. He states

the premise of social capital is "investment in social relations with expected returns"

(p.30). This statement shows that the relationships built for those who engage in social

capital is give and take. Stanton-Salazar (1997) also emphasized this idea showing that

social capital and the networks built in it can produce valuable resources for those that

engage in the practice. Social capital provides an information stream about opportunities

available that individuals in a lower social standing may not have been aware of (Lin,

1999). The social interactions created through social capital networks can also put a

person in a better light than was previously thought (Lin, 1999). Individuals may also

have improved credentials or credibility due to social ties created (Lin, 1999). The

capital that is gained improves student's ability to "participate institutional spheres"

(Stanton-Salazar, 1997, p.10). It must be remembered that capital is a usable support,

possessing social capital without efficiently putting it to use will not yield the same

results.

Bridges are structures that are meant to provide passage over obstacles that can

often seem insurmountable. Bridges are not only used to navigate tangible obstacles that

can impede the progress of an individual; a bridge can also be used as an abstract idea to

support individuals. Social capital is a form of bridge that can be used to connect an

individual economically, politically or socially (Lin, 1999). The bridges or networks that

individuals usually possess are due to parental or familial relationships; these

relationships will usually allow those within the circle to have better education and

knowledge about how to advance in their desired field (Linn, 1999). Stanton-Salazar

(1997) refers to social distribution of possibilities as unequal distribution of relationships

at the institutional level. Lower status individuals are often not able to access these

networks in institutions without the support of an individual who is in the social circle. It

is also essential to understand that not all networks will have the desired outcome. The

network must have influence over the desired outcome (Lin, 1999). In order to

implement these networks into institutions with individuals who have low status,

effective mentoring needs to be incorporated. The mentor will be used as a support agent

to help the student navigate the institution. The mentors who are chosen must be willing

to go against the institutional norms if necessary to benefit the individual they are

supporting (Satanton-Salazar, 2000). Individuals who provide support to lower status

students are charged with providing funds of knowledge. Stanton-Salazar (1997)

highlighted the importance of being able to engage in effective institutional discourse.

The ability to switch between the two forms of language is called code switching.

Improving student knowledge on when certain language is appropriate will improve their

ability to communicate with individuals within the institution that have high social

capital. Success in school is not only based on doing well academically, but also being

able to effectively navigate the system.

Institutional Agents

Low status students, as stated previously, will face difficulties when trying to

access the educational institution. In order to better navigate the educational system

Stanton-Salazar (2010) provides a theory of institutional agency to support the needs of

students. In this theory, institutional agents are defined as individuals who are high

ranking in an institution, that are able to provide students with the social capital needed to

access highly valued resources (Stanton-Salazar, 2010). Institutional agents have a non-

familial relationship to the adolescents they serve. The relationships created have been identified as essential to "adult occupational mobility" (Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995, p.116). Throughout this section of the literature review, an understanding is provided of institutional supports, the roles of institutional agents, and the empowerment agent within the institution.

Individuals from middle and upper socio economics will often have forms of institutional agency through familial supports that will help them to navigate educational institutions, allowing access to the necessary resources to be successful within that institution. Low status youth will often have "unequal distribution of opportunities" making it difficult to gain access to resources that are valuable within the institutions that they attend (Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995, p.116). Therefore, it is necessary that there be institutional supports in the form of individuals to provide the knowledge students need to have successful completion of postsecondary education (Gonzalez, Stoner, & Jovel, 2003). Within educational institutions, support is generally provided by teachers, counselors, and designated support personnel. These individuals help students gain various funds of knowledge necessary to be successful within the educational institution they attend (Stanton- Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995; Stanton- Salazar, 1997). Teachers, counselors, and support providers are not required by the institution they work for to be institutional agents; these individuals take it upon themselves to support students in a way that makes access to education possible.

Institutional agents are able to provide low status youths with the support needed to navigate the educational institutions. There are multiple roles that institutional agents can take on, including direct support, integrative support, system developer and system

linkage and network support, as evidenced in Figure 2.1 below (Stanton-Salazar, 2010).

Within an institution, agents can take on one or multiple roles to support low status

students' ability to access higher education.

Figure 2.1 Institutional Agents

From: Stanton-Salazar (2010, p.16)
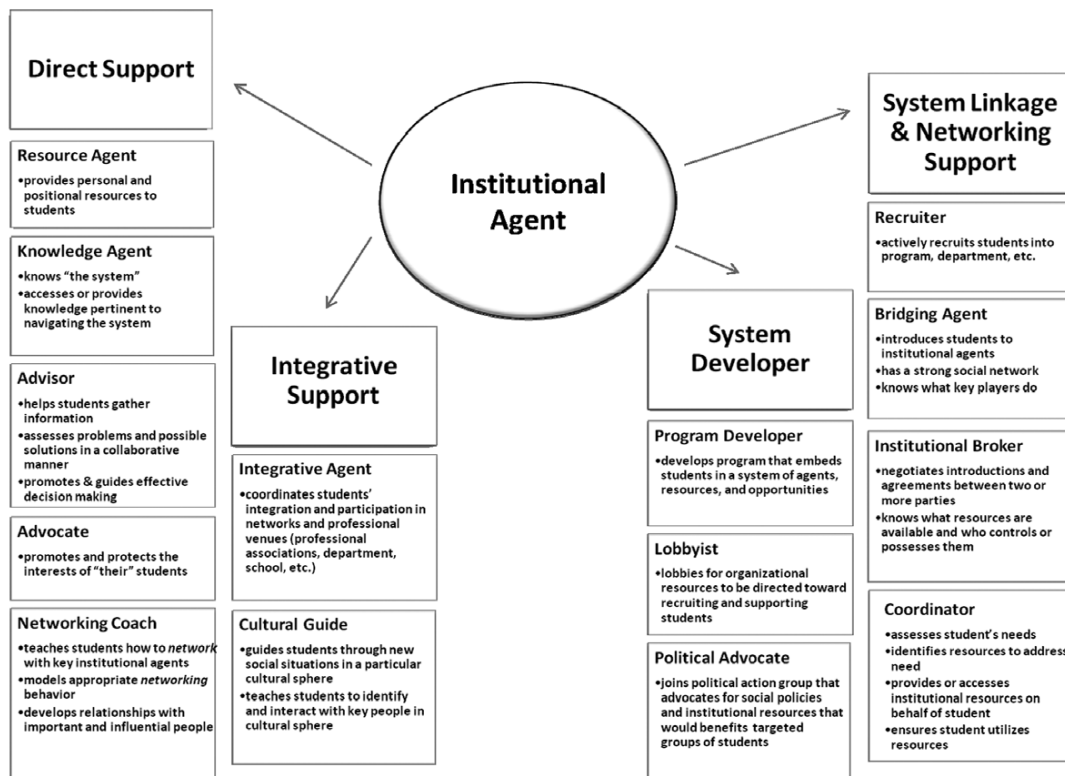
Empowerment agents have grown out of the institutional agent ideology. The

empowerment agent not only supports a student's ability to access the educational

system, but provides them with the skills needed to become change agents themselves

within their communities and society (Stanton-Salazar, 2010). Empowerment agents see

the need to involve themselves in communities that are often isolated culturally and filled

with poverty. For example in the film "Stand and Deliver" (Musca & Menendez, 1988)

Jaime Escalante can be seen as an empowerment agent within the educational system.

He was able to support not only a group of students' personal and educational ideologies, but also change the culture of education for low status youths in society. Through his ability to empower, he created a movement within the community that he served to strive for success. As an empowerment agent, it is necessary to confront and change the rules of hierarchy and "lead to a transformation of consciousness" throughout society (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p.26). While the empowerment agent is working to change the cultural mindset of education s/he is simultaneously helping students to "decode the system" and build networks to *change the world* (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 27).

Conclusion

This literature review provides a variety of areas necessary to understand the student with ADHD, social supports that are provided in the postsecondary setting, and the social capital theoretical framework that can be utilized by institutions to support student success. Barkley (1997) provided the foundation for the theory related to ADHD continuing after adolescents. To reiterate, it was shown that, although the levels of hyperactivity seemed to decrease in students, there continued to be problems related to inattentiveness and impulsivity (Barkley, 1997). Then, there was an in-depth look into the supports that are provided to students in higher education. The supports provided at the postsecondary level were hard to access for students with disabilities and pale in comparison to the services that are provided at the K-12 setting. This in depth look at post secondary instruction as a whole eventually lead to a focused look at the community college student. Students that are able to be successful at the community college level have a high likelihood of completing a bachelor degree and have higher financial outcomes than students who do not complete a community college education. Lastly, the

theoretical framework of social capital was introduced. Through the work of Lin (1999) and Stanton-Salazar (1997), an understanding was gained on the use of networks to support students' ability to gain access to educational institutions. Stanton-Salazar (2010) expounded the idea of social capital a step further with the introduction of institution and empowerment agents. The points covered throughout this literature review highlight the need for further study in the areas of institutional and empowerment agent ability to support students with ADHD in the postsecondary setting.

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

Students with ADHD face many difficulties in persisting and accessing higher education. Studies have shown that students with ADHD perform poorly as compared to their non-ADHD peers (Reaser, Prevatt, Petscher & Proctor, 2007). Students with ADHD will often have issues with study skills, note taking, poor test taking skills, problems with summarizing academic content and lack of motivation to complete academic task (Reaser, et.al 2007). The above stated issues contribute to academic failure for students with ADHD in higher education.

The purpose of this study was to provide schools with a better understanding on how to support students with ADHD throughout their educational tenure. This study provided detailed information on issues that are faced by students, families and educational institutions and their ability to support students with ADHD. Du Paul (2001) showed that students with ADHD are at a higher risk than their non ADHD peers to not perform well academically and to underachieve. Reaser (2007) also showed that students with ADHD are less likely than their non ADHD peers to complete a postsecondary education. It was once believed that ADHD was a childhood disorder that a child would grow out of by the time they reached adolescence (Weyandt & Du Paul, 2008, Glutting, 2005). However, current research indicated that students may continue to have problems with inattentiveness into adulthood, although the issues with hyperactivity usually subside in adolescence (Weyandt & Du Paul, 2008). Inattentiveness is one of the strong reasons for students in postsecondary education to have lowered levels of success than their non ADHD peers (Weyandt & Du Paul, 2008). This study was necessary because

students with ADHD are entering postsecondary programs at increased rates, with

estimates that 1%-4% of college students have ADHD (Glutting, et.al 2005). Data has

shown that students with ADHD are less likely to have access to higher education than

non-disabled students.

<div align="center">Research Questions</div>

In order to address the issues identified following research questions were asked:.

Primary Research Question: How do educational practitioners improve access to

postsecondary education for students with ADHD?

1. What are the experiences of students with ADHD who have accessed higher

   education?

2. What perceptions do community college students with ADHD have of the role of

   the educational institution in their ability to access higher education?

3. What experiences do community college students with ADHD have in accessing

   social capital?

4. What are the experiences of community college students with ADHD in utilizing

   institutional agents?

<div align="center">Research Design</div>

The case study tradition of qualitative research was utilized for this study

(Creswell, 2006). A qualitative method of investigation, through the use of interviews,

provided insight into the practices that ensure student success in higher education

institutions for students with ADHD (Creswell, 2006). The research design that was used

for this study included purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling was used because

participants were chosen based on a given set of criteria as described through the work of

Patton (2002). Purposeful sampling ensures that participants meet the criteria of the study, making the research a valuable piece to the overall body of knowledge.

Participants and Setting

This study examined students with ADHD at the postsecondary level and their ability to be successful throughout their educational tenure. The study took place at a two year public university in southern California. The university has an approximate enrollment of 30,000 students, with 1,200 students being served by the special resource center.

Unit of Analysis

Throughout the unit of analysis, there was a focus on individuals and people who share a common experience or perspective (Patton, 2002). Participants who were invited to interview have been diagnosed with symptoms related to that of a person with ADHD by a medical provider. There were10 students invited to participate in the interview process. As stated previously, these students were chosen purposefully based on meeting the ADHD criteria. It should be noted that working with students with disabilities is a sensitive issue and should not be taken lightly. All measures were put into place to protect the privacy of individuals being interviewed.

In order to find participants who meet the unique needs identified in the unit of analysis, there were multiple sampling strategies used. The first sampling strategy utilized was criterion sampling, which included choosing individuals who meet some of the criterion outlined for participants (Patton, 2002). Individuals included in the sample group were diagnosed with ADHD and participated in postsecondary education in a two or four year institution. The second form of sampling used was emergent sampling

(Patton, 2002). Emergent sampling ensured that there are opportunities to be flexible when necessary during the interviewing process (Patton, 2002). The last form of sampling used is stratified purposeful sampling, which allowed for comparison of subgroups within the participants (Patton, 2002). The use of multiple types of sampling ensures that the research presented is well rounded and takes all necessary components into account.

<div align="center">Instrumentation</div>

This study used the method of triangulation as described by Patton (2002). The interview protocol was divided into four sections around the research questions they answer. There were a total of 29 open-ended interview questions. The instrumentation was designed to elicit answers to the research questions. They were also used as a guide to ensure the interviewer stayed on topic (Creswell, 2006).

<div align="center">Data Collection</div>

Having completed IRB, the following method was utilized to obtain data. Interviews provided the basis for the research used in this study. Interviewing students with ADHD allowed for an understanding of student need, past experiences and perceptions of the personal experience of the student. The interview questionnaire (appendix A) consists of four parts, including an introduction, opener and overview of the study, interview questions, and a closing. The interview questionnaire (Appendix B) uses the triangulation table for interview topics (Patton, 2002). The protocols were triangulated to strengthen the study and find commonalities across multiple perspectives in support services.

To prepare for the interview, the interviewer participated in multiple pre-interview sessions. This ensured that the interviewer was effective in acquiring necessary information. The interviewer practiced the interview questions with multiple persons who are not participating in the study. This allowed for feedback on the interview questions as well as on interview style. The pre-interview sessions were recorded for later review.

The purpose of the interview was to find how students with ADHD were able to access and have success in higher education. The interview type selected for this study is open-ended semi structured (Patton, 2002). This type of interview was chosen because it allows for gaining specific data from the participant (Patton, 2002). It allows the interview to be conversational while ensuring that the participant does not stray far off topic. The questions asked of the participant were flexible and could be changed to meet the needs of the person being interviewed.

Interviews took place in the administrative conference room at the community college. The room was secluded from others to ensure the privacy of the participant. Interviews were tape recorded, the participants were made aware of the recording once the interview had begun and ended. Each interview took approximately 60 minutes in asking the prescribed as well as clarifying questions. Participants were provided with an interview fact sheet prior to the interview.

Data Analysis

A data analysis coding system was used to provide a better understanding of the correlation between Primary, Secondary and Tertiary sources of Data. Research questions

were labeled with capital letters, the data sources were numerically labeled, and the tertiary data was labeled by lowercase letters (Appendix F).

<div align="center">Delimitations</div>

This study confines itself to surveying students with ADHD in postsecondary institutions. This study focuses on support services provided by the disability support services center. Only individuals who meet the eligibility criteria were included in the study.

The methods discussed throughout this section are not without limitations. These limitations are addressed to provide an understanding on how to improve upon methods in the future. The constraints that most likely affect this study are access to participants, policy regarding student information, trust and eligibility criteria.

There was a limit on individuals who meet the requirements to participate in the interview. This limitation is due to multiple factors. The participants needed for this study to fit a very specific subset of society that has limited numbers, especially in postsecondary institutions. There are also a limited number of individuals who felt comfortable enough to give the sensitive information asked in this study. The institutions that these students attended disseminated the study information due to apprehension about providing student data to individuals outside of the institution. There was also delimitation as it relates to trust. This delimitation may have affected the interview process. These delimitations will not limit the ability to effectively conduct the study, but will undoubtedly make the process difficult.

Limitations

The author is aware of limitations that may occur in the study. The study was limited to the number of students interviewed. For the purpose of this study, it is assumed that subjects responded honestly to interview questions. The study is also limited in student's ability to understand and answer interview questions. The ability of a student with ADHD to attend to the interview process is also a limiting factor. Nevertheless, the study will add to the body of knowledge on ADHD and social capital in community college education.

CHAPTER 4

Summary of Findings

Focus of Inquiry

This chapter focuses on the presentation of data collected through the qualitative

interview process. Qualitative research was done to gain an understanding of ADHD

from the perspective of individuals who live with the disorder. It is a method of study

that will provide answers to the following research questions:

Primary Research Question: How do educational practitioners improve access to

postsecondary education for students with ADHD?

1. What experiences have community college students with ADHD had in accessing

   education?

2. What perceptions do community college students with ADHD have of the role of

   the educational institution in their ability to access higher education?

3. What experiences do community college students with ADHD have in accessing

   social capital?

4. What are community college students with ADHD experiences in utilizing

   institutional agents?

Descriptions of Participants

The interviews were conducted in the fall and spring semester at a community

college in California. Participants were invited to participate in the interview process by

the disability service center through an email blast. Counselors also had flyers to provide

to students who meet the interview requirements.   All students who met the minimum

requirements were allowed to participate in the interview. Interviews were held in a

private room at the campus. All interviews were recorded with participant approval. All

participants were provided the research data sheet (Appendix E) for a copy. There were a

total of 10 participants interviewed as a part of this research study. The demographics for

study participants are listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Demographics

	Participants	
	N	%
N=	10	100%
Gender		
Men	6	60%
Women	4	40%
Not Specified	0	0%
Race/ Ethnicity		
American Indian	0	0%
Asian	1	10%
Hispanic	1	10%
Black	4	40%
White	4	40%
Other	0	0%
Multiracial	0	0%
Not Specified	0	0%
Age		
Under 20	1	10%
20-30	7	70%
30-40	1	10%
40-50	0	0%
50-60	1	10%
Over 60	0	0%
Not Specified	0	0%

Bart

      Bart is an Asian male in his early twenties. He was diagnosed with ADHD in his

junior year of high school. Prior to his diagnosis he described himself as a good student

who did not have any problems learning. Bart attended a four year university before to

coming to the community college. Bart left the four year university because he had difficulty dealing with his ADHD and anxiety. He has completed the majority of his undergraduate requirements and would like to eventually return to a four year university when he feels that he can better control his ADHD.

Mary

Mary is a white woman in her early twenties. She was diagnosed with ADHD as a young child of approximately four years of age. Mary had a difficult upbringing. At the age of thirteen, Mary was sent to a residential placement due her mother's inability to deal with her behavior. Mary was kicked out of her first residential home and moved to another facility in Colorado. Mary engaged in sexual acts and used illegal drugs while in her residential home. This has caused Mary to hold a grudge against her mother. Mary has close relationships with her friends and close ties to staff at the community college. Mary has taken a large number of classes at the community college but has not passed her classes. Mary feels that by taking on a smaller class load she will be able to be successful.

Beth

Beth is a Latino woman in her fifties. She was diagnosed with ADHD in her fifties at the community college. Beth believes that she was not diagnosed earlier because she did not receive her primary education in a school. Beth was taught by tutors who travelled with her family. Her father was a diplomat, which meant that she moved often as a child. Beth does not currently have close ties with her family. She is homeless and lives in her car. She would like to eventually become a Spanish teacher. Beth has also has been diagnosed with obsessive compulsive disorder and anxiety.

Paul

Paul is a white male in his early twenties. He was diagnosed with ADHD at the age of four. Paul stayed with his father at his grandmother's house until his early teens when he moved to live with his mother in another state. He did well in school and joined the football and baseball team. Paul describes himself as a handyman who can fix almost anything. His life changed in his senior year of high school when his father passed away, and he was arrested for stealing the family vehicle. He was eventually kicked out of high school and was placed on probation. His family in California wanted to help, so they offered for him to stay with them. Upon returning to California, he tried to join the military, but he was unable to due to his theft conviction. He engaged in illegal drugs and dangerous behavior for a few years after returning to California. Paul enrolled in the community college to gain focus in his life. He currently has stopped doing drugs, has a job, a girlfriend and is doing well in school.

John

John is a black male in his mid-thirties. He was diagnosed with ADHD while in the penitentiary. Prior to going to the penitentiary, John had completed a year of community college at a different school. John has very close ties to his family whom he described as his strongest support system. Most specifically, he talked about the relationship he had with his mother. He was raised solely by her, and she continues to take care of him financially. John would like to eventually get a job in the medical field. John began the interview very apprehensively, answering questions very succinctly. As the interview continued and he seemed to get more comfortable, he began to engage more fully in dialogue.

Rick

Rick is a black male in his mid-twenties. He was diagnosed with ADHD at the age of five. Rick has a lot of apprehension about doing well in school. He was enrolled in special education classes during elementary, middle and high school. Rick finds his community college classes to be difficult and feels he does not get the support of his instructors like he did in his primary education. Rick studies hard and works closely with friends to pass his classes. He has the support of his mother and father both emotionally and financially. He is trying to get into the radiology program at the community college. His overall goal is to be independent of his families' financial support and he felt getting an education was the best way to do that.

Bill

Bill is a white male in his late teens. He was diagnosed with ADHD at the age of five. Bill is able to control his ADHD with medication and techniques he learned from his counselor. Bill finds he is able to complete his classes with ease and uses the DSC only for note taking and extended time on test. Bill did not talk much during the interview, which seemed to be a trait of his personality. He answered with short words or sentences and did not provide much detail about his experiences.

Alex

Alex is a white male in his early twenties. He was diagnosed with ADHD at the age of five. Alex had many issues related to ADHD growing up. He described himself as being a trouble maker, getting suspended from school and detention since elementary school. As a child, he was sent to a mental hospital and placed on suicide watch, and he was eventually diagnosed with bipolar disorder as well as ADHD. By the time Alex was

in high school, he had been placed at a non-public school due to vandalism and destruction of property. He found the small class sizes and sheltered nature of the non-public school suited him. He was eventually able to graduate high school and attend the community college. The transition to college was difficult, but when he found his major, music, all the pieces fell together.

Kim

Kim is a black woman in her mid-twenties. She was diagnosed with ADHD at the age of six. Kim was placed in foster care as a child because her mother was unable to care for her. She has been hospitalized on numerous occasions for mental health issues. Kim also had issues with illegal activity and substance abuse. Kim has worked as prostitute and has been physically and emotionally abused by her pimp. Kim was very agitated throughout the interview, often rocking, and she had varying levels of speech intonation. She has not been working with mental health professional to control her anxiety, bipolar disorder, ADHD or depression. Kim stays with her Aunt whom she described as being supportive, but whom she also felt wanted to send her to the mental hospital. Kim has had difficulty completing classes that she enrolls in due to her mental health issues.

Amy

Amy is a black woman in her mid-twenties. She was diagnosed with ADHD at the age of thirteen. Amy was diagnosed due her inability to focus on task and memory issues. She was able to complete her K-12 schooling with little support. She does not currently use the services at the DSC, but does utilize tutoring and financial aid support at the community college. She has a strong support system in her sister, whom she

currently lives with. Her sister supports her finically and academically. Amy would

eventually like to become a social worker.

<div align="center">Interviews</div>

The interviews were guided by a 30 question protocol. The interviews were very

conversational and the interview protocol was used as a guide to ensure that all pertinent

information was obtained. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. The interviews

were transcribed by an outside agency and destroyed upon completion of transcription.

Once the researcher received the transcribed documents, they were reviewed with a

recorded audio file and notes for accuracy. The transcribed documents were then

uploaded to the Atlas.ti file for coding. There were 47 initial codes that helped to focus

the data. The codes are listed in Table 4.2 in alphabetical order.

Table 4.2: List of Initial Data Codes in Alphabetical Order

Adhd	Study	Transition
College	Focused	Iep
Family	Job	Service
Support	Services	Counseling
Teacher	Diagnosed	Counselor
Mom	Group	Diagnosis
Myself	Education	Hyperactive
Years	Extra time	Concentrate
Focus	Disability	Financial
Working	Meds	Medicine
Friends	Anxiety	Distracted
Math	Therapist	Marijuana
Medication	Active	Med
Teachers	Management	Medications
Music	Depression	
Plan	Difficult	

The next step in the data analysis process was to use the codes to create common themes among the participants. From the initial 47 codes, there were 17 common themes that will be discussed throughout this chapter. The resulting themes, relevant quotations, research questions and researcher are highlighted in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Themes highlighted with Quotes

Theme	Quotes	Research Question	Research
What prompted diagnosis	I was hyperactive so I couldn't really, you know, keep still and you know take in the information from the teacher like most normal students without it.... Like I couldn't really keep still.	RQ 1	Barkley (1997)
Adhd experience	What will happen is if I'm sitting in class or something and it's really boring, I'll sort of become kind of nauseous and then at that point I'll either fight to not fall asleep or I'll have to find something else to do; to read something else or to something like that. Because when I am in the classroom and everybody – first of all, the teacher says we have an hour to complete the assignment, whoever finishes first is good to go. And I want to go, that the moment I see my classmates get up. Then I don't pay attention to the questions, I just answer and then I have to leave before everybody else leaves.	RQ 1	Barkley (1997)

Table 4.3, continued

Community college experience	Like today I had to give – I had to have my teacher sign something. He was like what is this. I'm like it's from dsc and he wanted a whole explanation and he wasn't really – I mean to me he seems like he's, I don't know. I can't really explain it. But I don't think – I think he's going to be like I was a little boy again. So yeah, I mean basically like I think he's not going to show my any favoritism. He's just going to let me earn my grade like everybody else.	RQ 1&2	
K-12 experience	I was a big trouble maker. All my elementary I was in and out of principal's office. I was always getting suspended or detention, all that. So for class time the same, I would like mess around and not pay attention, so I would have to go to…, , they have bungalows, so there's different ones for like different subjects. So I would go there for math. I would go there for science. Those were the only two main like subjects like I had trouble with paying attention and like staying focused on because I really didn't get it. So I would go to those special classes for that	RQ1&2	
Family / community support	I have support. I have family. My sister she's a college graduate. She helps me out a lot. That's why I am able to go to college. If it wasn't for my family I don't know what I would do.	RQ 3	Stanton-Salazar (1997)

Table 4.3, continued

| Social (institutional) support | I get like – they have their own counselors and they're all nice and want to help. I also take the accommodations, like the testing. That helps a lot too cause when it's like a quiet environment you have to like, you know, do a test and just focus on the test.... So I go over there something like this, just a room, and you go and no distractions. So you just take your time plus they double your time. So those are the kind of services they have

We go over ed plans. We go over any like activities that are coming up during the semester. | RQ 4 | Stanton-Salazar (1997) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teacher understanding of adhd | I usually go to them in the beginning but that's really hard to do sometimes too cause I don't want to think about it or I think I don't need this, but I've kind of trained myself to just go as soon as I can, just let them know right away.

There is no problem. They don't really care if you get extra time or not. | RQ 2 | |
| Effect of medication | Back then [when first diagnosed] I started with Ritalin and then I went up to a different kind of medication, I forgot what it's called, but it had some effects on me so I had to cut it down to Ritalin again. Sometimes I don't take it and I find out it's a lot harder to concentrate to this day still. | RQ 1 | |

Table 4.3, continued

Academic/ behavioral issues	I am trying to listen to what he says. But then I can hear the conversation behind me or somewhere, they are laughing or something and I can hear very clearly what they say. And if I hear one word, one sentence, that's it. Then oh, my god, what did the teacher say, and I try to remember what he said. And I'll say, "could you repeat that for me?" It's very hard for me to focus in class.	RQ 1	Barkley (1997)
Illegal substances	I smoke marijuana every day. I am not going to lie to you. It helps me. It makes me remember everything.	RQ 1	
Co morbidity	I have anxiety, bipolar, depression I've been hospitalized a lot – the last past three years. Psyche hospital a lot and they don't like letting me go	RQ 1	Barkley (1997)
Effective teaching style/ classes	Generally the more interactive it is, the more discussion-base.... Something that involves the student more than just a flat lecture. Generally the more interactive it is, the more discussion-base, the more I like it.	RQ 2	
Future implications	For the most part I'm just like any other person. You know I just have slight difference but it's not major. It's not like life altering. I still graduated high school. I still went on to college and I'm hopefully graduating in June like I overcame it. So some people think that it's something you can't overcome but I did.	RQ 1	

Table 4.3, continued

Planning and organization	You got to manage your time cause in college some people don't even come to study. Some people just come to have fun and they flash money and they just leave. At first time management, it was a little bit difficult because everything is like, takes more time so. Now I realize it takes the same amount of studying time as a high school for the subjects. I just have to plan for the classes	RQ 1	
Community college transition	It's different in high school and it's different because I had that support and I still have it now but it's a lot more work, a lot more studying time. It's easier, you don't have like seven classes packed on one day, and it's not that much stress	RQ 2	Stanton-Salazar (1997)
Strategies for success	I mean I got to study on campus; I can't study at home. There's too many distractions, it's too easy to say I'll do it tomorrow	RQ 1	
Activity	I'm really active, right, so I'll tell myself if you get through class today you can run, you can go workout, you can do something like that. Because if I don't do that, then it just seems like driving the whole way through.	RQ 1	

In the next section the themes are discussed further based on the research question that they answer. Participant responses were included to provide a better understanding of the student perspective.

Experiences of Students with ADHD that attend Community College

Diagnosis Prompt

In order to gain an understanding of participants, it is necessary to first investigate

what prompted the initial diagnosis of ADHD for study participants. The majority of

participants were diagnosed with ADHD prior to the age of 5. This means these students

were exhibiting ADHD like behaviors prior to entering their primary education. Table

4.4 shows the age of initial diagnosis for participants.

Table 4.4 Age of Initial Diagnosis (N=10)

	Participants	
	N	%
N=	10	100%
0-5	5	50%
6-10	1	10%
11-15	1	10%
16-20	1	10%
Above 20	2	20%

Participants were asked about their initial diagnosis. Individuals diagnosed as

young children had hyperactive tendencies which caused their families to seek support.

The participants who were diagnosed after the age of ten faced academic issues that

prompted the participant to seek diagnosis. The following are quotes from participants

about the reason they were either referred to or sought diagnosis for their ADHD.

Diagnosed between 0-10

John was diagnosed in early adolescence. He expressed feeling hyperactive. It

was difficult for him to sit in one place for extended periods of time as a child. He also

found it difficult to get information from the teacher. This caused his parents to seek

support, below is a quote about John's experience as a child:

> I was hyperactive so I couldn't really, you know, keep still and you know take in the information from the teacher like most normal students without it…Like it was something that hindered me from sitting there like how normal students do and you know, get an education. Like I couldn't really keep still.

Rick did not feel he was hyperactive as a child, but was told by others that he was hyper. The counselor at his school prompted the family to seek a diagnosis to support Rick's academic and behavioral needs. His family sought a psychologist for diagnosis at the age of five. The quote below shows the feelings Rick had as a child not yet diagnosed with ADHD:

> I was like 1 they kept telling me like I was too hyper and like you know off the walls and all over the place; stuff like that. And it wasn't until I got into elementary school, Roosevelt Elementary that one of the counselors there, one of my teachers talked to the school counselor and asked me to take sessions with her and that's when she started like doing her evaluation and stuff and asked my mom to come in and we had a talk about what we can do to like further like investigate or whatever, however they say it. So she requested that we go see a psychologist.

The above cases were of students who were diagnosed prior to the age of 10, which is usually when individuals are diagnosed with ADHD. They had experiences that are the norm for children that are diagnosed with ADHD. There was a concern regarding hyperactive behavior they displayed, which caused their family to seek medical support.

Diagnosed after 10 years of age

The experiences of individuals who are diagnosed with ADHD later in life are often different from those who are diagnosed early in childhood. Individuals diagnosed as teenagers or adults will not have extreme levels of hyperactivity. Individuals diagnosed as teenagers and adults are more likely to have the inattentive or impulsive type of ADHD. Bart's experience is noted below. He was diagnosed with ADHD in his junior year of high school. His family sought diagnosis because he began to have severe

psychiatric difficulties that impeded his academic progress. He expressed feeling

atrophy, depression and anxiety which prompted him to seek out the support of a

psychiatrist:

> See my junior in high school I had this weird episode of kind of extreme atrophy or depression and I was a pretty good student before that but since then I really been kind of on and off. And then my parents sent me to a doctor. They sent me to a psychiatrist. He gave me the ADHD diagnosis. (Bart)

The experiences of participants are similar to that described by Barkley (1997),

where the hyperactive characteristics of ADHD decrease in severity as individuals begin

puberty, but the inattentive and impulsive characteristics persist. Although students do not

continue to have hyperactive characteristics, there continue to be negative academic and

social effects from ADHD symptoms.

ADHD Experience

It was also essential to gain an understanding of the ADHD experiences that

participants have or have had in the past. Participants had different experiences in dealing

with their ADHD symptoms. Participants were asked to describe how their ADHD

symptoms affected them in and out of school. The following are examples of experiences

of participants. I have broken the participant comments down by the three forms of

ADHD.

Inattention

Individuals diagnosed with an inattentive type of ADHD often describe

themselves as not being able to remain on task for extended periods of time. The

experiences of Bart and Kim show characteristics of a person with the inattentive form of

ADHD. They describe themselves as feeling bored, impatient, having the desire to

engage in alternate activities and feeling the desire to fall asleep or flee from stressful or long activities. Here are their experiences:

> What will happen is if I'm sitting in class or something and it's really boring, I'll sort of become kind of nauseous and then at that point I'll either fight to not fall asleep or I'll have to find something else to do; to read something else or to something like that. (Bart)

> It affects me – it messes me up because my patience is short, and I can't sit in the classroom. (Kim)

Impulsivity

Beth and Paul had symptoms that relate to the Impulsive type of ADHD. The Impulsiveness that students can experience includes feeling the need to do things without thinking the consequences through completely. In Beth's case, she will impulsively complete class work in order to be like the other students in the room.

> Because when I am in the classroom and everybody – first of all, the teacher says we have an hour to complete the assignment, whoever finishes first is good to go. And I want to go, that the moment I see my classmates get up. Then I don't pay attention to the questions, I just answer and then I have to leave before everybody else leaves. (Beth)

> Paul's impulsive behaviors were noted inside and outside of the school setting.

He describes himself as doing things in extremes including sports and school. He would engage in impulsive and dangerous behavior that he described as being "all or nothing."

> So ultimately my ADHD kind of played on what I was doing, it fed what I was already working on which was pretty bad because I work in extremes to make it clear. I am either all out or nothing at all about everything in my life including school, sports and stuff, there is really no middle ground for me. (Paul)

Hyperactivity

The last type of ADHD that students displayed was the form most commonly known, the hyperactive type. Individuals with the hyperactive form of ADHD will often

say that they have a difficult time remaining still. This was true in the case of Rick who continued to have hyperactive symptoms. He stated, "You know it caused me not to do well in school cause I can't keep still." As described by Barkley (1997), this will often fade by the time a student becomes a teenager. Alex spoke about how he was hyperactive as child, but had grown out of this type of ADHD. He is now having symptoms more common with the impulsive type of the disorder:

> Sometimes… I'll wander off, you know, start daydreaming …but it's not to like back then. Compared to back then, where like I would walk around and like mess with other students and just be off the wall; not no more. I think it's cause maybe cause of the age. You kind of, you know, grow out of it but it's still there. (Alex)

The experiences conveyed by study participants are similar to that of other studies on ADHD. Although the students expressed the ability to deal better with hyperactive symptoms, the ADHD continues to affect student outcomes. The issues related to inattention cause students to have difficulty in succeeding in the classroom due to an inability to focus on task for an extended period of time. Study participants also discussed having impulsive-like behaviors. According to Barkley (1997), individuals with ADHD can experience multiple symptoms of ADHD. The impulsive and hyperactive forms of the disorder are categorized together. However, individuals may deal with all forms of ADHD hyperactive, impulsive and inattentive types. The experiences of participants indicate that ADHD symptoms have continued effects on students as they work in the community college setting.

K-12 Experience

The educational experience of students with ADHD at the community college level necessitates a look at their experiences in the K-12 setting. In primary and

secondary school, students will create habits that will transfer to the postsecondary setting. Students were asked if they were able to be successful in their primary and secondary education and if there were any supports they received during their primary and secondary education.

K-12 Services

As noted in previous chapters, the support provided in the K-12 setting is vastly different that of the postsecondary setting. The experiences captured in this section provide an understanding of participants that had special education supports and services in the K-12 setting as compared to those who did not. Two of the eight individuals who were diagnosed with ADHD prior to community college were taught in special education classes. The following are the participant's experiences in K-12 school.

Special Ed Classes

Often, the student with ADHD is segregated due to behavioral issues which can be very distracting in the classroom. The student will either be sent to a special education class for the entire day or for certain periods when help is needed. Alex was student who would be segregated for behavioral issues that he displayed. He also spoke about being taken out of class for subjects that he had difficulty with:

> I was a big trouble maker. All my elementary I was in and out of principal's office. I was always getting suspended or detention, all that. So for class time the same, I would like mess around and not pay attention, so I would have, I forgot what they call it but its where, I don't know …they have bungalows, so there's different ones for like different subjects. So I would go there for math. I would go there for science. Those were the only two main like subjects like I had trouble with paying attention and like staying focused on because I really didn't get it. So I would go to those special classes for that.

Receiving instruction in special education classes can be a positive for students. This was true for Rick. He was enrolled in special education classes due to his inability to focus on instruction in the general classroom. He felt the specialized attention he received in the special education class helped him complete high school. Placement in special education classes allowed him to take required assessments more than once. He also was able to get more focused specialized attention than he had in the general education classes:

> Special ED classes, I had some in high school, I had some in middle school, I had some in elementary. I was able to complete elementary school, middle school and high school. I could tell they looked at me differently than other kids in the class because I remember that too… I wouldn't say they didn't like me but they didn't really look forward to me being in their class. When I was in high school, I received tutoring services and counseling at ___High School and we had classes just for people like myself and basically that's what helped me get through high school. Without it and the medication a little bit too. .. I didn't have to take anything [to graduate]. I was considered a special education student. I did have to take it but it took me like two tries to do it and they allowed me two tries to do it fortunately and I passed it the second time. So without their program at ___High School I don't think I would have graduated.

The experiences of participants who had specialized programs in their K-12 schooling talked about being trouble makers in school and not being well received in the classroom. This shows that, although the student may be able to have her/his needs met in the general education setting, if the student had behavioral problems, there was higher likelihood that student would be sent to special education programs.

No Special Ed Classes

Some students did not have the opportunity work in specialized programs for students with disabilities due to their late diagnosis. Bart talked about how he was an excellent student until he became overwhelmed by the requirements of high school.

Although he was not placed in special classes his teachers noticed the need for him to

have accommodations of his instruction. They allowed him extra time on assignments

and modified timelines:

> I did pretty well my first two years of high school and then my last two I kind of
> squeaked by. I pretty much barely graduated but my grades were good enough to
> get me into a (four year university). At school they would help – they'd give me
> extra time on my papers. We had a big project they called the senior project
> where you had to research and write different drafts and stuff like that. The way it
> worked was I couldn't do little deadlines but basically procrastinate until the end
> but then at the end I would have the sum of whatever they asked for over the
> course of the semester.

Bill's experience was similar to that of Bart. He was diagnosed as a child, but did

not receive any specialized instruction. He was given academic accommodations by his

teachers, but there was never a formal agreement for special education services. He

expressed having difficulty in the classroom. However, he was able to be successful with

the accommodation informally implemented by his teachers:

> No special ed classes. It was harder to concentrate on things like the subjects,
> learning my language, writing, and doing my homework. They would let me have
> a little bit extra time on my tests and my class work assignment. coaching me
> because sometimes I felt that I was different than everybody else.

In the case of Beth, she did not have the opportunity to participate in a general

educational program. She was instructed by a private tutor that her parents hired. This

allowed her instruction to be tailored to meet her academic needs:

> Well, I didn't go to high school here. I went to different places because my father
> was a diplomat so we traveled a lot… since I cannot go to everywhere school, my
> parents hired a teacher so they can teach me.

The individuals who did not have specialized classes in the K-12 setting

learned to deal with their ADHD issues or were not schooled in a traditional school

setting. The above experiences show that students with ADHD can be successful in

general education programs when supports are put into place to meet their educational needs.

Some students have such difficulty dealing with the educational requirements that they are unable to complete school requirements. This was the case for Kim. She was kicked out of multiple schools, was not provided any special education services and eventually dropped out of school. She stated, "I was kicked out of ___Unified School District unfortunately. I have no high school diploma or GED." Kim's experience can be a common one for students with ADHD who are unable to control their ADHD symptoms and have negative educational consequences.

<div align="center">Community College Experience</div>

The transition to community college can prove to be difficult for some students, while others are able to make the transition smoothly. In order to gain a better understanding how students with ADHD are able to cope with the transition to community college, questions were posed in relation to student experiences with the transition. One of the ten students attended a four year university prior to enrolling in the Community College. Many of the participants expressed difficulty in their ability to pass classes and in making it to class. Others found that the college lifestyle suited their learning needs. The experiences expressed highlight the participants' experiences at the community college.

Positive

The transition to community college was positive for Bart because it allowed him to be able to better manage his anxiety and ADHD. Prior to attending community college, Bart was enrolled in a four year university. He found the size of the school

overwhelming and was unable to be successful in his classes. At the community college

he found that he was highly motivated and completed classes with ease. He stated,

"because at the (four year university) I'll be the least motivated person. At (Community

College), I'm probably the most motivated person."

Alex found that he is able to be successful in the community college setting

because he found an area of study that was of high interest. He also found that the school

had lots of education and support options. He was able to easily transition into different

programs until he found the one that suited him the best:

> It's going really well. I mean I love it here. There's a lot – the school offers a lot
> and my studies, I love my studies. I love music so that's kind of what I like about
> college cause when I first started, I just I used to take automotive classes in high
> school and I remembered that's what I used to like I kind of like studied besides
> like basic math and all that stuff. So I thought give a shot, just go for that because
> they offer it here. But I did really bad the first semester. I didn't really take it
> seriously. I got lazy and stuff. But then I kind of found myself while I was here
> so I changed majors and I found something that I like. (Alex)

Participants who had positive experiences in the community college setting were

either reverse transfer students or found a program to fit their educational needs. This

shows that students with ADHD may have problems adapting to postsecondary education

at all levels. The experience of Alex shows that it is important for students find programs

that will meet their needs.

Negative

Some students find attending college to be overwhelming. There are many factors

that can cause students to have negative experiences when attending community college.

There may be a feeling of apprehension of students to discuss the accommodations

needed to support their disability. This was true in the case of Rick. He felt that his

teachers do not understand his educational needs and would be unwilling to provide the accommodations as prescribed by the Disability Service Center (DSC):

> Like today I had to give – I had to have my teacher sign something. He was like what is this. I'm like it's from the DSC and he wanted a whole explanation and he wasn't really – I mean to me he seems like he's, I don't know. I can't really explain it. But I don't think – I think he's going to be like I was a little boy again. So yeah, I mean basically like I think he's not going to show my any favoritism. He's just going to let me earn my grade like everybody else. (Rick)

Students also have issues related to their daily life that cause them to have negative experiences as it relates to attending community college. Kim talks about how her personal issues made it difficult for her to be successful in college.

> I couldn't make it every day. I was dealing with a pimp, they never want me to go to school.

Amy also talked about the personal and educational factors she had balance comparative to her success at community college:

> I'm like a single mother so everything's on me. And just like last week, well no two weeks ago he was sick. I had to miss school because I didn't have anyone to watch him. I can't send him to school sick so it's just like certain sacrifices I have to make because of it but I just roll with the punches. (Amy)

Negative experiences in the community college were often due to outside factors. One participant was dealing with a pimp, one is a single mother and the other had intrinsic issues of not wanting to be in school. There was one student experience of not feeling able to express educational needs to school staff as a negative experience at the community college level.

<center>Effect of Medication</center>

The majority of participants indicated that they have taken prescription medication as a means of dealing with the symptoms of ADHD. One participant had

never been prescribed prescription drugs for her ADHD symptoms. The participants had

different thoughts about the effectiveness of the medications that they had been

prescribed. Out of the ten participants, six indicated that their medication was effective

and that they continue to use it effectively to for their ADHD symptoms. The other

participants either found prescription medicine ineffective for their ADHD symptoms or

did not like the side effects of the medication so they discontinued use.

     Bart was treated with anti-depressant medication before he was diagnosed

properly with ADHD. The various medications that he was prescribed were not effective,

which caused him to perform poorly in school. He found that with the proper medication

he is better able to handle all the symptoms related to his ADHD.

> I'm taking Abilify and then Adderall. I was initially on some like antidepressants
> and stuff because they didn't really realize it was just an attentional thing. So I
> think what they said was the attentional problems led to kind of depression or
> apathy. (Bart)

     Mary has also had positive experiences when it relates to her medication. She

stated, "When I was on my meds when they are controlled and appropriate, they are

good. She has had difficulty with her medication due to lack of permanent residence,

health care coverage and physician/psychiatrist availability. Mary indicated that, without

proper medication, it is difficult for her to complete daily functions.

     Bill found it necessary to utilize a certain brand of medication for positive effects.

He finds it essential to take his medication daily in order to stabilize his ADHD

symptoms. He described negative side effects that were exhibited when he changed his

medication:

> Back then I started with Ritalin and then I went up to a different kind of
> medication, I forgot what it's called, but it had some effects on me so I had to cut

it down to Ritalin again. Sometimes I don't take it and I find out it's a lot harder to concentrate to this day still.

Negative Experiences

Kim had negative experience related to being able to secure and take her medication on a regular basis. She discussed her lapse in medical care and other issues that have caused her to be unable to take her medication as prescribed. Below she describes problems she has had with maintaining her medication:

> I feel, I'm still the same way, because I'm not on it steady… I should be a taking a dose now of the meds. I need them, I haven't – the guy that I left when he threw me out on the street he was on his way to jail my meds were left there.

During the interview Kim seemed very agitated. She had not had medication for an extended period of time. She finds that, if she does not take medication consistently, it will not only have a positive effect on her academic ability, but her life as a whole. She had difficulty remaining focused during the interview, in class, having conversations for an extended length of time, and remembering what she was supposed to daily.

Paul describes his use of prescription medication. He was not prescribed his medication by a medical doctor, but obtained it from a girlfriend. He eventually became dependent on the prescriptions drugs for ADHD and was unable to control his use of the drugs. This led him to ultimately use illegal substances for a similar effect:

> I took that and part of the problem was, .it wasn't my prescription, and my body's chemistry is super receptive to anything and I have to monitor what I intake because I have so much energy output a day that I am very aware of what good day is or bad day is and how much control I can maintain mentally over that. So worse thing happened was that it just became out of control really past, I became dependent on it real quick to just maintain a job. And so off the bat it was not regulated, it wasn't monitored and it was really weird because it was the complete opposite of what Ritalin was to me when I was a kid. Now this thing allowed me to catch up to me and mentally, like I am still 130% going forward but I am able to keep up now and even going.

Alex had adverse effects to his ADHD medication. He eventually needed psychiatric care to resolve the issues that came out after he began to take his medication. He mentioned, "That really messed me up. I tried to commit suicide and ended up going to the mental hospitals on like suicide watch." It is often noted that psychiatric drugs can have negative effects. In Alex' case, he had an extreme psychiatric episode. He stopped using medication for his ADHD after his hospitalization.

Participants had varying experiences with medications. Some participants found that taking their medication daily was essential to dealing with their ADHD symptoms. Other participants no longer used their prescription medication for their ADHD symptoms, but felt it would be positive if they began to use their medication again. Several participants indicated that they had negative experiences related to taking their ADHD medication and they have chosen to no longer use the medication.

<p style="text-align:center">Illegal substances</p>

Out of the ten participants, three indicated they have used or currently use illegal drugs. Participants used an array of illegal substances from cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana and illegally purchased prescription drugs. The main illegal drug that was used is marijuana. Participants spoke about how they felt marijuana was an effective treatment for their ADHD symptoms. Mary stated, "I smoked pot, too, at one point, but I stopped after a year of that. Alex described how he is able to complete task and remain focused when he uses marijuana:

> I found the marijuana it does really help like. I don't smoke it before class because I won't be able to like understand and stuff but at least like having it in my system like I'm like 100% focused, I'm 100% like on my job like I do everything on time. I come to class, you know, and like set for the day. I get my notes done. I get my homework done good.

Kim speaks about marijuana has improved her memory. She also talked of trying to get off of other illegal drugs; she found that she did not have the support of her family to support her in her desire to stop using illegal drugs:

> I smoke marijuana every day. I am not going to lie to you. It helps me. It makes me remember everything. I was started doing powder for like a little bit and then I started calling family like I'm on a real severe thing think – like I need some help and nobody will come, nobody.

Academic/ Behavior issues

Participants were asked about difficulties they have in being successful in their education. The answers that they provided were an insight on Academic and behavioral issues students with ADHD face in the academic setting.

Academic Issues

Beth has difficulty in the area of academics. She has hard time focusing on the instruction in the classroom because of distractions from her classmates:

> I am trying to listen to what he says. But then I can hear the conversation behind me or somewhere, they are laughing or something and I can hear very clearly what they say. And if I hear one word, one sentence, that's it. Then oh, my God, what did the teacher say, and I try to remember what he said. And I'll say, "Could you repeat that for me?" It's very hard for me to focus in class.

Behavior Issues

Paul had issues related to engaging in illegal activity. He was incarcerated for negative choices as a teenager:

> I was on probation for taking the truck… There was no leniency out there because they had nothing better to do I think. I took that car without their knowing and it was what it was. So that got me into alternative school. it was a felony, felony of unauthorized use of the vehicle at 16.

The academic and behavioral issues that Paul and Beth describe have negative effects on their academic and life outcomes. Paul continues to have to deal with

repercussions of his behavior as an adult; he was unable to join the military because of probation. Beth has a difficult time being successful in the classroom.

<div align="center">Activity</div>

The tendency for hyperactive behavior in participants was low, but many of them indicated that it was necessary to stay physically active to release energy that they have after being in class for extended periods of time. Six out of the ten participants indicated that they often did physical activity.

Bart uses exercise as a reward for completing task. He uses his workouts as a motivation to be successful academically:

> These days what I do is I'll have the medication and I'll go to class and to kind of get myself through class what I do is I'm really active, right, so I'll tell myself if you get through class today you can run, you can go workout, you can do something like that. Because if I don't do that, then it just seems like driving the whole way through.

Beth's experience as it relates to being active was in the area of housekeeping. She will begin with a simple task, which will grow as she sees more things that need to be done. This will often take away from other things that she had planned on accomplishing:

> I have to be active; I need to be doing something, moving. Or when it comes to cleaning up, let's see I need to throw the trash away but it's (13:20 inaudible) so I need to clean up that, too. So that's not only one thing. I have to clean up that. I need to go, get the supplies to clean it up. So I leave the trash there, and the last thing I do is to throw the trash away because now if I am going to clean up the wall, I don't need the trashcan to throw the trash. And if I just throw the trash away, it's like something is missing, it's not like I didn't do anything, it's not done.

Paul described his behaviors as extreme. He found that when he did an activity he would push himself to limits that were unsafe:

I did play high school sports. I have always been a very active child so baseball when I was living here, did get start in surfing before I left and skating, went there became a horse trainer and I became a jack of all trades really. So one of my biggest battles now is not going too far, is keeping myself in check. My first season snowboarding, I blew out my knee trying to do things that I hadn't understood yet. It takes time to do that and that's one of the things I had to realize. So actively I have had to keep that at a slow progressive level just as I have had to do academically.

Infusing activity into the daily life of the student with ADHD can be positive. Bart used activity as a reward system to ensure he completed task throughout the day. Beth's experience caused her not to complete planned task because she becomes focused on unrelated activities. Paul engages in dangerous activities that make him prone to injury.

<div align="center">Co morbidity</div>

Issues with co morbidity were also reported by five of the ten participants. There were five co morbid diagnoses presented by participants: anxiety, bi polar depression, panic attack, depression and obsessive compulsive disorder. It is unknown if the co morbid issues experienced by participants are the primary or secondary problem. The following are experiences of participants with other co morbid disabilities.

Beth described how her panic attacks start. She describes how she will think about multiple tasks that she needs to complete, which will cause her to have a panic:

I have anxiety. I get those panic attacks, and you know why because let's say for instance, we are talking and we are supposed to be here talking. But I am looking at my books and I am wondering what they say, and is it going to be hard or not. At the same time I see that book over there and I wonder where it belongs. And somehow I feel like I should put it back or if somebody is going to go and get it and it's going to interrupt a conversation.

Kim described her co morbid disorder as being severe. She has been hospitalized for extended periods of time in order to control her mental health issues:

I have Anxiety, bipolar, depression. I've been hospitalized a lot – the last past three years. Psyche hospital a lot and they don't like letting me go.

Participants indicated that dealing with co morbid disorders difficult. It is unknown if the co morbid issues participants experience were created by the ADHD disorder or if these are solitary issues. The co morbid issues experienced by participants cause the student to have increased symptoms of ADHD. The co morbid issues cause students to spiral out of control and may require hospitalization.

<div align="center">Time Management</div>

Participants were asked about strategies they used to be successful in the community college setting. The theme of time management was expressed as an important strategy to success. Participants spoke of using technology to ensure that they completed task on time. The technology used was in the form of cell phone and email calendars. Participants also spoke about having an organization system as being important.

Mary uses extensive planning to ensure she gets thing done. She also uses an alarm on her phone for reminders of events that she is supposed to complete or places that she is supposed to be:

I have to make sure I plan for things. Make sure I know when things are due and what's happening. I use my phone the calendar to put things so I don't forget, and I use my alarm to remind me that I have something to do.

Bill utilizes a planner to manage his time. When he began at the community college, he did not use a time management system and found that he was not able to complete task or would forget things that he was supposed to do. He thought that he had

more time than he did in high school, but eventually found that community college

required the same amount of time for studying as high school.

> At first time management, it was a little bit difficult because everything is like you have more time so. Now I realize it takes the same amount of studying time as a high school for the subjects. In planning, yes, I use a planner.

> It is essential to have a plan to deal with managing time. This may include using

a paper or electronic planner or studying at designated times. Participants indicated

having a time management and planning system in place was the most important strategy

that they utilized to be successful at the community college.

Future Implications

Participants were asked about the implications for their future. It is important

to gain an understanding on how students see ADHD affecting them in the future so plans

can be made or provided to support student achievement. The following responses show

that the majority of participants feel that they will be successful upon completion of their

academic endeavors.

Rick talked about how he feels that he will be able to reach his future goals. It

will be difficult, but he will utilize self-monitoring skills to be successful after he

completes community college:

> Just fundamentally feels like I think differently or different speeds at different times or whatever but I don't think it's going away. And once I'm done with that I can jump into a x-ray technician job and making like $50,000 a year.

> Mary also had a positive response when asked about the future implications of her

ADHD:

> I see it as a kind of like whatever I'm dealing with it's kind of lifelong thing. It's a small problem but I am accomplishing it like for the most part.

Beth felt that she was getting better at controlling her ADHD symptoms; therefore she saw her future as positive with ADHD having little effect on her life.

> I try to think positive about it so I know I couldn't say yeah but I just know that like my condition is getting better. I'm starting to pay attention more for some reason.

Amy feels that she may face discrimination by co-workers after she enters the workforce:

> I think so like maybe when I do start working like if I have like a lot of people don't understand it so I don't want to kind of be discriminated against for it so I try to hide it as much as I can but sometimes you just can't hide it. So I think maybe when I get in the workforce especially around adults, adults seem to be more mean than kids to me. It's like I don't think they'll understand it like okay what's going on with her.

She continues to talk about how she would like for others to view her positively.

She is confident about her future:

> For the most part I'm just like any other person. You know I just have slight difference but it's not major. It's not like life altering. I still graduated high school. I still went on to college and I'm hopefully graduating in June like I overcame it. So some people think that it's something you can't overcome but I did.

Participants emphasized they will have to deal with symptoms of ADHD throughout the duration of their life. Bill highlighted this by saying that he hopes to not be discriminated against because of his disability. Amy also spoke about wanting people to treat her like any other person although certain tasks may be difficult to complete

Perception of the Role of the Educational Institution

Community college transition

Gaining an understanding of how students with ADHD are able to deal with transition to the community college will provide insight on how to support these students

through the different transitions they face in life. Participants indicated that the transition

to community college was not very difficult.

Bill compared his community college and high school experiences. He did not

have difficulty in adjusting to the time requirements of classes at the community college:

> It's easier, you don't have like seven classes packed on one day, and it's not that much stress as you would get as these.

John was incarcerated after his first semester of community college. He described

how he was able to pass some of his classes in his first semester and that he was

preparing to focus on his second semester.

> I went to college before I went to the penitentiary. I wasn't ready. I passed half of my classes. The other ones I didn't pass. Then I psyched up for the following fall semester after I was attending SMC for a year and then what happened then I went to the penitentiary.

Alex had family members who attended the community college. They were able

to provide the motivation and supported needed for him to have a smooth transition to the

community college:

> Well like I thought like you know I love school; like I enjoy school. I mean I'm not going to just work like retail my whole life. I want to try and find a job like want to like do something with my life, right. So then I thought about it and I talked with one of my cousins and she goes here and she told me about like what they offer and stuff and like it's close by.

Rick one of the students who received special education services during K-12

school described his postsecondary experience as difficult due to the amount of work

required, less support and distractions:

> I would say the amount of work that is required to do in these classes. It's different in high school and it's different because I had that support and I still have it now but it's a lot more work, a lot more studying time. You got to manage your time cause in college some people don't even come to study. Some people just come to have fun and they flash money and they just leave. I'm not one of those.

I really want to support myself and stuff like that because my father, you know, he's supporting himself, my mom's supporting herself, and that's my aim too. Like I don't want to just be a statistic. So I'm just, you know, use that as motivation like hey, you know, even though you have this stuff going on with you, you still can do well. Don't use it as an excuse.

Bart's experience is different from other students. He previously attended a four year university and finds the community college easier than the four year university:

[Transition to] community college pretty good in that it's a little bit easier than over there. I think the semesters work for me better because it gives me time to warm up. Other than that, my credits don't really transfer over so I'm basically here just pretty much paying dues for screwing up. Basically what it comes down to.

Effective teaching style/ classes

It is essential to gain an understanding of the effective teaching style for students with ADHD to improve student outcomes. The majority of participants indicated that interactive were a better fit for the student with ADHD One student prefers to work alone, in a less interactive setting..

Not Interactive

Amy believes that she is most successful in classes where she can work independently. She feels that when she does group work that everyone does not participate equally, causing her to have to more work in the long run:

I actually prefer to work by myself because every time we have a group it's like always end up being the person that does the most work and it's like everybody else just kind of slack off.

Interactive

Bart talked about becoming anxious and overwhelmed in classes that are not engaging. He finds listening to a teacher lecture is ineffective for his learning needs:

Generally the more interactive it is, the more discussion-base, the more something like that. Something that involves the student more than just a flat lecture.

Beth enjoys classes that offer her the ability to work with a group. She describes a similar feeling to that of Amy, where individuals in the group will not put forth the same effort. However, she feels with assigned jobs the use of group work is effective"

> I like when the teacher take notes and then they have students take notes, group exercise, group class work that everybody …have like everybody has assigned job to do or stuff like that. Because people like that they just get the credit some time. Cause I know I used to be one of those students. I didn't do nothing in the group assignment but now I don't do that. Like my last previous, last semester, I was, you know what I'm saying, participating in the group and not just getting the credit for it, just writing my name with everybody else's name.

Rick finds it important to able to socialize and have discussions during class. He is unable to fully grasp what the instructor is trying to convey in classes that are strictly lecture:

> Group activities so I can be around people. I'm a people person. I like to socialize but yeah I would say group activities. Lectures like you got to be focused and you got to sit there and take those notes like I did today so yeah. I mean I remember some stuff he talked about. Some things he was like he would ask us questions and I would sit there and be like I don't know. In my head I'm like wow, man.

Participants overwhelmingly indicated that they worked best in classes that allowed them to be interactive and work with others. It was shown that when instructors only lecture students did not feel that learning outcomes were as good as when there are activities during teaching.

Teacher Understanding of ADHD

Participants were asked about their teachers' understanding of supporting students with disabilities. The participants who utilized the option of in-class support, such as

extra time on test and note taking, noted that the teachers were open to students with

disabilities utilizing the accommodations that had been set in place. One participant

indicated that he did not feel the teacher would allow him to use his accommodations.

The participants who did not use the accommodations form felt that their teachers were

supportive enough without having to use the form for extra supports. Bill feels that his

teachers are able to implement his accommodations with ease. He stated, "There is no

problem. They don't really care if you get extra time or not." In the case of Bill, he finds

it important to talk with the teacher before class starts to review the accommodations he

may need:

> I usually go to them in the beginning but that's really hard to do sometimes too
> cause I want to think about it or I think I don't need this combination or whatever
> but I've kind of trained myself to just go as soon as I can, just let them know
> right away.

Alex has not had any difficulty with his instructors providing extra time needed

for assessments. He talked about how the instructor will have the test ready in an

envelope for him to take in the student resource center (SRC):

> Oh yeah, they understand. They don't, you know, they don't ask questions. I
> mean they know like, you know, like I have some special needs so like I say I
> have a form like this and I have to sign it first and I have the specialist sign it and
> then I take it to my teacher and they go ahead and sign it. They just ask, okay so
> what do you need. So I just say I need the extra time …I'll maybe ask them once
> when the time comes but so far, yeah, they're like really nice and they
> understand… They'll like the day of the test or something they'll put it in an
> envelope and I'll take it and go take the test at the SRC.

Developing a personal relationship with her instructors was important for Amy.

She finds that, if the instructors have an understanding of her needs and her ability, then

they will motivate her throughout the duration of the class:

> I like to feel like I have a personal relationship with a professor. So I would say professors that feel – that actually care about you passing. I love that. Like they like pushing me. Like okay you can do better, you can be better. I don't like instructors that set it up for you to fail.

The majority of participants indicated that there was a positive relationship with instructors as it relates to understanding of service needs and supports. One participant indicated the importance of being able to have a personal relationship with instructors. One participant indicated that he did not feel his current instructor would be accepting of following his service/accommodations plan.

<div align="center">Experiences of the Student to Access Social Capital</div>

Family / Community Support

One out of the ten participants indicated that she did not have family support, but indicated that the friendships that she had created were essential to her educational success. All other participants indicated the support of their family was the most important support system that they had. The support of friends and community were also indicated as being integral. The following quotes support the importance having a strong support system outside of the educational environment. Motivation is provided to Amy by her sister. She stated, "I have support. I have family. My sister she's a college graduate. She helps me out a lot." Having the support of family is an essential piece for Paul who lives with his extended Family. Paul has a strained relationship with his mother and his father passed away when he was young. He finds having the support of extended family to be extremely important:

> My uncle and my aunt who I was very close to growing up and their two daughters … they were always, they are still, supportive. I live in their back house now, so they are very supportive.

Rick finds that friends are important to his academic success. He is able to depend on his friends to help him in choosing and completing his classes:

> So I know someone that's a psych major. She's was talking to me today about how can she help me. So she's going to be able to help me do well in these classes because she's done well in classes in psychology.

Kim had a very difficult upbringing as a foster child, but she was able to stay connected with her family which provides her support as an adult:

> I was in over 95 group home placements and faculties, seriously. Through all that I was able to keep in contact with my family. I am currently living with my great Aunt, it's difficult, but she supports me.

The support offered by family can be in proving a place to live while in school or providing motivation to completing school. One participant also indicated the importance of having the support of community resources including church groups.

<center>Experiences with Institutional Agents</center>

Social (Institutional) Support

Students with ADHD are able to utilize disability support services at postsecondary institutions. Of the ten students interviewed, two indicated that they had not utilized the services of the disability services center although they had utilized other supports available at the college. Participants who did utilize the disability support services stated that the support was a necessary component of their success in community college.

No Use of DSC

Amy has been able to be successful in community college by participating in array of educational programs offered at the community college:

From time to time I use tutoring because I struggle in math. Like I hate math, so, yeah from time to time I do use tutoring and I was in the first year experience program my first year of college and I'm also a participating EOP and S-Care.

John utilized counseling services to help him stay focused on his goal and not take

unnecessary classes:

They basically help you keep on track because it's easy to get into college and just take random stuff that has nothing to do with your major and you find yourself being in a junior college for 4 years. (John)

The students who have not used the DSC indicated the importance of finding

supports available at the school for success. They sought out individuals who would

provide support in the form of tutoring, financial support and academic planning.

Use of DSC

Bart and Paul found the ability to have early registration important to deal with

ADHD symptoms. It is necessary for Bart to take classes in the morning, because of his

medication:

Probably that I can schedule things whenever I want. Yeah, they help me register earlier so I can take classes in the morning usually because the medicines for the morning, if I take it at night, then I can't sleep all night. Sometimes I'll take advantage of the extra time. Sometimes they'll allow me to have like 30 extra minutes on a test or something. Usually I don't need it but it's nice to have peace of mind going in cause what it will do is reduce the anxiety going in.

Regarding registration, Paul mentioned

Priority registration, get in my classes, staying focused on what classes I had to do, can't break the cycle now. So I am very adamant about maintaining my schedule and events and having goals constantly set…Funding, being able to financially be self-sufficient because financing was my worst thing in the world (Paul)

The Special resource center provides students with books on tape, which was essential for Beth. Beth is mainly Spanish speaking, so she is able to use books in her home language which make it easier for her to understand the content. She also finds it beneficial to have a quiet when taking test:

> At the Special Resource Center, they help me by putting me if not in my own room, in a room with students but they are doing their own stuff. So I am doing my own thing and I can concentrate there's no noise or anything. There is a program they have that …They scan the books and the program reads it for you even in Spanish. They have different languages; one of the languages is Spanish. And then if you don't understand, you always go back to it and then highlight the paragraphs or whatever. And there is something that you don't understand, you immediately click – I don't know if it's dictionary or something like that, and it gives you the meaning. And it's everything in verbal so it's easier for you to understand because you are listening, you are looking on it and you are reading it, all that. So that's very good. And also you can put it in electronic device.

The special resource center at the community college offers students academic counseling; Rick uses the counseling to complete the classes he needs for graduation and in selecting instructors that will teach classes to ensure greater academic success:

> I speak to that counselor to keep me on track so I can finish up here so like four things, four to five things right now. I would say go to the resource center here on campus, talk with people that I know about classes that they've taken that I probably will take or I am going to take or I'm taking next semester. So I would say seek out help from on campus that's available, ask my friends that I know if they token these classes before how can they help me, and that's basically how I would overcome like stuff like that.

Bill uses the special resource center to support him in creating an educational plan. He also finds it necessary to utilize a note taker.

> Usually with my Ed plan. If I have any problems taking notes or if I need extra time on my tests, they would help me like that. If I need a note, they would give me this carbonless paper, and I would give it to a friend, one of my classmates, and they will write down the notes and I would take the paper underneath it while they have the original copy. That's only when the teacher talks fast though, not with one of those slow talkers. My Ed plan, they would sometimes figure out if I

need to cut my class because before I was taking to many credits and they said it was too much for me so I had to cut off a class.

Mary finds the extended time on test to be especially beneficial. She takes the accommodation form to her teachers and is able to have 50 to 100% more time on test.

Extended time, they will give me this paper that I take to the teacher, and they would check it and see what they would give me, and then I will bring it to the place and they would accept it and give me either 50% more time or 100% more time on my test.

Alex utilizes all the services mentioned above, extended time for test, different testing environment, and the educational planning services.

I get like – they have their own counselors and they're all nice and want to help. I also take the accommodations, like the testing. That helps a lot too cause when it's like a quiet environment you have to like, you know, do a test and just focus on the test,…So I go over there something like this, just a room, and you go and no distractions. So you just take your time plus they double your time so it's better. So those are the kind of services they have. We go over Ed plans. We go over any like activities that are coming up during the semester.

There were a multitude of positive experiences given by those who do use the DSC. Students expressed the importance of having someone to review their educational plan with so that goals can be met in a prescribed amount of time. Participants also indicated having the ability to have a quiet place to complete exams was helpful. The other positive components of the support offered at the DSC were priority registration, financial support, classroom accommodations, note taking, book readers and counseling.

Strategies for Success

Individuals who live with a disability for a long time will often develop strategies to deal with some of the issues they face related to their disorder. The participants in this study have an array of strategies they have used to be successful in their educational

career. The following are some of the strategies that they feel are essential to their

success.

Bart has found that using his medication and understanding in advance what may

cause him problems is the best strategy for him to use to make sure he is able to achieve

academically despite his ADHD:

> Those last two years were really hard. I didn't really – I was basically doing what
> I could. Nowadays I have slightly better strategies like I'll have the medications.
> I'll know what's going to be a problem for me; what's not going to be a problem
> for me.

Mary has found that making connections with programs offered at the community

college important in completing community college as a student with ADHD:

> When I first got here, I was in the SELPA program, the transition SELPA program
> I was still finishing up high school stuff and I was taking some small classes doing
> pretty good for first couple of semesters and then I don't know what happened. I
> think after SELPA disappeared, that's when I went down there. and then I became
> a part – I was wondering when I became a part of EOPS program, Extended
> Opportunity Programs Services.

Alex find that making academic goals for himself to be an important piece of his

success at the community college. He also describes using medical marijuana to reach

his academic goals:

> To focus, I just think of my goals. I try to keep my mind set on something, you
> know, just think about like motivation in me. To be honest…I kind of like had
> that like kind of like depression mode, and I started I saw like on a website that
> like medical marijuana helps with ADHD and all this other stuff.

Avoiding distractions was also described as an important piece to be successful

academically. Rick finds it necessary to study on campus to avoid distractions:

> I mean I got to study on campus; I can't study at home. There are too many
> distractions; it's too easy to say I'll do it tomorrow.

The participants in this study had a variety of strategies that they used to deal with their ADHD symptoms. Bart talked about the importance of using his prescribed medication to deal with his symptoms. Mary utilized supports offered at the community college to ensure she maintained good academic standing. Alex spoke of the non-prescription drugs, marijuana, as a tool to deal with his ADHD symptoms. Rick's strategy to ensure he meets his academic goals is to study on campus so that he has fewer distractions. The strategies given by participants provide an insight on what it takes for a student with ADHD to be successful at a community college.

<div align="center">Reflection on Findings</div>

Throughout this chapter, the focus was on students at community college with ADHD describing the trials they have faced, the successes that they have had, their use of social capital, the role of the educational institutions, and their experiences with institutional agents. These experiences led to the creation of a figure on the hierarchal educational needs of students at the community college with ADHD. Table 4.1 provides a tiered approach to understanding the needs, supports and structures to put in place for the community college student with ADHD. The student is the primary factor in his/her own success. Then, the support spirals outward to include family, friends, community and lastly the institutional support. At the center of the figure is the student; the student must have intrinsic motivation to seek support from family, community or school to attain educational success. The family is the second tier of student support. Family showed an ability to identify student need and provide an intervention to promote positive outcomes for the student. The third tier of support is provided by friends; participants relied strongly on friends to negotiate the community college system. This included, but is not

limited to, note taking, motivation, clarification and navigation. Students who are unable

to get support from family and friends or do not have intrinsic motivation to ensure

academic success, the community will provide support to the student. The community

support includes, but is not limited to church, mentors, family friends and community

organization.

Figure 4.1 Tiered Support Structure Model
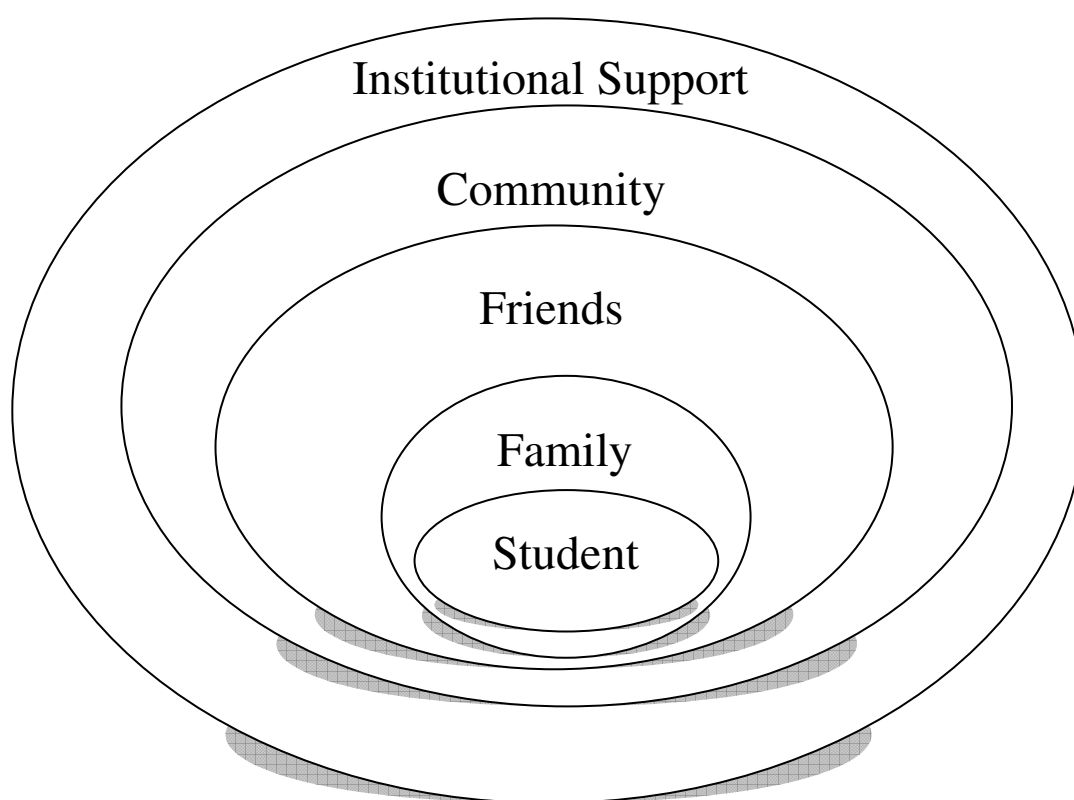
Family, friends and Community support will provide the student with the needed

social capital to navigate the educational system. When these individuals or groups are

ineffective at supporting the student then either they or the student themselves will seek

the help of the institution. This tier of the model is similar to what Stanton-Salazar

(2010) calls institutional agents. In his model, Stanton-Salazar (2010) provides an in

depth understanding of the individuals who would be considered as institutional agents. However, he does not consider the tiers of support that the student has had prior to reaching the top level of need and support. The model above can be used as a guide when working with students with ADHD to direct students on how to seek support. It should be used in conjunction with Stanton-Salazar's (2010) model to provide improved understanding of individuals who support students at the educational institution.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion, Recommendations and Limitations

This ethnographic examined the experience of students with ADHD attending community college in Southern California. The goal of this study is to examine the impact of support services on student with disabilities, specifically students with ADHD. In order to gain an understanding of the student with ADHD, the following research questions were used as a guide in this study:

Primary Research Question: How do educational practitioners improve access to postsecondary education for students with ADHD?

1. What are the experiences of students with ADHD who have accessed higher education?

2. What perceptions do community college students with ADHD have of the role of the educational institution in their ability to access higher education?

3. What experiences do community college students with ADHD have in accessing social capital?

4. What are the experiences of community college students with ADHD in utilizing institutional agents?

These research questions have been examined in the first four chapters of this study. The first chapter provided an understanding of the purpose of the study and spoke to the problem that was presented. The second chapter focused on providing a theoretical framework in which to analyze the data gathered. Chapter three provided an understanding to how the data would be collected and scrutinized. The previous chapter had a compilation of interviews collected through interviews of students with ADHD at

the community college. This chapter provides a discussion of the data collected, recommendations, implication for practice, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

While research on the topic of social capital as it relates to students of racial minority groups has been explored; there is little research on the topic of students with ADHD at community colleges. The lack of research on this topic has created a need for improved understanding of this population of students. For that reason, the findings of this research will be tremendously enlightening for the professionals working with these students across educational environments.

Summary of Findings by Research Question

What are the experiences of students with ADHD who have accessed higher education?

The themes created in chapter four highlight some of the experiences students with ADHD have in their educational tenure. Students provided details of experiences that they have in the classroom. Bart expressed feeling nauseous and anxious when sitting in classes that he described as boring. Mary described feeling anxious when others completed assignments and she still has work to do. Participants also provided insight on their experiences at the community college. Rick stated how he felt his teachers would not give him any specialized treatment because he had a disability; he is required to meet the same standard as the other students in the class. The K-12 experiences of the participants varied; some students had special education classes and received specialized support for their disability mandated by an individualized education plan. Others were in the general education classroom and received support based on teacher assessed needs and one participant did not receive formalized education in a school setting, but was

taught individually by a teacher. Participants expressed issues with co morbidity that affected their academic progress. The most common co morbid issues were anxiety, depression and bi polar disorder. The experiences of the participants are a valuable resource that will be used to provide increased understanding on students with ADHD in educational settings.

What perceptions do community college students with ADHD have of the role of the educational institution in their ability to access higher education?

Participants spoke of attending this community college because of its proximity to their home. Alex stated that he attended the community college because he heard of the supports offered at the DSC. Students felt that teachers and support providers at the community college had a good understanding of how to support their specific disability. Rick was the only participant to state he felt he would be received negatively by staff at the community college for needing accommodations due to his ADHD. The majority of participants felt the most effective teaching style was one that was interactive and provided opportunities for group work. The transition to the community college was smooth for participants due to supports that they receive from the DSC and other services provided at this particular campus. Overall, student perceptions of the community college were positive and seemed to fit the needs of the student with ADHD.

What are the experiences of the student with ADHD in ability to access social capital?

Student social capital was a highlight of this study. Students found that most of their social capital came from family and community support. As it relates to the support offered by family, providing shelter was the most frequently stated support that

participants recognized as being essential. Participants also spoke of having the

encouragement of family as essential.

What are the experiences of community college students with ADHD in utilizing

institutional agents?

Institutional agency as described Stanton-Salazar talked about having a person at

the university who is able to provide students with to negotiate institutional resources.

Students provided experiences of the DSC as being an integral piece to their success at

the community college. Students described the counseling services and having someone

to discuss their educational plan as important to piece of support that they received at the

college.

The above secondary research questions help to answer the Primary Research

Question: How do educational practitioners improve access to postsecondary education

for students with ADHD?   The experiences of interview participants help educational

practitioners understand how to better support students with ADHD at the community

college level. The following recommendations are suggestions for practitioners that serve

this specific population.

<center>Recommendations</center>

The following recommendations are provided based on the data described in this

study. The first recommendation is to continue to do research in the area of community

college students with ADHD. There is currently little research in this much needed area.

There is also a need to improve collaboration between the different educational levels

that students with ADHD reach. This includes the K-12 setting, the four year university,

the community college, trade institutions and an array of other educational options that

students have the opportunity to participate in. Ensuring improved communication among these educators will allow for transfer of acquired knowledge to all educational institutions. The educational institution should also provide incoming students with ADHD a course on effective time management and academic strategies. Participants talked about how they had to learn how to manage their time and create academic strategies that were effective to maintaining their academic coursework.

The information ascertained in this study can help to provide guidance and support to students with ADHD. The interviews of 10 students who attend a community college in southern California offered an in depth understanding of the issues that students with ADHD face and strategies that can be utilized to ensure student success.

Implications to Practice

The data collected in this study has implications for practice in the K-12 and postsecondary educational setting. The implications presented here provide improved outcomes for students with ADHD. The first implication is that it is essential for there to be improved collaboration with health services. The majority of participants in the study had co morbid medical diagnoses and utilized medication that affected their ability to access education. Participants described having anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder and depression. Improved health services can provide these students with proper intake of medication and psychological services.

Another implication for practice is to provide instructors professional development in the area of supporting students with ADHD, teaching to the multiple modalities of learners. The majority of participants described how they are most successful in classes that are interactive. Some of the participants described how they had

increased ADHD symptoms when they were in classes that only taught in the lecture format. Providing instructors with improved understanding of the different ways to instruct students and the academic implications will positively affect student success.

With the improved understanding of how to support students with ADHD at the college level, student outcomes should improve. The student data has shows that it is essential for practitioners to take an active role in supporting students with disabilities.

Limitations of the Study

There were various limitations to this study that should be recognized. The small number of participants, n=10, in this study was the first limitation. While the experiences of the participants provided a thorough understanding of the needs of students with ADHD, the study would have been further enriched with increased participation. Another limitation of this study was that all participants were from one community college. The study would have been enhanced by getting the perspective of participants from other colleges for comparison purposes. The study was also limited by a lack of funding at the community college level to diagnose students. It was expressed by individuals at disability service centers at other community colleges that, due to lack of funding they are unable to identify students who may meet eligibility requirements for disability support services; students have to bring in their own documentation of disability to receive services.

Suggestions for Further Research

This sections provides suggestions for further research. The study would have been more in-depth if it included interviews with support personnel and teachers. This information would have allowed the researcher to triangulate the information and provide

increased data to examine. The last limitation is the need to look at the effects of ADHD

at other educational institutions, including public and private four year universities,

online programs and K-12 schools.

<div align="center">Conclusion</div>

Conducting this study provided a wonderful opportunity to gain improved

understanding of a population of students. This is especially essential due to the increased

number of students with ADHD who are pursuing higher education. Providing

postsecondary educational institutions with an improved understanding on how to support

students will provide improved educational outcomes for this specialized group of

students.

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of student's with ADHD

and their ability to access higher education. This study was designed to ascertain an

understanding of ability to access higher education for students attending community

college in an urban area of California. The study intended to take an in depth look at the

use of institutional agency and social capital as it affects the outcome of students with

ADHD in education. In addition, I wanted to examine the multiple individuals who play

supportive roles, parent, peers, teachers, counselors and other members of educational

institutions to see how they elicit multiple outcomes for students with ADHD.

This qualitative study provided new understanding of the experiences of students

with ADHD at the community college setting. The interview portion of this study yielded

17 themes that shed light on successes and challenges faced by interview participants.

The interviews showed how students with ADHD are able to navigate the educational

system. The information collected in this research study will provide practitioners with

an improved understanding of how to afford students the tools needed for academic

achievement. The study also showed the importance of developing structures within the

educational system.

REFERENCES

Abrams, H. G., & Jernigan, L. P. (1984). Academic support services and the success of high-risk college students. *American Educational Research Journal, 21*(2), 261-274.

Psychiatric Association. Barkley, R. A. (1997). Behavioral inhibition, sustained attention, and executive functions: Constructing a unifying theory of ADHD. *Psychological Bulletin, 121*(1), 65-94. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.121.1.65

Barnard-Brak, L., Lechtenberger, D., & Lan, W. Y. (2010). Accommodation strategies of college students with disabilities. *Qualitative Report, 15*(2), 411-429.

Blase, S. L., Gilbert, A. N., Anastopoulos, A. D., Costello, E. J., Hoyle, R. H., Swartzwelder, H. S., et al. (2009). Self-reported ADHD and adjustment in college. *Journal of Attention Disorders, 13*(3), 297-309.

Bourdieu, P. (2002; 2008). The forms of capital. *Readings in economic sociology* (pp. 280-291) Blackwell Publishers Ltd. doi:10.1002/9780470755679.ch15

Bryant, A., (2001). ERIC Review: Community College Students Recent Findings and Trends *Community College Review Winter 2001 29:* 77-93, doi:10.1177/009155210102900305

Calcagno, J. C., Bailey, T., Jenkins, D., Kienzel, G., & Lenbach, T., (2008). Community college student success: What institutional characteristics make a difference? Economics of Education Review 27 (2008) 632–645

California Department of Education (2010). http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/sr/promoretntn.asp

California Department of Education (2009). Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications for Administration of California Statewide Assessments. http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/accmod.asp

Chapman, C., Laird, J., Ifill, N., and KewalRamani, A. (2011). *Trends in High School Dropout and Completion Rates in the United States: 1972–2009* (NCES 2012-006). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved [date] from http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch.

Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology, 94*(, Supplement: Organizations and Institutions: Sociological and Economic Approaches to the Analysis of Social Structure), pp. S95-S120. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org.libproxy.usc.edu/stable/2780243

Creswell, J. W. (2006). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*

CSULB. *Disabled student services.*www.csulb.edu/dss

Dika, Sandra L. Singh, Kusum. (Spring 2002). Applications of social capital in educational literature: A critical synthesis. *Review of Educational Research, 72*(1), 31-60.

DuPaul, G. J., Schaughency, E. A., Weyandt, L. L., Tripp, G., Kiesner, J., Ota, K., et al. (2001). Self-report of ADHD symptoms in university students. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 34*(4), 370-379. doi:10.1177/002221940103400412

Finn, D., Evans Getzel, E., & McManus, S. (2008). Adapting the self-determined learning model for instruction of college students with disabilities. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 31*(2), 85-93.

Getzel, E. E., & Thoma, C. A. (2008). Experiences of college students with disabilities and the importance of self-determination in higher education settings. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 31*(2), 77-84.

Glutting, J. J., Youngstrom, E. A., & Watkins, M. W. (2005). ADHD and college students: Exploratory and confirmatory factor structures with student and parent data. *Psychological Assessment, 17*(1), 44-55. doi:DOI: 10.1037/1040-3590.17.1.44

González, K. P., Stoner, C., & Jovel, J. E. (2003). Examining the role of social capital in access to college for latinas: Toward a college opportunity framework. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 2*(2), 146-170.

Gordon, M., Lewandowski, L. Murphy, K., & Dempsey, K. (July/August 2002). ADA-based accommodations in higher education: A survey of clinicians about documentation requirements and diagnostic standards. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 35*(4), 357-363.

Hoachlander, G., Sikora, A. C., and Horn, L. (2003). *Community College Students: Goals, Academic Preparation, and Outcomes.* (NCES 2003-164). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Hunsinger, B. (2009). *Council for the advancement of standards in higher education*

Kane, T. & Rouse, C. (1999). The Community College: Educating Students at the Margin between College and Work. *The Journal of Economic Perspective, 13(1), 63-84.g*

Karabenick, S. A., & Knapp, J. R. (1991). Relationship of academic help seeking to the use of learning strategies and other instrumental achievement behavior in college students. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 83*(2), 221-230.

Leuchovius, D. (2003). *ADA Q&A...the ADA, section 504 & postsecondary education* Retrieved from Pacer Center website: www.pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c51g.pdf.

Lin, N. (1999). Social networks and status attainment. *Annual Review of Sociology, 25*, pp. 467-487. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org.libproxy.usc.edu/stable/223513

Lin, N. (2000). Inequality in social capital. *Contemporary Sociology, 29*(6), pp. 785-795. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org.libproxy.usc.edu/stable/2654086

Litner, B. (2003). Teens with ADHD: The challenge of high school. Child and Youth Care Forum, 32, 137–158.

Meaux, J. B., Green, A., & Broussard, L. (2009). ADHD in the college student: A block in the road. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing, 16*(3), 248-256. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2850.2008.01349.x

Murray, C., Wren, C. T., & Keys, C. (2008). University faculty perceptions of students with learning disabilities: Correlates and group differences. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 31*(3), pp. 95-113. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org.libproxy.usc.edu/stable/25474642

Musca, T. & Meendez, R. (1988). Stand and Deliver. United States of America: American Playhouse.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd edition ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Rabiner, D. L., Anastopoulos, A. D., Costello, J., Hoyle, R. H., & Swartzwelder, H. S. (2007). Adjustment to college in students with ADHD. *Journal of Attention Disorders,* , 1-12.

Raue, K., and Lewis, L. (2011). *Students With Disabilities at Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions* (NCES 2011–018). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Reaser, A., Prevatt, F., Petscher, Y., & Proctor, B. (2007). The learning and study strategies of college students with ADHD. *Psychology in the Schools, 44*(6), 627-638. doi:10.1002/pits.20252

Salzberg, C. I., Peterson, L., Debrand, C. C., Blair, R. J., Carsey, A. C., & Johnson, A. S. (2002). Opinions of disability services directors on faculty training: The need, content, issues, formats, media and activities. *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability*, *15*, 101–114

Shaw-Zirt, B., Popali-Lehane, L., Chaplin, W., & Bergman, A. (2005). Adjustment, social skills, and self-esteem in college students with symptoms of ADHD. *Journal of Attention Disorders, 8*(3), 109-120. doi:10.1177/1087054705277775

Stanton-Salazar, R. D. (1997). A social capital framework for understanding the socialization of racial minority children and youths. *Harvard Educational Review, 67*(1), 1-40.

Stanton-Salazar, R. D. (2001). The help-seeking orientations of latino and non-latino urban high school students: A critical-sociological investigation. *Social Psychology of Education, 5*(1), 49-82.

Stanton-Salazar, R. D. (2004). Social capital among working-class minority students. (pp. 18-38)

Stanton-Salazar, R. D. (2010). A social capital framework for the study of institutional agents and their role in the empowerment of low-status students and youth. *Youth & Society,* doi:10.1177/0044118X10382877

Stanton-Salazar, R. D., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1995). Social capital and the reproduction of inequality: Information networks among mexican-origin high school students. *Sociology of Education, 68*(2), pp. 116-135. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org.libproxy.usc.edu/stable/2112778

Stanton-Salazar, R. D., & Urso-Spina, S. (2000). The network orientations of highly resilient urban minority youth: A network-analytic account of minority socialization and its educational implications. *The Urban Review, 32*(3), 227-261.

Stodden, Robert A. Whelley, Teresa Chang, Chuan and Harding, Tom. (2001). Current status of educational support provision to students with disabilities in postsecondary education. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 16*(3-4), 189-198.

Sweener, K., Kundert, D., May, D., & Quinn, K. (2002). Comfort with accommodations at the community college level. *Journal of Developmental Education,*

Trammell, J. K. (2003) "The impact of academic accommodations on final grades in a postsecondary setting." *Journal of College Reading and Learning* 34.1 (2003): 76+. *Academic OneFile*.

US Census Bureau (2011). Current Population Survey, unpublished data. http://census.gov/population/www/socdemo/educ-attn.html

US Department of Education. (2002). *No child left behind.* Retrieved July, 22, 2011, from http://www2.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml

US Department of Education. (2004). *Building the legacy: IDEA 2004.* Retrieved July, 22, 2011, from http://idea.ed.gov/explore/home

U.S. Department of Justice – ADA Home Page: www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm

Weyandt, L. L., & DuPaul, G. (2006). ADHD in college students. *Journal of Attention Disorders, 10*(1), 9-19. doi:10.1177/1087054705286061

Weyandt, L. L., & DuPaul, G. J. (2008). ADHD in college students: Developmental findings. *Developmental Disabilities Research Reviews, 14*(4), 311-319. doi:10.1002/ddrr.38

Wilson, K., Getzel, E., Brown, T. (2000). Enhancing the post-secondary campus climate for students with disabilities. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 14*(1), 37-50.

APPENDIX A: Interview Questions

Introduction- I am Lavon Flowers, and I will be interviewing you today. I have been an educator in the K-12 setting for 10 years working with students with disabilities. The work that I have done with students with disabilities has made me question student outcomes upon leaving high school. The purpose of this study is to find out how students diagnosed with ADHD have been able to successfully achieve in education. This study will not only help me as educator understand how to support my students, it will also be used as tool for the student to gain an understanding on what is needed to be successful. Today's interview should last approximately 60 minutes, we will take a break after 30 minutes; please let me know if any other breaks are needed. I would like to tape record our conversation so that I am able to fully focus on our dialogue and review what was discussed at a later time. The recordings will remain confidential and pseudonyms will be used throughout the interview to maintain anonymity. Is it alright with you if the interview is recorded? Please choose a pseudonym.

Primary Research Question: How do educational practitioners improve access to postsecondary education for students with ADHD?

1. What are the experiences of students with ADHD who have accessed higher education?

2. What are the experiences of community college students with ADHD in utilizing institutional agents?

3. What are the experiences of community college students with ADHD in utilizing institutional agents?

1. What are the experiences of community college students with ADHD in utilizing institutional agents? How long have you been a student at the Community college?

2. Why did you choose to attend this Community College?

3. Are you a full time or part time student?

4. Number of Units completed

5. What is your Major?

6. When were you diagnosed with ADHD?

7. What issues prompted the need to seek diagnosis

8. Is your diagnosis for attention, hyperactivity or the combined type?

9. Do you currently take medication?

10. If yes, share with me the kind of medication you take?

11. How long have you been taking medication?

12. Talk to me about how ADHD impacted your educational experiences/ academic success in k-12 education

13. Describe any strategies you used in primary and secondary school to overcome academic challenges related to ADHD.

14. Tell me about any services you had during elementary and high school

15. What services/ interventions/ accommodations did you find to be most helpful?

16. Talk to me about your transition community college

17. What aspects did you find challenging

18. Were there things that you were apprehensive about?

19. What kind of strategies do you use now to overcome challenges associated with

    ADHD symptoms?

20. What is the easiest or best thing about college?

21. Tell me about any services you have used or currently use through disability

    support services?

22. What services/ interventions/ accommodations have found to be most helpful?

23. What kind of teacher/ instruction style is most effective in helping you to learn

    new material?

24. What kind of teaching style is least effective for you?

25. What kind of class assignments/ activities do you enjoy the most?

26. Dread the most?

27. Beyond college, how do you see ADHD impacting your life (if at all)?

28. Can you share other things with me about your college experience as it relates to

    ADHD that I may not have asked you about?

29. Extras

Thank you very much for your time. The information that you gave me will definitely

    support students.

APPENDIX B: Triangulation of Student Interviews

	Past	Present	Future
Behaviors and Experiences	**X**	**X**	
Opinions and Values	**X**	**X**	
Feelings and Emotions	**X**		
Knowledge and Skills	**X**	**X**	
Sensory Information	**X**	**X**	
Background and Demographics	**X**	**X**	**X**

	What are the experiences of students with ADHD who have accessed higher education?	What perceptions do community college students with ADHD have of the role of the educational institution in their ability to access higher education?	What experiences do community college students with ADHD have in accessing social capital?	What are the experiences of community college students with ADHD in utilizing institutional agents?
Interviews	X	X	X	X
Existing Documents	X			
Existing Quantitative Records	X			

	Mono Method	Analytic Triangulation	Multiple Theoretical Perspective
What are the experiences of students with ADHD that have accessed higher education?	**Purposeful Sampling** **Theoretical saturation**	**Multiple Coding Systems** **Member Checking**	**Constructivist**
What are students with ADHD perception of the role of the educational institution in student ability to access higher education	**Purposeful Sampling** **Theoretical saturation**	**Multiple Coding Systems** **Member Checking**	**Constructivist**
What are the experiences of the student with ADHD in ability to access social capital?	**Purposeful Sampling** **Theoretical saturation**	**Multiple Coding Systems** **Member Checking**	**Constructivist**
What are student with ADHD experiences with institutional agents	**Purposeful Sampling** **Theoretical saturation**	**Multiple Coding Systems** **Member Checking**	**Constructivist**

APPENDIX C: List of Initial Codes

Words	Bart	Mary	Beth	Paul	John	Rick	Bill	Alex	Kim	Amy	Total
Adhd	5	4	4	1	9	9	12	14	12	5	75
College	12	7	4	3	1	8	9	3	10	1	58
Family	3	2	14	0	13	5	1	1	0	16	55
Support	7	1	6	2	2	16	7	9	3	2	55
Teacher	1	1	12	12	1	8	7	5	6	0	53
Mom	0	2	13	0	2	9	5	0	4	17	52
Myself	3	1	9	1	25	0	6	0	1	3	49
Years	6	2	11	0	11	0	3	2	4	6	45
Focus	0	3	2	2	7	6	6	4	4	2	36
Working	0	1	10	4	13	0	2	0	1	1	32
Friends	0	1	11	0	8	0	2	1	0	8	31
Math	0	4	8	9	0	5	0	1	4	0	31
Medication	2	2	1	0	2	3	5	7	6	3	31
Teachers	1	0	8	1	0	3	7	6	3	0	29
Music	0	0	0	19	0	0	0	0	8	0	27
Plan	1	3	10	0	0	3	0	6	1	3	27
Study	0	1	1	1	1	4	12	3	1	1	25
Focused	0	1	0	2	5	2	4	1	4	2	21
Job	0	0	5	0	5	3	2	0	2	4	21
Services	4	2	2	1	1	2	5	0	1	1	19
Diagnosed	1	2	1	1	4	1	1	4	1	2	18
Group	0	5	0	1	0	5	4	1	0	1	17
Education	0	0	1	0	1	1	8	3	1	1	16
Extra time	4	0	1	0	0	4	0	5	1	1	16
Disability	1	0	0	5	4	1	1	2	1	0	15

Meds	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	14
Anxiety	2	0	0	1	0	4	2	0	0	4	13
Therapist	0	0	4	0	6	1	0	0	2	0	13
Active	1	0	1	1	6	2	0	0	1	0	12
Management	0	0	0	0	5	0	6	1	0	0	12
Depression	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	5	11
Difficult	3	1	0	1	0	1	3	1	1	0	11
Transition	2	0	4	1	0	0	0	1	0	3	11
Iep	0	3	0	0	1	0	1	3	1	1	10
Service	1	0	0	3	3	1	0	2	0	0	10
Counseling	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	7	9
Counselor	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	4	1	9
Diagnosis	5	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	9
Hyperactive	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	3	0	9
Concentrate	0	0	0	4	0	0	1	3	0	0	8
Financial	0	0	4	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	8
Medicine	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	5	0	8
Distracted	0	0	2	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	7
Marijuana	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	2	7
Med	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	7
Medications	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	7

ADHD Research Study

Be a part of an Important Research Study at _____Community College.

- Are you 18 years or older?
- Do you have a medical diagnosis of ADHD?

If you answered yes to these questions you may be eligible to participate in a research study.

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into the experiences of community college students with a diagnosis of ADHD. It is the hope that this research will provide increased understanding of successful and unsuccessful support services provided to community college students with ADHD.

Study participants will:

- Be asked to participate in 1 personal interview to be conducted on campus during the fall semester; beginning September 2011.
- Receive a $25 cash incentive for participation in the study

For more information please contact:

Lavon Flowers at _____

APPENDIX E: Formal Consent Form

University of Southern California

Rossier School of Education
3470 Trousdale Parkway
Los Angeles, CA 90089
INFORMATION/FACTS SHEET FOR NON-MEDICAL RESEARCH

NAVIGATING THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM: THE PLIGHT OF THE STUDENT WITH ADHD AND THEIR ABILITY TO ACCESS HIGHER EDUCATION

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of student's with ADHD and their ability to access higher education. This study is designed to ascertain an understanding of a student's ability to access higher education for students attending community college in an urban area of California. You must be aged 18 or older to participate. Participation is voluntary. Your grades will not be affected, whether or not you participate in this study.

PARTICIPANT INVOLVEMENT
If you agree to participate will be asked to participate in an open-ended interview about ADHD and abilities to access higher education. The interview will be recorded with your permission. You may decline to be recorded and continue with participation in the study.

PAYMENT/COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION
You will receive $25 Visa gift card for your time. You do not have to answer all of the questions in order to receive the card. The card will be given to you at the end of your participation.

CONFIDENTIALITY
There will be no identifiable information obtained in connection with this study. Your name, address or other identifiable information will not be collected.

The members of the research team and the University of Southern California's Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP) may access the data. The HSPP reviews and monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects.

When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no identifiable information will be used.

INVESTIGATOR CONTACT INFORMATION
Principal Investigator: Lavon Flowers via email: or phone:

IRB CONTACT INFORMATION
University Park IRB, Office of the Vice Provost for Research Advancement, Stonier Hall, Room 224a, Los Angeles, CA 90089-1146, (213) 821-5272 or
upirb@usc.edu