A visual aid to decision-making for people with intellectual disabilities

Rebecca Bailey, a, Paul Willner a,b,*, Simon Dymond b

a Directorate of Learning Disability Services, Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board, United Kingdom
b Dept. of Psychology, Swansea University, United Kingdom

1. Introduction

Decision-making is only possible if the decision-maker has the mental ability to engage in reasoning and manipulate information rationally, so as to weigh the pros and cons of the alternative outcomes (Buchanan & Brock, 1989; Grisso & Appelbaum, 1998; Mental Capacity Act, 2005). There are numerous factors that influence the difficulty of any particular decision (British Psychological Society, 2006), but one factor that bears particularly on the ability to weigh information is the dimensions in which the elements of the decision are expressed. Weighing up two items of information is very simple when they are expressed in the same dimensions (e.g. the choice between paying £10 or £100 for the identical outcome), but becomes much more problematic when there is a need to integrate information from two or more sources that are expressed in different dimensions (Green & Myerson, 2004).

The problem of integrating information that is expressed in different dimensions is captured by a popular laboratory decision-making task, temporal discounting (TD), in which decisions are based on both the magnitude and the delay of an expected reward. In TD tasks, participants are presented with a series of choices between small immediate and large delayed rewards. The overwhelming majority of typically developing adult participants produce an orderly trade-off between magnitude and delay, such that larger rewards are preferred at short delays, but smaller rewards are preferred at long delays. However, in the present study, both tasks were presented to 24 participants who attended day services for people with learning disabilities (mean Full-Scale IQ = 59.8), half of whom were trained to use a visual aid to support decision-making. Performance of control participants did not change over repeated testing, but use of the visual aid substantially improved the quality of decision-making on both tasks: temporal discounting performance became more orderly, and participants were able to provide more information to justify their decisions in the financial decision-making task. The visual aid also substantially improved participants’ ability to justify decisions they made about their own lives. We suggest that, while the visual aid was designed and evaluated as a means of increasing the quality of reasoning that supports a decision, it may also have potential as an aid to therapeutic interventions aimed at encouraging wiser decision-making.
acquired in childhood (British Psychological Society, 2000). Participants' disabilities were of mixed etiology, and the etiology of these areas.

2. Method

2.1. Design

The study involved two groups of participants (initially, \( n = 12 \) per group) who performed a series of decision-making tasks. One group was supported for each task by the use of a visual decision-making aid; the other was not.

2.2. Participants

The participants attended day services for people with mild to moderate learning disabilities. [The term 'learning disability' is used in the UK to refer to people with significant impairments of both intellectual and functional abilities, acquired in childhood (British Psychological Society, 2000). Participants' disabilities were of mixed etiology, and the etiology was typically unknown.] All participants provided informed consent and the study was approved by the Local National Health Service Research Ethics Committee. Participants were screened using a simple test of financial knowledge (Coins and Costs: Willner et al., 2010a), with a threshold value of 4. All potential participants met this criterion.

Participants were assessed for intellectual ability using the Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence (WASI), so as to confirm that they met the IQ criterion for a diagnosis of 'learning disability' (Full-Scale IQ < 70), and for receptive language ability using the British Picture Vocabulary Scale (2nd edition) (BPVS).
دریافت فوری
متن کامل مقاله

امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات