



Teacher awareness of Dyslexia: An Interview study

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Introduction

- Dyslexia affects reading, spelling, and writing skills, impacting academic performance and confidence.
- This study explores primary and secondary level teachers' awareness, perceptions, and strategies in supporting learners with dyslexia in Sri Lankan classrooms.



Literature Review

- Dyslexia: neurobiological disorder affecting reading, spelling & writing (Shaywitz & Shaywitz, 2020).
- Teachers often lack knowledge; some mislabel students as “lazy” (Washburn et al., 2011; Gwernan-Jones & Burden, 2010).
- Effective support: early identification, phonological training & multisensory teaching (Snowling, 2019).
- Teacher preparedness is key to learner success (Aladwani & Al Shaye, 2012).



Research Questions

1. What is the level of awareness and understanding of dyslexia among primary and secondary level teachers in Sri Lanka?
2. How do teachers identify and support learners with dyslexia?
3. What challenges and barriers teachers face in supporting dyslexic learners?
4. What training/resources would teachers find useful?



Methodology

- Qualitative design: Semi-structured interviews
- Participants: 5 teachers who has more than 5 years experiences. (primary & secondary, public & private)
- Data collection: Interviews (30–60 mins each)
- Data analysis: Thematic analysis (coding, theme development, review)



Findings: Teacher Awareness

- Mixed understanding: some see dyslexia as reading difficulty, others as neurological disorder.
- Many rely on observable signs (letter reversals, slow reading).
- Limited training: most teachers had little or no professional input on dyslexia.

Teacher 3 (Primary, Public): “Honestly, I don’t know much. I think it’s about difficulty learning letters and words.”



Findings: Strategies & Adaptations

- Strategies: phonics drills, peer support, visuals, breaking tasks into smaller steps (only one teacher).

Teacher 5 (Private, Bilingual): “I break tasks into smaller steps and sometimes accept diagrams instead of paragraphs.”

- Adaptations: extra time, oral responses, reduced reading load.
- Private schools offered more structured accommodations than public schools.



Findings: Challenges & Barriers

- Large class sizes (40+ students)

Teacher 1: “Large classes (40+ students) and no resources make it hard to give individual support.”

- Exam-focused education system
- Lack of resources and school policies
- Parental misconceptions (believing children are lazy)



Conclusion

- Teachers show varying levels of awareness about dyslexia.
- Classroom support is inconsistent, often based on personal effort.
- Need for national-level awareness, teacher training, and policy changes.
- Dyslexic learners require inclusive teaching strategies and resource support.



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Questions and Answers



Thank You