

**Examination of the Social and Emotional Effects of
'Dyslexia' on the Learners in Private Primary Schools in**

Dubai

by

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Abstract

This dissertation was designed to research the social and emotional impact of dyslexia, a specific learning difficulty on learners in private primary schools in Dubai. It is a general fact that dyslexia affects a learner academically, to regard if non-academic skills were also affected which further deteriorated the over all performance of these learners (educationally, socially and emotionally) this research was conducted in three private primary schools in Dubai. Research based recommendations were developed to enhance the future learning processes of these learners. This research was based on qualitative as well as quantitative analysis. Parents, teachers, special educators and the learners themselves were considered for the collection of data findings. Interviews, observations, and questionnaires were used as a source of information for the collection of the data. The findings provided a variety of information that was based on many factors. These factors formed the research recommendations for the learner's future teachings and include on- time diagnoses and intervention, parent – school partnership, special dyslexia programs, providing social and emotional support, setting realistic goals etc.

Dedications

*To my sweet children; Maria, Sunny and Manahil,
for patiently waiting till the end, and to my husband for
for his endless support*

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all the children diagnosed with dyslexia and their mothers, teachers and special educators who helped me through this research. I also want to extend special thank you to my dissertation tutor Dr. Eman Gaad for guiding me through the final path of my research.

A Poem by a Child with Dyslexia

I come to school.

I see all the other friends.

Who can rite and read.

But me, I'm all on my own

Not good at riteing.

Not good at reading.

I site on my bed,

I cry I cry and I cry.

But I bon't see why.

It's so hared for me.

Can't you see?

Poem by Jodie Cosgrave , age 11 (Chievers and Andrew, 1996)

Table of contents

	Page No
Title.....	1
Abstract.....	2
Dedications.....	3
Acknowledgements.....	4
Poem.....	5
Table of contents	6
1. Chapter 1 – Introduction.....	11
1.1 Introduction.....	12
1.2 Background.....	13
1.3 Research questions.....	17
2. Chapter -2 Methodology and Data Collection.....	18
2.1-Methodology and Data Collection.....	19
2.1. a Selection of Sample.....	20
2.1. b Methods Used.....	21
2. 2 Rational and Methodological Challenges.....	23
2.2. a Rational.....	23
2.2. b Methodological Challenges.....	24
3. Chapter 3- Literature Review.....	25
3.1-Introduction.....	26
3.2-Methods Used for Literature Review.....	26
3.3- Literature Reviewed.....	28
3.4- Research History on the Social and Emotional Impact of Dyslexia...	29
3.5- Relationship between Social, Emotional Issues and Academics.....	32
3.6- Special Education.....	35

3.7- Special Education in the United Arab Emirates.....	36
4. Chapter 4 - Research Findings.....	38
4.1-Research Findings from Serena in a Special Needs School.....	39
4.1.a Serena’s Teacher.....	39
4.1.b Serena’s Mother.....	40
4.1.c Interview with Serena.....	41
4.1.d Observations with Serena.....	42
4.2 Research Findings from Interview with a Mother of Child Diagnosed with Dyslexia Studying in a Special Needs School.....	43
4.3 Research findings from an Interview with a Mother of a Child Diagnosed with Dyslexia.....	44
4.4 Research Findings from Interview with the Head of Dyslexia Unit in a Private Primary School of Dubai.....	45
4.5 Research Findings from Interview with a Teacher of Children Diagnosed with Dyslexia in a Special Needs School.....	46
4.6 Research findings from an Interview with a Head Teacher of a Special Needs School.....	47
4.7 Research findings from interview with a Learning Support Tutor of a Private Primary School in Dubai with Special Dyslexia Unit for Children Diagnosed with Dyslexia.....	48
4.8 Research Findings from interview with a Learning Support Tutor of a Private Mainstream School (<i>New in establishing their special</i>	

<i>needs facilities)</i>	48
4.9 Research Findings from the learners studying in special needs school.....	49
4.10 Research Findings from the Questionnaires.....	50
4.10.a Dyslexia Support.....	50
4.10.b Social Impact.....	51
4.10.c Emotional Impact.....	51
4.10.d Academic Impact.....	52
5. Chapter 5- Discussion of Research Findings.....	53
6. Chapter 6- Recommendations.....	59
7. Chapter 7- Reflection.....	66
7.1- Discussion.....	67
7.2-Conclusion.....	68
8. Chapter 8- References.....	72
9. Chapter 9- Bibliography.....	81
10. Chapter 10- Appendices.....	83
10 Appendix 1	84
10 Appendix 1.1 Interview Serena’s Teacher in a Special Needs School (<i>9 June, 2007</i>).....	84
10 Appendix 1.2 Interview with Serena’s Mother (<i>11 July, 2007</i>)...	88
10 Appendix 1.3 Interview with Serena (<i>26 Nov, 2007</i>).....	100

10 Appendix 2	103
10 Appendix 2.1	Summarized Account of Observation in Art Class...	103
10 Appendix 2.2	Summarized Account of Observation in Literacy Class....	108
10 Appendix 2.3	Summarized Account of Observation in Recess Time.....	114
10 Appendix 2.4	Sample of Serena’s Work in the Literacy Class.....	116
	Sample of Serena’s Work in Literacy Class.....	116a
10 Appendix 3	117
10 Appendix 3.1	Interview with a Mother of a Child Diagnosed with Dyslexia in a Special Needs School (<i>25 October, 2007</i>).....	117
10 Appendix 3.2	Interview with a Mother of a Child Diagnosed with Dyslexia in a Special Needs School (<i>10 October, 2007</i>).....	124
10 Appendix 4	Interview with the Head of Dyslexia Unit in Private Primary School (<i>4 November, 2007</i>).....	128
10 Appendix 5	Interview with a Teacher of Children Diagnosed with Dyslexia in a Special Needs School (<i>14 November, 2007</i>).....	135
10 Appendix 6	Interview with a Head Teacher of a Special Needs School (<i>28 October, 2007</i>).....	140

10 Appendix 7	Interview with a Learning Support Tutor of a Private Primary School in Dubai with a Special Dyslexia Unit for Children Diagnosed with Dyslexia (<i>8 October, 2007</i>).....	140
10 Appendix 8	Interview with a Learning Support Tutor of a Private Mainstream School (New in establishing their special needs facilities) (<i>1st October, 2007</i>).....	150
10 Appendix 9	155
10 Appendix 9.1	Short Interview with a Learner in a Special Needs School...	155
10 Appendix 9.2	Short Interviews with a Learner in a Special Needs School..	158
10 Appendix 10	160
10 Appendix 10.1	What is Dyslexia?	161
10 Appendix 10.2	Types of Dyslexia.....	163
10 Appendix 11		
10 Appendix 11.a	Sample of Survey Questionnaire Distributed between Teachers.....	165
	Sample of Survey Questionnaire Distributed between Teachers(Attachments)...	165 a, 165b &165c
10 Appendix 11.b	Research Findings from the Questionnaires Distributed between the Teachers.....	166
10 Appendix 12	Brief History of United Arab Emirates.....	178

1. Chapter 1 – Introduction

1. Chapter 1 – Introduction

‘Social and emotional growth and development are closely linked with all aspects of child development’. (Jones, 1998:241) (Jones: pp: 3)

1.1 Introduction

Social and emotional challenges are part of daily life for every individual. But for individuals who have learning difficulties, this can be challenging and frustrating in many ways. This research will regard a specific learning difficulty called, ‘Dyslexia (see chapter 10; 10 appendix 10.1 & 10.2) for its social and emotional impact on expatriate learners in private primary schools in Dubai. It will also aim to look at how support could be provided to learners diagnosed with dyslexia in a best possible way through research based recommendations. These recommendations will be suggested for future support of learners diagnosed with dyslexia to enhance their learning processes in academic as well as non- academic environment. It is important to remember that the academic needs were highly considered in this research dissertation when social and emotional difficulties were researched. Social and emotional needs of an individual can be described as skills of self awareness, self concept, control of impulsivity, working cooperatively and caring about yourself and individuals around you for successful process of development. Elias et al (1997) describe it as , ‘Social and emotional competence is the ability to understand, manage, and express the social and emotional aspects of one’s life in ways that enable the successful management of the life tasks such as learning, forming relationships, solving everyday problems, and adapting to the complex demands of growth and development’ (pp: 2).

Different researches suggest that social and emotional difficulties of learners with a learning difficulty like dyslexia are predictive of serious adapting problems in

teenage years and later in adult life. Many researchers after their studies are of the opinion that dyslexia, an academic learning difficulty is accompanied by social and emotional challenges (Riddick: 1996, 1st ed, pp: 32). The focus on dyslexia and its social and emotional effects can be tracked from 1980's. Samuel Orton was one of the first neurologists who pointed to the social and emotional effects caused by dyslexia in addition to academic learning difficulties in 1925. There could be many possible factors causing social and emotional issues, but mainly there could be either biological factor, environmental factor, or a reaction to the disability itself. Bruck (1980), cited in Ryan (2004), offers two possible explanations to these issues:

1-First the social and emotional difficulties of dyslexia, "are part or a manifestations of the same disorder as is responsible for academic failure".

2-Second, Bruck suggests that because dyslexia puts the child at odds with his environment. He experiences great stress, which in turn creates many problems in social and emotional adjustments" (pp: 1).

At present the main evidence on the social and emotional impacts of dyslexia comes from personal interactions and individual's life histories. Educationalists many times see the academic side of a learning difficulty but fail to see psychological damage caused by this difficulty in their lives. Ryan, M (2004) argues that, 'subsequently, however these difficulties were neglected, and for some years, only the academic and cognitive aspects of dyslexia were studied' (pp: 1-5). This research will discuss how academic achievement cannot be separated from social and emotional learning and how they are interlinked and related. There are gaps in research in Dubai (see 1.2 Background) regarding the selected area of research. Special education is integrating but progressing at a low speed and effective inclusive education is rare in Dubai. So this research will be helpful in recognising a unique area of research (dyslexia) in Dubai so that future education of these learners includes their social and emotional needs to enhance their academic skills. Different approaches to research were adopted (discussed in chapter 2) will be adopted to regard the research from learner's perspective, parent's perspective and educationalists who are involved in teaching these learners.

1.2-Background

Bryan et al (2004) informs that, 'The topic of social –emotional factors in learning disabilities (LD) has benefited from special education's emphasis on science'(pp:45) and continues by saying that, 'over the past 30 years, an impressive body of research has accumulated detailing the social problems experienced by students with LD'(pp: 45).

This research will aim to analyse the social and emotional effects related to dyslexia (see chapter 10 ; appendix 10) in private primary schools of Dubai (mainstream and special needs schools). Dubai is one of the seven Emirates in the United Arab Emirates commonly called UAE. The UAE was founded in 1971. UAE has shown tremendous development in the past ten years (for brief country profile see chapter 10, 10 appendix 12). Arif and Gaad (2008, forthcoming) inform that, 'The population has been directly influenced by the rapid development witnessed by the country in recent years' (pp: 3). Special Educational Needs called SEN in the UAE comes under the responsibility of Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. There are two types of general education systems in the UAE, the public sector and the private sector. The public sector is governed by the government of the UAE itself. It provides free education to all Emaratis (local UAE population) and has Arabic as its primary language. UAE education centre (2007) informs that, '...the UAE offers a comprehensive education to all male and female students from kindergarten to university, with education for the country's citizens being provided free at all levels'. Public sector has its own educational policies, including policy for special educational needs (UAE Educational Summary Policy 2003). 'International Bureau of UNESCO (UAE Policy) states that, 'The Ministry aims at integrating their curricula into the general education curricula' (2003, pp: 24). This emphasises the fact that SEN education was known to the country and was included in their policy. But Gulf News (2006) reported that, 'parents of special needs children feel that there are inadequate facilities for them in some parts of the UAE'. There are centres for rehabilitations for handicapped which provide help, support and education to children with special needs. These centres are placed separately from the general education in UAE. Gaad (2001) informs that, 'Notably all SEN centres are situated outside of mainstream schooling' (pp: 196).

Private schools in UAE offer excellent education to the growing number of expatriates (foreigners) from around the world. They constantly review their curricula

to deliver best education. UAE Policy states that, 'Although the private schools follow the curricula of their homeland, they nevertheless operate under licensing and supervision of the Ministry of Education' (2003, pp: 25). Most private schools in UAE are business investments for private companies confirmed by UNESCO, UAE Policy (2003) which further states that, 'Private schools are financed by resources allocated by private sources to construct, develop and expand them as educational/investment private institutions' (pp: 13). Private schools are open to everybody. There are many private schools in UAE but provision of special needs education is very limited in most of them and many don't have a well defined special educational needs policy.

Research was carried out in three private primary schools in Dubai (explained in chapter 2- methodology) to examine the social and emotional impact of dyslexia on learners in these schools and to provide research based recommendations. Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty described differently by professional (see chapter 10; 10 appendix 10.1, 10.2). Sagmiller (2002, 3ed) describes it as, 'Dyslexia, or more properly functional dyslexia or language disorder is a neurological dysfunction affecting visual, auditory and spatial perception' (pp:2). The author goes on to say that, 'dyslexia involves a wide range of perceptual difficulties in which information from the body's sensors arrives to the brain in a mixed or confused state' (pp: 2). Where as social and emotional capabilities can be defined as the competency to cope, respond, and understand the social and emotional aspects of one's life for the successful management of tasks like learning, social relationships (friendships), problem solving, and adapting to the environment during growth and development. Having understanding about one's self that is self awareness, self control, cooperating with others in tasks related works etc. Elias and Maurice, J(1997) defines social and emotional needs as, 'Social and emotional learning is the process through which children and adults develop the skills, attitudes, and values necessary to acquire social and emotional competence' (pp:2). The 'National Centre for Learning Disabilities'(2007) informs that, 'Research shows that social and emotional skills are the most consistent indicators of success for students with learning difficulties, even more so than academic factors'. Low self-concept and self esteem accompanied by dyslexia or any learning difficulty can further deteriorate a learner's ability to learn, and cause social and emotional issues. There is research and literature that claims the

above statement. Elksnin & Elksnin (2004) informs that, ‘Presently the social – emotional skills problems of children and adolescents with LD are well recognized’ (*pp: 3*).

The reason why ‘dyslexia’ was regarded for this research was that, dyslexia is an academic learning difficulty that affects school learning experiences of almost up to 10% young children worldwide. Prior, M (1996) informs that, ‘At least one in every ten children of school age will have difficulties with one or more areas of school curriculum, most commonly reading and spelling’ (*pp: 1*). Orton (1925), Bryan, Pflaum (1978), Elksnin & Elksnin (2004), Gorman (1999) & (2004), Riddick (1996) and Ryan (2004) researched the social and emotional impact of learning difficulties such as dyslexia. Riddick (1996), informs that, ‘Despite the paucity of research, concerned clinicians and educationalists have consistently pointed to the devastating effects that dyslexia or specific learning disabilities can have on some children’s lives’ (*1st ed, pp:32*).where as Palti (1998) informs that, ‘There is a need also to address the social and emotional problems associated with dyslexia. These problems should be addressed in conjunction with the specific educational provision, if the dyslexic pupils are to cope effectively with this stress inducing disability’.

Effects of dyslexia may not be limited to academics only as other areas like a child’s self-esteem, self- confidence and social life with peers at school and at home may get affected too. So understanding a child’s needs from this perspective becomes important. Hazel & Mellard (1992) states that, ‘The learning disabilities have been examined most carefully in the academic setting; however, learning disabilities is a life long condition that impacts individuals outside the academic environments’ (*pp: 251*).

Palti (1998) informs that, ‘However, it is difficult to assess the effects of dyslexia on the pupils without considering its emotional and social effects’. Goldstein (2000) explains why a learning difficulty is stressful by stating:

- First , they tend to have a negative self-image
- Second, they tend to view the world negatively. This makes it difficult for them to enjoy life

- Finally, depressed individuals with a learning difficulty foresee a life of continuing failure

Research findings will include parents and educationalists perspective who are involved with labelled and diagnosed children with dyslexia. It was considered important to include learner's perspective also to regard if they themselves felt any significant change in their over all life academically, socially and emotionally. Broatch (2003) continues by explaining that, 'Their academic struggles and failures are often met with disapproval by teachers, peers, and parents. Such disapproval can take the form of negative labelling of a child as "slow," "lazy, or dumb"'. In cases where oral language acquisition is affected, it will make them awkward in social situations. Ryan (2004) argues that, 'many dyslexics have difficulty in reading social cues. They may be oblivious to the amount of personal distance necessary in social interactions or insensitive to other people's body language' (*pp: 1*). Gatlin & Kistner (1989) stresses that, 'Some emphasize the role of skill or ability deficit (e.g. non verbal, perceptual abilities; verbal communication skills); others suggest that self control problems lead to negative social interactions (e.g. aggressive, disruptive behaviours) which in turn result in greater dislike of LD children' (*pp: 133*). Thus main aim would be for educationalists, learning support tutors, parents, and researchers involved with children diagnosed with dyslexia to understand, support and show sensitivity towards their social and emotional needs because they may have encountered failure due to their learning difficulties.

1.3 - Research questions

Cited in Mclaughlin & Mertens (2004) where Hedrick, Bickman, and Rog (1993) inform that the research questions operationalize the objectives of the proposed research' (*pp: 38*). Mclaughlin& Mertens (2004) goes on to say that, 'Research questions focus the research hypothesis and clarify what information needs to be collected from what sources and under what conditions' (*pp: 38*).

My research questions are;

1. What are the social and emotional effects of dyslexia on learners in private primary schools in Dubai?

2. How can educationalists and parents help in minimizing the social and emotional difficulties caused by dyslexia to enhance learning?

2. Chapter -2 Methodology and Data Collection

2-Chapter 2- Methodology and Data collection

This chapter gives an overview of the research methods and materials that were adopted to carry out the research.

2.1-Methodology and Data Collection

Designing a research methodology is one of the most important elements when carrying out a research. Different researchers claim that a well planned research design will lead to better research findings. Yates (2004, 1st ed) argues that, 'We can measure good education research by its contribution to learning' (*pp: 17*). To increase reliability and validity 'Robson's Triangulation Methods' (2002) were considered initially. This involved qualitative and quantitative approaches or flexible and fixed designs respectively as called by Robson. Bell (2005), states that, 'Different styles, traditions or approaches use different methods of collecting data, but no approach prescribes nor automatically rejects any particular method' (*4th ed, pp: 7*). But due to sensitivity towards researching special education in Dubai (an Emirate in United Arab Emirates) the research progressed more through qualitative data analysis (see 2.2 methodological challenges) even though quantitative analysis was conducted simultaneously. This was not intentional but circumstantial. Thus a flexible design (qualitative research methodology) and fixed design (survey questionnaires) were organised and then followed for the research findings. Interviews and observations were the main source of information for this research in addition to survey questionnaires. But data collection from the flexible design was not easy and its validity was also one of the concerns. Robson (2002) informs that, 'The term reliability and validity are avoided by many proponents of flexible design', but the author goes on to say that, 'Flexible research design are much more difficult to pin down than fixed designs' (*pp: 5*). Whereas Denzin and Lincoln (1994:2) cited in Ozga (2000) argues that, 'Qualitative research is multiplied in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter' (*pp: xi*).

2.1a Selection of Sample

- **Schools:**

Three different types of private primary English International schools were approached for the findings of the concerned research. Two out of these schools were mainstream private primary schools. The third one was a special needs school that accommodated only children that needed special education. In the third school even though a special curriculum was designed for each student depending on their special needs the teaching staffs were not specialised in special education where as the therapists(occupational, language, speech and reading therapies) were trained in their field. The pupils that attended these schools were mainly expatriate children that recruited from different countries widely varying in their geographical, cultural, religious and social backgrounds. The approach to special education was different in these three schools but their aim was the same that is providing the best education to their learners with in their resources and further assisting them if they failed to deliver as required. The assistance that these schools provided varied from learning support and pull-out sessions to a wide range of educational programs . Due to diversity of special education facilities provided in these schools the findings were also diverse.

- **Learners:**

Sample selected here refers to the learners and educationalists (teachers, special educators, learning support tutors) and parents. Learners comprised of expatriate students diagnosed with dyslexia studying between grade three and six in private primary schools in Dubai (special needs and mainstream schools). The reason behind the selection of students between grade three and grade six was that these are the learners who understood from this age onwards that they have a learning difficulty and that may be stressful in different ways. For example in Herman et al (2002) a learner expresses his feelings as ‘...the most difficult time was the fourth through eight grade because the kids made fun of me’ (pp: 7). Also the researcher wanted to look at the learner’s perspective and his/her voice and from people involved around them. The area of selected research (special education) is a sensitive issue from learner’s perspective also. Parents tried to protect their children from being questioned or asked

about their feelings regarding their emotional and social difficulties. Thus interviewing the child was one of the most difficult tasks for the researcher. Nevertheless learners voices have been included in this dissertation (10 appendices: 1.3, 9.1, &9.2) so that recommendations can be suggested based on their views also.

- **Parents**

Parents of learners diagnosed with dyslexia were approached for this research and their views were respected and considered because most of them had undergone emotional turmoil due to their child's dyslexia (see 10 appendix: 1.3, 3.1& 3.2 for details). These parents had been involved with their children learning processes. Riddell et al (1994) informs that, 'Parents rights and responsibilities with regard to the education of their children feature as a key theme in recent government policy on education' (*pp*: 327). In Dubai it was found that parents tried to hide their child's learning difficulty because of social, cultural and ethical reasons and they expected their child's school to remain discreet about the issue due social norms and stigma. An interesting feature that later became visible from interviews was that two of the special educators in these private schools were mothers of children diagnosed with dyslexia (see 10 appendix 4& 5). These mothers became special educational professionals after they had to deal with the issue of dyslexia at home. Main participation from parent's perspective was interviews conducted with mothers of children diagnosed with dyslexia.

- **Teachers and Special Educators**

Teachers and special educators were considered as one of the most valuable and reliable source for the process of data analysis for this research. Lindsay & Thompson (1997,1st ed) states that, 'Teachers are constantly transmitting values both through their behaviour and through what they teach. Teachers cannot conceal their out look on life from their pupils and the academic material they teach has values embedded in it' (*pp*: 117). These teachers and special educators taught primary students in private schools.

2.1 b-Methods Used

- **Interviews and observations**

Informal interviews were conducted with teachers (10 appendix 5), special educators (appendix 4), three mothers of children diagnosed with dyslexia (10 appendix 1.2, 3.1, 3.2), three learners diagnosed with dyslexia (10 appendix 1.3, 9.1 & 9.2) and learning support tutors (see 10 appendix 7 & 8) and recorded through an audio recorder for accuracy. The beginning part of the interview contained introductory questions (for a warm-up and to break the ice with the interviewer also to understand the background of diagnosed dyslexia). The researcher then focused on the main questions related to this research. Thus many of the questions asked in the interviews may give an impression of ‘irrelevancy’ but since the researcher adopted flexible research design those question were considered important from social interaction perspective. Three classroom observations of a learner diagnosed with dyslexia were conducted and are presented in 10 appendices 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3. An interview was conducted with the parent of the same learner (see 10 appendix 1.2). Brown & Dowling (1998), suggests that ‘In the educational research, we might employ a combination of, for example, interviews and direct observations in attempting to gain access to teachers classroom practices’ (*1st ed, pp: 9*). It is important to note here that interviews and observations were requested in both the mainstream schools that were selected for the research but access was denied so these interviews were conducted with only learners in a special needs school.

- **Questionnaires**

A written survey questionnaire was prepared through a computer program called SNAP (see 10 appendix 11, 11.a). An explanatory letter was attached with the questionnaire to explain what the research aim was and thanking them for cooperating with the research project. The feedback from these questionnaires was unsatisfactory. For example only fifteen teachers completed the survey questionnaires out of fifty. The reason given to the researcher for the incompleteness of the survey questionnaire was the lack of time on teacher’s part due to her busy school schedule. Thus these fifteen responses have been included in this dissertation (see 10 appendix 11, 11.b). The responses from the questionnaire have been compiled in percentages.

2. 2 -Rational and Methodological Challenges

2.2a - Rational

The reasons for the selection of this research project are as follows:

- **Knowledge and personal curiosity**

As a primary school teacher the researcher interacted with children (diagnosed / undiagnosed) with dyslexia. Many times with the progression of this learning difficulty, other behavioural challenges commenced. Need to understand dyslexia and it's relation to social and emotional issues became a curiosity and a reason to enhance my knowledge in the field.

- **Professional development purposes**

Dyslexia affects academic reading, writing, spelling and mathematical skills in school going children. This research project will provide an excellent opportunity to the researcher for professional growth in this field and for future assistance to children struggling with dyslexia and its impacts.

- **Bridge research gap**

Researching the social and emotional effect of a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia would be unique as nothing significant has been written on this research area in the UAE even though special education is gradually gaining its popularity.

- **Create a positive environment for children**

The researcher is firm believer that children with dyslexia will learn better when their social and emotional needs in a teaching environment are respected and given preference in addition to their academic needs. A dedicated, motivated, understanding and a warm hearted loving teacher will create a positive environment for his/ her students and will find best ways to help them learn. Cooper (2002,3ed) confirms this by explaining that, 'The idea that human capacities, such as moral conduct and emotional difficulties, were amenable to change through environmental manipulation...This development established the important principle that children placed in the right circumstances can change in positive ways', (*pp: 15*).

2.2b- Methodological Challenges

Researching the field of special educational needs has its limitations and challenges and the researcher was aware of this. Especially in Dubai where there are cultural, religious, ethical and social issues related to a learning difficulty. McLaughlin & Mertens (2004) argues that, 'Special education research is affected by political, legislative, programmatic, social, and contextual factors that are unique to its functioning. These factors have implications for methodology at every stage of the research process' (pg: 7). But due to interest in researching related aspect of dyslexia these barrier were overlooked and research was continued. The sample size of schools selected for interviews, observations and questionnaires was decreased from five to three schools due to limited access. Even though classroom observations of students diagnosed with dyslexia were requested in all these three schools, only one school that is, the special needs school willingly gave their consent whereas the mainstream schools completely refused due to ethical reasons. In Dubai, it was found that there were two areas of concern regarding researching in special education. Firstly, parents of children labelled with dyslexia are often sensitive and unapproachable. Secondly, educational institutes often do not cooperate as they prefer to stay discreet due to privacy reasons. Also, limited literature available in the field of; 'dyslexia and its social and emotional affects' made this project challenging but exciting.

Even though qualitative and quantitative research were both designed to maximize validity but qualitative analysis was carried out more successfully and gave more rich data compared to quantitative research. Only fifteen out of fifty questionnaires were answered by the teachers using limited time as a reason not to complete them. Though Bell (2005) states that, 'Quantitative researchers collect facts and study the relationship of one set of facts to another' (4th ed, pg: 7). Also the interviews conducted with the learners were kept very short because parents did not fancy the idea of their children being interviewed. It is also important to notify that the possibility to involve more learners in interviews and to perform more observations on the learners inside or outside their classroom was rejected and the researcher had to make use of research that was willingly allowed by the schools.

3. Chapter 3- Literature Review

3. Chapter 3-Review of literature

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the literature review of a special issue of social and emotional difficulties that are associated with dyslexia. Main aim of this literature review was to get implicit understanding of the research before concluding the results of the findings. McLaughlin& Mertens (2004) states that, 'One of the primary purposes of research is to generate information that will increase understanding and identify successful practices or products' (*pp*: 35).

3.2 Methods Used for Literature Review

Library of 'The British University in Dubai' was the primary source of information for the research. Articles from local news paper and websites were also reviewed for the purpose. In addition different databases via the British University in Dubai (BUiD) were accessed for this research. These databases were in association with the University of Birmingham through Athens Organisation certification. Although many data bases were researched only two were selected in regard to their relevance to the area of research. The databases selected were 'ebrary' and 'JSTOR' (see web addresses in references).These databases were used to identify research related to 'social and emotional impact of dyslexia on learner's; and if these impacts adversely affected the academic life of these learners. Past research done in this field between 1980's till 2007 were reviewed and a fair base knowledge of other researchers work done in the field formed an important part of my research. Most of the literature that was reviewed on these databases was fairly old as many of the books and articles were written between 1989 and 1997, also limited books and articles were found ranging between 2000 and 2007.

It was concluded from the year of publication of the literature that the area of research has remained dormant for more than a decade except for the few books written .Even though many researchers has emphasised the need of doing research in the field, latest views are vague on the current issue due to the literature gap. Cited in

Riddick (1996, 1st ed), where Pumfrey & Reason (1991) emphasises that ‘more research on this area is essential’ (pp: 32). Though the reasons for the absence of literature in the field cannot be argued here the provision of shedding light on the history of social and emotional difficulties related to dyslexia till now and the current research (my research) may give some perspective about the perceptions related to social and emotional difficulties caused by dyslexia.

Another aspect that needs consideration is that dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty that falls under the big umbrella of learning difficulties or learning disabilities, thus the literature that was reviewed for learning difficulties or learning disabilities related to social and emotional impact on the learner has been included in this literature review and in this dissertation. Also many educationalists authored books by mentioning learning disability or a learning difficulty even though they meant dyslexia in many places. For example if an article read ‘Effects of learning difficulties on the individual’s social and emotional aspect of learning’ then that article was considered relevant for this research due to the reason explained earlier. Cited in Riddick(1996, 1st ed) where Pumfrey and Reason(1991) and Miles(1995) observe that the terms ‘dyslexia’ and ‘specific learning difficulties’ are often used synonymously although some authorities would see ‘specific learning difficulties’ as an umbrella term of which ‘dyslexia’ is one variant’(pp:1).

Thus only the practical side of the research conducted was limited to learners that were diagnosed with dyslexia, and teachers that were teaching learners diagnosed with dyslexia and parents who had children with dyslexia. So that there would be uniformity throughout the conducted research and the focus remains on one specific difficulty as researching all other learning difficulties would make the research endless. Thus literature that was reviewed was not limited to dyslexia only and the effects (social and emotional) of all learning disabilities were carefully studied also

Several research terms were used on the websites. These research terms were manipulated to ensure explicit identification of the published research (see references; chapter 8). The research terms included the following:

- Special Educational
- Special Educational Needs
- Learning difficulties

Learning disabilities
Learning difficulties and its impact
Learning difficulty and its social impact
Learning difficulty and its emotional impact
Social and emotional problems related to a learning difficulty/ dyslexia
Dyslexia
Dyslexia and its impact
Dyslexia and its social impact
Dyslexia and its emotional impact
Living with a learning difficulty
Living with dyslexia
Education in UAE (United Arab Emirates)
Special education in UAE
Special education Laws in UAE
UAE, UNESCO Policy
UAE culture and education
History of education in the UAE
Diagnoses and assessment of dyslexia
Interventions of dyslexia
Teachers teaching children with learning difficulties
Inclusion and its history etc were some of the terms that were used for researching.

3.3 Literature Reviewed

Before carrying out the research some valuable books were reviewed about the field of research to design research methodology. Robson (2002, 2nd ed) '*Real World Research*' offered guidance to carrying out your own research. This book discussed the general design issues, fixed and flexible designs, and the designs for particular issues. This book provided me guidance during my preparation of questionnaire and in performing real life interviews. Silverman (2001, 2nd ed) was reviewed since most of my data collection was based on qualitative work it guided me by providing information about how research has evolved since 1990's. Bell (2005, 4th ed) was helpful in organising my time for the research . Brown, A and Dowling, P. (1998, 1st

ed) helped me in the development of my research questions and methodology. But most importantly Lacey & Porter's (2005, 1st ed) *Researching Learning Difficulties* put light on historical perspective of learning difficulties and the research associated with it. I benefited from chapter five of this book which discussed researching interventions in special education. After deciding the research methodology, literature was reviewed for the historical background of the social and emotional impact of dyslexia before it could be carried out in schools in Dubai. Yates (2004, 1st ed) identifies that, 'Good research must make sense to/ be usable by teachers (or instructors or parents or the lay reader)' (pp: 20). McLaughlin & Mertens (2004), states that, 'The literature review serves as a foundation for forming research questions' (pp: 38). As the questions that formed the base of this research were; 'what are the social and emotional impact of dyslexia on learners in private primary schools in Dubai?' And the second question was 'How can educationalists and parents help in minimizing the social and emotional difficulties caused by dyslexia to enhance learning?' The second question would provide research based recommendations for the first question.

The researcher had many more interrelated questions in mind that would be concluding after carrying out the research, for example; whether social and emotional impact of dyslexia should be regarded when academics are more important in schools today, whether social compatibility (social development) with peers has its significance, whether contentment and happiness (emotional development) is important for an individual with dyslexia and whether physical environment plays a vital role in the learners' social, emotional and academic development. Ryan (2004) informed that he interviewed many learners with dyslexia in the past twenty-five years and found that, 'in addition to factors such as intelligence and socioeconomic status, other things effect the dyslexic's chances for success. Firstly, early in the child's life, someone has been extremely supportive and encouraging. Secondly, the young dyslexic found an area in which he or she could succeed. Finally successful dyslexic appears to have developed a commitment to helping others' (pp: 4).

3.4 Research History on the Social and Emotional Impact of Dyslexia

Many books were regarded and disregarded before selecting appropriate literature related to what was written on the impact of a learning difficulty and dyslexia. Ryan (2004) informed that Samuel Orton (1925) was one of the first researcher who researched the social and emotional consequence related to dyslexia (*pp: 1*). Ryan himself researched dyslexia and its impact and informed that, ‘Depression is also a frequent complication in dyslexia and that a depressed child is unlikely to be lethargic or to talk about feeling sad. Instead he or she may become more active or misbehave to cover up the painful feelings’ (*pp: 3*). Importance of social and emotional development was put forward by Elias et al (1997, 1st ed) who argues that, ‘Indeed experience and research show that promoting social and emotional development in children is ‘the missing piece’ in efforts to reach the array of goals associated with improving schooling in United States’ (*pp: 1*). Broatch (2003) explains that, ‘Research conducted by Dr. Kenneth Kavale of the University of Iowa and Dr. Steven R. Forness of the University of California at Los Angeles indicates that as many as 70% of children with LD suffer from poor self-esteem.’ But Riddick put forward the issue of social and emotional consequence of specific learning difficulty like dyslexia in 1996 and stated how this area is difficult to research. Riddick (1996, 1st ed), stated that, ‘It is important not to assume that **all** children with dyslexia will automatically have social or emotional difficulties’(*pp: 32*), Where as Ryan (2004) stressed that, individuals with dyslexia **usually** have problems with social relationships and that many of the emotional problems caused by dyslexia occur out of frustration with school (*pp:1-5*). Riddick(1996, 1st ed) did agree by stating that, ‘Despite the paucity of research concerned clinicians and educationalists have consistently pointed to the devastating effects that dyslexia or specific learning difficulties can have on children’s lives’(*pp:32*). And Ryan (2004) further argues that, ‘The inconsistencies of dyslexia produce great havoc in a child’s life’, (*pp: 2*).

Learning difficulties relating to social and emotional issues has been identified by many researchers. For example, Elksnin & Elksnin (2004) elaborates that three decades ago Bryan (1974) published an article ‘Peer Popularity of Learning Disabled Children’ and interest developed in this respect that went way beyond the academic issues’ (*pp; 3-8*). Wong & Donahue (2002) supported his claim clearly emphasising on the poor acceptance of individuals with learning difficulties(*pp: 3*). Elksnin & Elksnin(2004) goes on to explain that even though the social and emotional issues of

children have been identified, there are still different hypothesis that are considered reasons for the issues (*pp*;3-8). For, instance academic problems and educational isolation (La Greca & Stone, 1990), Central nervous dysfunction (Denckla et al 1986), cognitive processing and social and emotional problem solving difficulties emphasised by Donahue et al 1997) etc (*pp*;3-8). Where as Cross argues that (2004, 1st ed) explains that, ‘More seriously, there is a growing body of evidence that shows that many children with emotional and behavioural problems have communication difficulties which have not been detected’ (*pp*: 61).

The importance of social and emotional needs are identified by Lewis, Cited in Gutstein (2002) where the author poetically emphasises the importance of social needs, he states that, ‘Friendship is unnecessary, like philosophy, like art...It has no survival value; rather it is one of those that give value to survival’ (*pp*:13). Bender and Wall(1994) after their research informed that, ‘The study of social –emotional development of students with learning disabilities is important for a number of reasons; first, deficits in cognitive processing , which are sufficient to cause major learning problems in academic areas, are probably sufficient to cause major learning problems in non-academic areas as well’(*pp*; 323) and went on by saying that ‘Secondly, research has indicated that the social –emotional development of students with learning difficulties may be more severely impaired during adolescence and early adulthood than previously thought (Gregory, Shanahan& Walberg 1986; Huntington& Bender, 1993, Phil& MnLarnon, 1984; Spafford & Grosser, 1993; etc)’(*pp*:432). Chapman (1988) after studies emphasised that, ‘Study of learning disabled (LD) children’s self concepts were reviewed; the findings show that LD students have lower self-concepts than non-handicapped students’ (*pp*; 347-371). Chapman further goes on to say that, ‘It is widely held that self concept is centrally involved in the learning process, either as a contributing cause or an important outcome(Scheirer & Kraut, 1979, Wylie, 1979)’and stated that, ‘Self concept is the perception of ourselves involving our attitude feelings, and knowledge about our skills, abilities, appearance and social acceptability’ and difficulty in self-concept will lead to ‘Problems in establishing fruitful peer relationships(Bryan& Bryan, 1983; Kronick, 1981)’ (*pp*;347-349).But Marshall& Weinstein(1984) in Chapman(1988) argued that children with learning difficulties when placed in a mainstream education system may develop low self-concept due to their learning difficulties (*pp*;349).

Riddick(1996) stresses that, ‘Burns(1982) in an extensive review of the literature relating to self-concept and education argued that there are clear links between an individual’s self- concept and school performance’(*pp*;34).

3.5 Relationship between Social, Emotional Issues and Academics:

Cited in Bryan and Pflaum (1978) where Koppitz, 1971 and Black, 1974 emphasises that, ‘Typically, social and emotional problems of learning disabled children are interpreted to be a secondary result of academic failure’ (*pp*; 70). Also in Gorman (2001) where Bender & Wall (1994) stresses that, ‘Learning disorders may also be strongly related to emotional problems because the core deficits that interfere with learning affect social and emotional development’ (*pp*; 40). Prior (1996) also stresses that, ‘It has long been known that learning problems and behavior problems tend to go together’ (*pp*; 117). Elias et al (1997) stresses that, they simply cannot understand that the social and emotional issues are integral form of their learning difficulty’ (*pp*;1). Cross(2004,1st ed) argues that, ‘Although there are strong links between language and emotional development there is a body of literature deriving from work in child psychiatry which suggests that there may be large numbers of children with emotional and behavioural problems who have unsuspected speech and language difficulties’(*pp*; 12).

Poor academic performance in school children can lead to psychological issues that could affect self esteem, self concept, social relationships and friendships with peers and that can have a further adverse affect on the education capabilities. This has been emphasised by Herman et al (2002), Elksnin& Elksnin (2004), Bryan (2004), Sagmiller(2002), Donahue, M. Wong, B (2004) etc to name few. Cited in Gorman (2001) where Heyman (1990) informs that, ‘Students with learning disabilities may also generalise from their deficits to an overall negative image of themselves’ (*pp*; 40). They may perceive the idea of inadequacy when unable to cope with their learning difficulty causing frustration and lower self -esteem .Herman et al (2002) goes on to say that, ‘Your peers call you stupid and retarded they make fun of you. Your self esteem goes down. You think of yourself as a stupid child’ (*pp*; 7). Importance of self-esteem was emphasized by Stopper (2000, 1st ed) who argues that, ‘Heightened self-esteem produces a more efficient use of intelligence.’(*pp*; 46).

Elias et al (1997, 1st ed) explains connection between anxiety and learning as, ‘Under conditions of real or imagined threat or high anxiety, there is a loss of focus on the learning process and a reduction in task focus and flexible problem solving’ (pp:: 3). Elias has gone forward by asking a question, Can people succeed without Social and Emotional skills? The researchers say, the accumulating evidence suggests the answer is no’ (pp; 3). Jones, C (1992, 1st ed) stresses that, ‘Social and emotional development are interrelated psychological perspectives concerned with social relationships, emotional stability, social perspective...’ (pp; 3). Ryan(2004) argues that the depressed dyslexic not only experiences great pain in his present experiences, but also foresees a life of a continuing failure’(pp;4). The relationship between dyslexia, academics and social and emotional needs has been identified by researchers for improvising the quality of educational life for the learners in the contest of normal growth and development. Elias et al (1997, 1st ed) explains that, ‘ When schools attend systematically to students social and emotional skills, the academic achievement of children increases, the incidence of problem behaviours decreases, and the quality of the relationships surrounding each child improves, And the students become contributing members of the society’(pp;2).

Dependency of humans on emotional needs can also be understood from Gutstein& Steven’s (2002) statement that, ‘Remove our emotional bonds with family, colleagues and friends and few of us would want to go on living’ (pp;13). Addressing the issue is also important for the reason that good society built on excellent educational force is the key to healthy minds and healthy society. Elias (1997) goes on to say that, ‘In sum, both character education and social and emotional education aspire to teach our students to be good citizens with positive values and to interact effectively and behave constructively’ (pp; 2). Going back to the perception of supporting dyslexia academically, socially, and emotionally to limit the disruptions caused in society, Merith and Morrison(1997) informs that, ‘Today’s children and youth are faced with many challenges including changing family constellations , economic hardships, exposure to violence, availability of drugs and alcohol, and a general loosening of community bonds’(pp;43). From a student perspective it is important to identify their social and emotional needs. Herman et al (2002) states that, ‘...the most difficult time was the fourth through eight grade because the kids made fun of me’ (pp; 7). Individuals with dyslexia feel inferior. Broatch (2003) also stated

that, 'Rather than developing a sense of pride in their accomplishments, children with LD may end up in a quagmire of frustration and shame.'

Parent's perspective for this research was considered as a key element due to their involvement in their children's life. Their views were respected and were regarded important. Lindsay & Thompson (1997, 1st ed) informs that, 'Parents see themselves, and are generally seen by the wider community, as being the primary carers'... (pp; 122). But Dale (1996, 1st ed) informs that 'the role that parents play provides different contribution and responsibilities which may lead to frustration and dissatisfaction on both sides if the school professionals and the parents are to work together' (pp; 37). Parental influence has been well recognized by researchers in, changing the policy and practice of special education of the children with special educational needs. Laws have been formed to include parental power in their children's schooling where, special education is the main concern. Riddell et al (1994) goes on to say that, the Scottish Office 1991 states that: 'As parents you have prime responsibility for your children's education...when you send your child to school you are a partner with the school and the education authority...' (pp; 327). McLaughlin & Mertens (2004) argues that, 'Educators cannot and should not try to do the job alone when it comes to the education of students with special needs' (pp; 11).

As much as the parent influence is important in the aspect mentioned above it is also important to be aware of the fact that parents of children with special needs like dyslexia also puts strain on the marital relationship between the parents. The stress of coping with the needs of a child with learning difficulty is sometimes too much to endure for the relationship between a father and the mother, blaming each other verbally or nonverbally for something (having a child with a disability) that is neither person's fault. Ryan (2004) argues that, 'Like any handicapping condition dyslexia has a tremendous impact on the child's family' (pp; 4). Providing their child with on-going support in education and in other areas can be frustrating for them also and may put an additional burden on them financially, emotionally and socially. Dale (1996) informs that, 'Within the pathological model, it is anticipated that having a child with special needs would lead to great strain on the marital relationship' (pp; 105). Pumfrey and Reason (1991), cited in Riddick (1996, 1st ed), goes on to say that, 'It appears that whatever the debate and terminology and identification, at a global

level there is agreement that such difficulties can have detrimental effects on both the lives of children and their families' (pp;32). As a parent accepting a child with a learning difficulty needs emotional adjustment and can be stressful for both the parents. When these emotional adjustments has to accommodate the challenges faced by the child in school with academics, peers relations, anger, feeling of loneliness, anxiety, low self concept etc then this can further deteriorate the effects of the learning difficulty and may further affect their learning processes . Osama (2001) states that, '...the development of children's social skills frequently is taken for granted. It goes without saying that it is painful for parents to see a child rejected by peers'. Merith and Morrisson(1997) agrees that, '...a learning disability , affects non-academic such as emotional adjustment , family functioning, adolescent problems of school dropout, substance abuse and juvenile delinquency, and adult adaptation'(pp;43). Brooks, Goldstein and Weiss (2004) are all of the opinion that generally, 'Parents worry when their children struggle with anger due to their learning difficulty'.

Teachers are the most important source of learning in a student's life but it should be remembered that they are not the only source. Ott (1997:1st ed) stresses that 'they(teachers) can change the course of their lives for better or worse depending on how they carry out their duties' (pp; 199).Gorman (2001) argues that, 'Remember the child is much more than what he or she is learning in the classroom. Because we only see a portion of the child's life (and thus an incomplete picture of the child), we have to be careful not to reduce a child down to his or her learning and / or emotional problem(s)' (pp; 2-3).

3.6 Special Education

Literature was also reviewed to gain historical background of special education and how it has been adopted in different places. Swanson .L(1991,pg:242) In 1981, the National Joint Committee for the Learning Disorder(NJCLD) adopted the following definitions: ' Learning disabilities is a generic term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening , speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities'(pp;242).

Tanis Bryan (1991) 'It is important to build upon the work that has been done, to continue this evolutionary process, to challenge public policies and their impact on children and families and to advance our knowledge about the nature of learning disabilities' (pp;297).The UNESCO Paris (2005) stresses that, 'According to the 2005 Global Monitoring Report, 'Education should allow children to reach their fullest potential in terms of cognitive, emotional and creative capacities' (pp; 16). The Salamanca Act of 1994 states that, 'every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs, education systems should be designed and educational programs implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs' (pp; viii). Austin et al (2004) informs that, 'The two most common disabilities found in the juvenile justice system are specific learning disability and emotional disturbances' (pp; 22).

3.7 Special Education in the United Arab Emirates

Literature in Special Education for United Arab Emirates was reviewed for the purpose to gain knowledge about the current support provided for children with special needs in the country. After literature review it was concluded that progression of special education is quite slow. Public and private sector both have their educational policies that in majority cases do not include special needs children. Najami (2006) reports that, a special needs program called 'Takamul' was launched on 10th September, 2006 by Sheikh Hamdan Bin Mohammad in support of individuals with special needs. It aims to integrate special needs children into mainstream schools, public system of education. It was found through literature and general news information that the law will be implemented but is not fully functional at the moment. Many private schools were found not to accommodate special needs children because they generate businesses through their schools and supporting learners with dyslexia would put an extra burden on their resources, educational policy and practice etc. UNESCO, UAE Policy (2003, pg: 24) states that, 'The number of special education classes in the academic year 1994/95 was 162. In 1995/96, there were 184 classes accommodating 1,316 learners'. It is also clearly stated in this policy UNESCO UAE (2003, pg: 24) that, 'The Ministry of Education has adopted the use of resource rooms to help students facing difficulties in education' (And further says) these resource rooms follow educational methods that accommodate students with

special needs'. These resource rooms contained all the resources that were needed for special education and their number increased from 17 to 22 from the year 1994 to 1995'(UNESCO ,UAE *pg: 25*).The document also stated that these resource rooms had specialized staff to cater to the child's needs. UNESCO, UAE Policy (2003) also states that, 'Private schools are financed by resources allocated by private sources to construct, develop and expand them as educational/ investment private institutions' (*pg, 13*)

4. Chapter 4 - Research Findings

4 Chapter 4 Research Findings

To understand social and emotional impact of dyslexia on learners in Dubai interviews, observations were conducted for the findings. In addition to this survey questionnaires were prepared and distributed between teachers to get their feedback on the concerned research. For the interviews, observations and questionnaire data refer to the appendices. These research findings have been summarized below;

4.1 Research Findings from Serena in a Special Needs School

4.1.a Serena's Teacher

This research is not a case study of a child but one child was observed inside and outside her class on three separate days and later her teacher, mother and she herself were interviewed to understand if this child faced any social and emotional issues.

10 Appendix 1&2 gives a detailed overview of an eleven years old girl, Serena (due to ethical reasons the name has been changed) who has been diagnosed and labelled with dyslexia and is currently studying in a special needs school in Dubai. In 10 appendix: 1.1, Q8 (Q will be referred to question throughout this dissertation) when Serena's teacher was asked if she had dyslexia the teacher's answer was vague and not revealing and said she was not sure if Serena has dyslexia, also in 10 appendix: 1.1, Q5 she said that,

'I believe that she goes for occupational therapies' without much surety. Where as she does say that she has seen academic improvement in Serena since she started with her which was a positive remark about Serena (10 appendix 1.1, Q: 7). About Serena's relationship with her peers her reply was;

'She is a very helpful girl, very positive, very cheerful and very supportive. I think she is liked by everybody. She is very caring' (see 10 appendix 1.1, Q; 9). Where as on Serena's self-esteem her reply was,

'She is a confident girl. She may be put in a situation sometime where she doesn't know how to answer a question or she may feel that she doesn't know how to answer it. Usually she comes up quite confidently' (see 10 appendix 1.1, Q: 10).

Serena's teacher was caring and supportive towards her learning difficulty and that was obvious from her remark where she said that she usually tries to give her a

small paragraph to read out loud in the class (see 10 appendix 1.1, Q11). About Serena's social and emotional difficulties in the class her reply was;

'She is the only girl in the class... And I think she is a little pressured by the other boys, being she is the only girl. She can become very quite and withdrawn if she is in an unpleasant situation. And she will not really stand up for herself, however on the contrary I have seen her at times she has really put her foot down and say I had enough and stop. So I think she may be weak at times but usually she can really stand up for herself, and that's very important' (see 10 appendix 1.1, Q: 14).

The researcher asked the teacher if she thinks there is a relationship between dyslexia and social and emotional behaviours considering in general or from Serena's case and her reply was, *'If you are doing poor academically you will not be confident emotionally and that will obviously affect you socially. However on the contrary the brighter side is, children with learning difficulties have a great capacity for imagination and looking beyond things and I see more of a talent. But there still is a phase where I believe they experience a very difficult time until they are able to overcome that awareness of their difficulty so to say'*(10 appendix 1.1, Q:15).

Here the teacher generalized the issue and confirmed her point of view that there is a relationship between learning difficulties and social and emotional issues.

4.1.b Serena's Mother

Interview with Serena's mother started with some warm-up questions first to understand which country Serena belonged to and what language she spoke and gradually getting informed about her learning difficulty. Serena's mother was very open about discussing her daughter's learning difficulty and this was concluded from the information she shared with the researcher. Serena relocated from Paris. She also explained how Serena spoke many different languages because of her Swiss -German mother and Italian father. Serena did learn English from the age of five when they relocated to America; she started pre- Kindergarten, her mother explained (10 see appendix 1.2, Q5). She informed the researcher that she was ignorant about her learning difficulty and associated the learning issues to different languages spoken at home thinking her daughter was language confused (10 appendix 1.2, Q6). She said that when Serena's teacher suspected that she may have a learning difficulty and shared it with her she got offended by it. She said;

'Of course I got very angry, thinking who she thinks she is to tell me something like this' (see 10 appendix 1.2, Q6) and when she said, *'...once I was crying at night because I just so much wanted the society to accept her'*(see 10 appendix 1.2, Q :7). These both remarks from a mother itself identifies how difficult it is for a parent to accept their child's learning difficulty and living with it can be emotionally stressful for parents also. She followed by saying that she thought her child was special when she was diagnosed with dyslexia and she made sure that her child knew about it. Her remark that, *'But I said what if I am not here. I want every body else to like her just the way she is. And that is why I tried to make her as normal as possible'* (10 appendix 1.2, Q: 7). This showed that parents feel vulnerable socially and emotionally and want to protect their children. About her social issues she explained that, *'There is a lot of bullying around in school when children are different. And this is so painful for a child and so painful for a mother and you want to stay there in front of the door of the class and protect your child. Remember how many times did I drive to school in Paris to be sure that when the children are playing outside I would be so scared that somebody would hurt her. She was not the popular girl invited to birthday parties'* (see 10 appendix 1.2, Q 8 & 9).

Her mother explained that Serena's self-esteem has improved in special needs school because she is accepted as she is (see 10 appendix 1.2, Q: 11).For the relationship between dyslexia and social and emotional issues she said, she needed to work on self esteem first to make her child happy and that a happy child will learn quicker and that the academics will follow better and she thought that all of this was closely linked together (see 10 appendix 1.2, Q: 13).She also informed in Q9 that, *'I was really tough. I stressed her constantly and I hate myself for that. I did it only because I was stupid not because I was evil'*.

4.1. c Interview with Serena

Interviewing a child was one of the most difficult tasks for the researcher. Questions were put very tactfully and indirectly. Serena informed that she liked her school (special needs school) and was very happy there. In 10 appendix 1.3, Q3 she answered that; *'No, I would not want to be in a big school because it is scary and confusing. I like my little school'*. And she went on in Q4 by saying that,

'Everybody is my friend in my school; we all know each other because it is a small school with only fifty children'. Serena explained her feelings about being in school as, 'No I am happy all day. But sometimes there is too much confusion and I wish I had a quiet time' (see 10 appendix 1.3, Q6).

This sentence shows that her dyslexia confuses her which her mother also confirmed.

When asked about Serena's confidence and self esteem she replied,

'I am very confident. I am popular in school. People want to be my friend because I am nice to everybody. I never hurt anybody on purpose. I feel bad and sorry when someone is upset. I am one of the smartest students in my class and I never talk badly or swear like the ninth graders do. I find it disrespectful and embarrassing. They should set good example for the smaller kids. I want the smaller kids to learn only nice things and kindness from me' (see 10 appendix 1.3, Q:7).

And she went on by saying in Q8,

'I am a very happy girl. I feel lucky with my family and my school. The only thing that I miss sometimes is a best friend who is a girl'.

4.1.d Observations with Serena

Two observations were conducted in Serena's class and one outside her class at a recess period (see 10 appendices 2.1, 2.2, 2.3). The most significant element that was noted was that Serena was the only girl in her class of eight students. This was identified by her teacher and her mother also that this caused her stress. And this was noted when in (10 appendix 2.2) a boy calls her bossy, where as the teacher thinks Serena gave a suggestion. Serena did not defend herself and stayed quiet. Serena also stayed mostly quiet in her class during observations 2.1 and 2.2, busy working and avoiding talking to any of her class mate. Another element that was observed was that throughout her recess period she played with younger students not from her own class. There is a possibility that she did not feel comfortable with her own class group. But it is difficult to comment on that only through an observation because did not mention anything about this in her interview. Mason. (2002) argues that, 'Observation is rarely viewed or experienced by researcher as an ethically straightforward or easy method' (pp; 87).

4.2- Research Findings from Interview with a Mother of Child Diagnosed with Dyslexia Studying in a Special Needs School

This interview was conducted with a mother of an eight year old boy diagnosed with dyslexia (see appendix 3.1). After asking introductory questions the mother was asked if there were social and emotional issues experienced by her son she explained that, *'My son started to be happy here because he himself felt rejected at the mainstream school where as at his present school he thought that the work was easy and manageable for him'* (see 10 appendix 3.1, Q: 5).

She went on ;

'He started to eat lunch alone and sat beside his assistant teacher to eat; he didn't participate in any class play and sometimes tried to talk to some of the girls in the class because he said they were better than the boys. The boys made fun of him.

When I asked him about this I found out that since he was not able to deliver his class work on time and also because many times he was not able to answer his teacher's questions related to academics. He felt embarrassed and ashamed that he may make mistakes in words while reading (see 10 appendix 3.1, Q: 6).

About her child's self-esteem she shared that,

'I must tell you that his self esteem went very low because of his frustration with academics. He felt insecure and then I remember that at night time he would come to my bed and say 'mommy I am scared. I want to sleep with you.' This he never did before but after his struggles with school work this was the first sign for me how insecure he had become' (see 10 appendix 3.1, Q: 6).

When the researcher asked if she thought that these social and emotional issues were related to her son's dyslexia her answer was:

'Yes, this is exactly what I think. I think in his case academics played a major role in getting him frustrated, unhappy, insecure, and withdrawn from peers. I can say this now because I remember I passed through a lot of stress when he was going through all these phases'(see 10 appendix 3.1, Q: 7).

Her child's dyslexia put her in emotional stress and this was concluded when she said, *'I used to cry at night thinking why it's my child... I had dreams for him. Sometimes I hated myself and sometimes I hated everything around me. It was not only frustrating for me it was also frustrating for my husband because he saw me taking this very seriously much seriously'* (see 10 appendix 3.1, Q: 7).

And she feared for his future saying,

'I thought he will never make it to college and university' (10 appendix 3.1, Q: 7).

She further explained that, *'He has realised that in this special school there are children who all have some sort of issue and nobody in his school is perfect and that in itself has proved to boost his moral because he thinks he is not the only one and that there are other children too who are not perfect and need to work hard to learn. He is ok now'* (see appendix 3.1, Q: 8).

Upon asking she also informed the researcher that she has not told her son yet that he has dyslexia and shared that he thought he was stupid because he forgets his spellings (10 appendix 3.a, Q: 11). For interview with her child see 10 appendix 9.2.

4.3- Research findings from an Interview with a Mother of a Child Diagnosed with Dyslexia

This interview (see 10 appendix 3.2) was conducted with a mother of a nine year old girl diagnosed with dyslexia who also had Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (commonly called ADHD) studying in a special needs school in Dubai. Her diagnoses of dyslexia came late and that put her further behind academically, socially and emotionally, before she started at her present school. Even though the researcher tried to keep the interview focused but it turned out to be very long and many answers given by the mother were not relevant to the research so only that part of the interview has been added that was thought to be relevant. Literature show that dyslexia can be sometimes accompanied with other problems as in this girls case. Also her mother argued that her daughter was identified very late and had she been diagnosed earlier, on-time intervention could have helped her and she would not be behind academically , socially and emotionally When asked about her daughter's social difficulties she said,

‘There is panic that crosses her face when somebody tells her off. Her words come out too quickly. Since she cannot process the information quick enough, she just screams. She would run away or she would back shout. She was not being mean she just couldn’t handle the on-slot of words. But that didn’t happen that very often, it was once in a while. It was very much in a blue moon’ (see 10 appendix 3.2, Q1).

About her daughter’s general intelligence she explained that,

‘She can analyse things and can come up with the most logical answers that even my son eleven wouldn’t come up with’. She further said that, *‘She has got the wicked sense of humour’* (see 10 appendix 3.2, Q; 2). Talking about her daughters social growth she said in Q1 that;

‘Socially I would say that she is eighteen months behind in some years for her actual age group. So yes you are dealing with a nine year old but you are dealing with a nine year old who missed out the first three years of discipline’.

She further explained that when her daughter started in the special needs school and intervention started for her daughter her self esteem got high (see Q: 2), *‘She believed in herself. She was some kind of supper hero. She was the best in the class and she was on a high and I think it also gave her so much confidence’*. For interview with her child see appendix 9.1.

4.4 Research Findings from Interview with the Head of Dyslexia Unit in a Private Primary School of Dubai

This interview was conducted with a head of dyslexia unit in one of the most popular mainstream private schools in Dubai. It was later found through interview that she herself was a mother of a child diagnosed with dyslexia. She informed that their school worked on a pull out session of students diagnosed with dyslexia to give them support through special dyslexia programs once a week for forty five minutes and that they have been very successful academically (see 10 appendix 4, Q: 4 & 5). When she was asked if she came across any social and emotional difficulties while working with them her reply was,

‘The difficulties arise when the child is of reasonable intelligence and is able to understand that they are failing. When they are younger they don’t realise that they are struggling. So there is social impact when they get integrated into grade three,

and four because they have intelligence to understand but they can't do what their friends can do. And this can start having an impact and that would be things like their spellings, their writing they won't have the confidence to write new things because they are told that they get it wrong so that's why they don't want to try anything new. They restrict their ability to try things. They are also very forgetful, some of them are very gentle but some of them are very forgetful' (see 10 appendix 4, Q: 7).

And she gave example by saying that socially they have difficulty because when they are playing a game with their friend *'there is difficulty with information processing and they don't understand the rules of a game'* and their friends will say, *'oh... you never understand and that impacts on their ability socially'* (see 10 appendix 4, Q: 7). When she was asked about how she would deal with social difficulties if they arise and her answer was ; *'explanation and instant feedback from the parent will limit the impact'* (see 10 appendix 4, Q: 8). She elaborated that they have been very successful in providing dyslexia support but she said, *'Because it is identified as quickly as possible here and the opportunity for the child to fail is limited and therefore the peers don't have as much reason to be negative and it fits very well and managed in this school'*(10 appendix 4, Q: 9). When asked if she noticed any emotional difficulties with these learners her instant reply was, *'Yes, mostly frustration'* but she said that teachers in dyslexia support unit help them and that could be limited (see 10 appendix 4, Q: 10). About dyslexia and its social and emotional impact she elaborated that, *'Yes, it's the difficulty with dyslexia that impact the social and emotional difficulties. But the difficulties that the children display socially and emotionally are whether the child is dyslexic or not, these difficulties may have been there anyway depending on the child's personality'* (10 appendix 4, Q: 12).

4.5- Research Findings from Interview with a Teacher of Children Diagnosed with Dyslexia in a Special Needs School

The teacher in this interview explained that they were very successful in supporting their children by providing them help in a pull out sessions, ILP (Individual Learning Plan), and accommodating small number of children per class (see 10 appendix 5, Q1, 2, 3, & 4). Since these children with dyslexia were studying in an isolated environment (special needs school) the researcher wanted to know if she observed any emotional

stress in these students for not being in a mainstream system. The teacher answered this by saying if these children are explained why they are having problems and that they are intelligent and their dyslexia doesn't mean that they are stupid then they will understand' (see 10 appendix 5, Q: 5). She also confirmed the importance of therapies especially when she said they were providing neurological occupational therapies to these learners (see 10 appendix 5, Q: 5).

She further explained how hugely traumatic it is for these children who understand that they have problems (see 10 appendix 5, Q: 6). Discussing the about the emotional issues related to dyslexia she explained that she herself is a mother of a son with dyslexia and elaborated that, *'There are huge emotional issues and they feel the want to give up. They don't find any school work easy...'* (see 10 appendix 5, Q: 8). Going further in question 10 & 11 she confirmed her point of view that dyslexia is related to social and emotional difficulties by giving examples. She said that, *'... because the other children say 'Oh you are stupid you are thick'. You get this in the normal mainstream school and their friends from other schools give them a really hard time sometimes'* (see 10 appendix 5, Q: 11).

4.6- Research findings from an Interview with a Head Teacher of a Special Needs School

The head teacher informed that they have been very successful in providing support to their students diagnosed with dyslexia because they use special teaching methods and support them with dyslexia programs (see 10 appendix 6, Q: 1&2). She said their school give a caring environment to their students which is one of the most important factor why these children are happy at their school (see 10 appendix 6, Q: 3). She also said that these children don't feel isolated at this school (see 10 appendix 6, Q: 4) but there is a contradiction between the head teacher reply and the teacher's in (10 appendix 5, Q: 5) because they were from the same school. The head teacher informed that parents feel ashamed that their children are here with us at the special needs school because there is a stigma attached to being in a special needs school (see 10 appendix 6, Q: 5).Also she confirmed emotional difficulties related to dyslexia in Q7 & 8. When asked about social difficulties related to dyslexia her answer was, *'The peers they don't see friendship connected. They wouldn't say we are not friend*

with him because he is dyslexic or something like that' (see 10 appendix 6, Q: 9). For emotional difficulties related to dyslexia her reply was, *'Some cases but not all cases'* (see 10 appendix 6, Q: 8). Where as for social difficulties experienced by these students her reply was that their friends may say things like *'you cannot even do your three's the right way. You are like a baby.'* (10 appendix 6, Q: 9). About the social and emotional impact of dyslexia she informed that, *'Again it depends on the situation, the child and the environment. All of these things contribute to these happenings'* inQ11.

4.7 Research findings from interview with a Learning Support Tutor of a Private Primary School in Dubai with Special Dyslexia Unit for Children Diagnosed with Dyslexia

Describing the social difficulties related to dyslexia the learning support tutor said that, since their school support children on a pull out session these children may feel embarrassed in front of their peers when they say, *'I am going to the Dyslexia Unit'* but when they gain improvement from the unit then they start liking it (see 10 appendix 7, Q: 7) but inQ8 she said that it's expected from them that they have some emotional problems in the beginning but she refused to give any example due to ethical reasons. She said that to deal with emotional difficulties they have a counsellor at school who will help and informed that, *'And all round teacher, parent the learning support department the dyslexia department there would be support on all sides'* (see 10 appendix 7, Q10). For the relationship between social and emotional issues and dyslexia she said that, *I would say so. Because if it's not caught the child is going to sink further and further. And a lot of a time it's not indicative (meaning dyslexia) and the child has a high IQ and just the frustration of not being able to express themselves is severe in some cases and not being able to read what they want etc, this is extremely frustrating* (10 appendix 7, Q: 11). From the interview it was concluded that their school was very successful due to their dyslexia unit . This was found to be the only school in Dubai that had a dyslexia support unit.

4.8 Research Findings from interview with a Learning Support Tutor of a Private Mainstream School (New in establishing their special needs facilities)

The learning support tutor informed that parents have been very helpful in offering support to their children collaborating with the school (see 10 appendix 8, Q: 5). She further explained that the program that they have started is relatively new because they started it only four months ago but she said she foresees success because parents, teachers and the learning support group of school are all involved in it (see 10 appendix 8, Q: 7). She said the support was provided to children with dyslexia in a group where as from home they get extra support at a one to one level (home tutor) (see 10 appendix 8, Q: 8). When asked about social difficulties experienced by these students she explained that, *'The social isolation happens more with in the classroom because they are isolated as far as learning is concerned. They have things that they can't complete that make them socially isolated and emotionally down that ah...they are struggling'* (see 10 appendix 8, Q: 9). She also informed that their children at school are told about their dyslexia (Q 10). About social and emotional impact of dyslexia on these learners she said, *'when they are given little bit of work and that work is achievable, emotionally they don't feel that upset... when they do get the pressure they get emotionally upset'* (see 10 appendix 8, Q: 12) and she also said that teachers understand this condition and are very helpful by breaking down what they have to teach so that the children don't feel the pressure. She remarked that, *'They do feeling that they are different'* (see 10 appendix 8, Q12). She also confirmed that they tell children about their dyslexia so that they feel good for the right reasons.

4.9- Research Findings from the learners studying in special needs school

This interview took place with a nine year old girl (see 10 appendix 9.1). She informed that she was happy at her school though she wanted to be in a mainstream school so that she could attend French, Spanish and do swimming as well as after school activities because they were not available at her current school (see 10 appendix 9.1, Q1,2& 3). She elaborated that she had many friends at school but preferred to be with her own classmates (Q: 4 &5). Although about her self esteem and self confidence she honestly explained that, *'I am a more confident person than I was when I started the school'* (see 10 appendix 9.1, Q: 7). This also shows that when intervention (academically and also occupational therapies) started for her at the

special needs school her confidence level went high.

The second short interview took place with an eight year old boy diagnosed with dyslexia. He confirmed that he liked his school but was not happy because other kids bothered him (see 10 appendix 9.2, Q: 1& 2). When asked would you like to be in a big school his reply was; *'No, because being in a small school we get more attention and I can work harder'* (Q: 3). He also said that he had many friends but his preference is, *'I like people who are kind to other kids. And I like to talk to my friends. Some of my friends that I want to be with; because they are kind and very nice and the others use bad language so I don't want to be with them'* (see 10 appendix 9.2, Q:5). When asked if he feels any emotional issues at school? His reply was, *'Yes, when I am doing my spelling test I feel frustration and am scared because I feel if I get bad grades then I will fail in class'* (see 10 appendix 9.2, Q:6). He also said that he was a confident boy (Q:7) and his strategy to deal with other children's bad behavior at school was, *'I ignore the people who annoy me, like a boy in my school'* (Q:7).

4.10 Research Findings from the Questionnaires

The research findings from the questionnaires given to teachers were neatly put in separate tables and represented in percentages for better understanding (see 10 appendix 11.b) and a sample of the questionnaire and the letter attached with it for explaining about the research are presented in 10 appendix 11.a. The survey questionnaire was divided into four sections and the findings will be presented systematically in that order;

4.10.a Dyslexia Support

Teachers answer to the dyslexia support in their school was that; 73.33% said they had special programs and the rest 26.66% had no dyslexia support at their school. The most significant feature that came was of dyslexia unit in a schools which comprised 26.66% (Please refer to 10 appendix 11.b table 11.b.2, Q: 4). In table 11.b.3, Q: 5, 33.33% said they noticed some improvement and 26.66% said considerable improvement was observed when these programs were followed with children.

4.10.b Social Impact

When the teachers were asked if the learners felt any social difficulties; 60% said yes, and 40% said no (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.4, Q: 6). When asked to indicate the level of social difficulties faced by the learner at school (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.5, Q: 7), 53.33% did not answer. For withdrawal from peers; 13.33% said it was significant and 33.33% said it was somewhat significant. For difficulty in making friends; 20% said it was significant, 20% said it was somewhat significant, 13.33 % said it was insignificant, while 46.66% did not answer. For violent behavior towards peers; 6.66% said it was significant, 20% said it was somewhat significant, 26.66% said it was insignificant, and 53.33% did not answer. For disliked or ignored by peers; 13.33% said it was significant, 20% said it was somewhat significant, 26.66% said it was insignificant and 46.66% did not answer. For participation with peers in group centered activities at school; 33.33% said it was somewhat significant, 26.66% said it was somewhat significant and 40% did not answer (all in 10 appendix 11: 11.b, table 11.b.5).

Other social difficulties observed by the teachers was; 13.33% said there was peer rejection, 20% said unable to follow written directions , 26.66% said they are often naughty to get attention, 33.33% they had difficulty in communication where as 66.66% did not answer(see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.6, Q8). For the question , if they agree that there is relationship between dyslexia and social difficulties; 26.66% said they highly agree, 33.33% said they agree, 6.66% stayed neutral, and 66.66% don't answer (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.7, Q:9). When asked about what was the relationship between dyslexia and social difficulties; 33.33% said there is negative impact on self-esteem, 6.66% said there is frustration due to academic performance, 20% said poor self confidence and 60% didn't answer (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.8, Q: 10).

4.10.c Emotional Impact

In this section teachers were asked about the emotional impact felt by the learners. When asked if the learners showed any emotional difficulties; 53.33% said yes, 40% said no and 6.66% did not answer (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.10, Q: 12). When

asked how you would grade this child's self esteem; 26.66% responded good, 26.66% responded neutral, 33.33% responded poor and 6.66% didn't answer (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.11, Q:13). Other questions like ,

'Is the student willing and happy to come to school?' For response see table 11.b.12, Q: 14, and *'Does the student get uncomfortable and tense in situations where asked to deliver in front of the class?'* For response see table 11.b.13, Q: 15.

When asked, *'Does the student get upset on small issues inside or outside the classroom?'* (To understand if there was any stress involved in school for the learner); 53.33% said yes, 40% said no, while 13.33% did not answer (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.14, Q: 16). For the question; *'does the student stays unhappy or quiet at school?'* 33.33% said yes where as 60% said no (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.15, Q: 17). And about the relationship between dyslexia and emotional difficulties; 13.33 % each responded difficulty in answering questions and feeling embarrassed, inferior to others, academic failures, peer pressure, unable to deliver in class, 26% responded that dyslexia impact on self esteem and confidence, while 40% didn't answer(see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.17, Q: 19).

4.10. d-Academic Impact

In Response to *'Do you think that academics play role in a learners social and emotional life?'* 20% highly agreed, 40% agreed, 26.66% said neutral, and 6.66% didn't answer (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.19, Q: 21). Response to academic impact was; 26.66% said low academics lead to low self esteem and poor self concept, 13.33% said if children have difficulty in all areas it can make them anxious around peers and tend to hide their learning difficulty, 6.66% said all children like to do tasks at school and receive good grades, 13.33 % said success at school is important, 46.66% didn't answer (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.20, Q: 22).

5. Chapter 5- Discussion of Research Findings

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Researching the social and emotional impact of dyslexia had its limitations but the outcome of the results from the findings not only enhanced the knowledge of the researcher but will prove beneficial for future researchers when they carry out research in special education in the UAE. Since the aim was to observe from different individuals perspectives and the learners themselves the social and emotional impact of dyslexia the data collected was fresh, diverse, authentic and relevant. Research findings from interviews, observations and questionnaires are discussed below;

Research findings from Serena that is, interviews and observations (see 10 appendix 1&2) gave very informative results. Serena was a normal child according to her teacher as far as her behaviour, confidence and general life inside the classroom was concerned (see 10 appendix 1.1, Q: 10). Though her teacher was not sure if she had dyslexia (10 appendix 1.1 , Q:8)even though Serena started with her since January2007 and her mother acknowledged many times that her daughter had severe dyslexia. Teachers are important individuals in learner's lives and they need to understand their pupil's needs, especially if they have a learning difficulty. Ott (1997:1st ed, pg: 199) stresses that 'they(teachers) can change the course of their lives for better or worse depending on how they carry out their duties.' Studying in a special school, following an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and going through occupational therapies had helped her academically, socially and emotionally as far as her school life was concerned. Her mother was aware of the issues related to her dyslexia and she offered her support at home in the form of special dyslexia programs, and by creating an environment of support built on unconditional love. Her emotions, love, understanding and caring was evident when she said,

'She is very creative, absolutely adorable, she is very sensible, when somebody is sad or somebody has something, she will be the first person who notices, who gives the hug, or say something kind to make somebody feel better'(10 appendix:1.2,Q7).

It was also obvious from Serena's case that dyslexia puts parents in emotional stress. When her mother said, *'I was crying at night because I just so much wanted the*

society to accept her' (10 appendix: 1.2, Q7) because her other two children studied in a mainstream school where as Serena was attending a special educational needs school. School rejection was reported by a mother in her interview when she said that; *'My son started to be happy here because he himself felt rejected at the mainstream school where as at his present school he thought that the work was easy and manageable for him'* (see 10 appendix: 3.1, Q: 6).

Baumel (2002) argues that, 'For parents raising children who struggle in school, there are times when the daunting task of juggling day-to-day family responsibilities, work, and the special needs of kids with learning difficulties can feel totally overwhelming'. In Appendix 3.1, Q: 6 when the mother informed that, *'The boys made fun of him'* came as a harsh statement. About her son's social isolation she said that, *'He felt embarrassed and ashamed that he may make mistakes in words while reading'* (see 10 appendix 3.1, Q: 6), showed that academics problems got him frustrated and made him feel inferior to his peers. The mother further explained that, *'I must tell you that his self esteem went very low because of his frustration with academics. He felt insecure...'* (see 10 appendix 3.1, Q: 6). Riddick (1996, 1st ed) argues that, 'At present the main body of evidence on the social and emotional concomitants of dyslexia comes from personal accounts and life histories' (pp;33). Serena herself said that she is happy all day at school and elaborated about her confidence and self esteem as 'I am very confident. I am popular in school. People want to be my friend because I am nice to everybody. I never hurt anybody on purpose' (see 10 appendix 1.3, 6&7). Serena had on-time academic intervention at school, a happy supportive environment at home and a positive attitude towards life even though she had severe dyslexia. Ryan (2002) argues that, 'If children succeed in school, they will develop positive feelings about themselves and believe that they can succeed in life' (pp;1-5). Thus in her case the social and emotional impact cannot be seen due to the factors discussed earlier. From 10 appendix 3.2, Q1, where the mother said that, *'Since she cannot process the information quick enough, she just screams. She would run away or she would back shout. She was not being mean she just couldn't handle the on-slot of words'* (see 10 appendix 3.2, Q1). This also showed that children who have dyslexia and have difficulty in language processing, may show behavioural and social difficulties. Cross (2004) informs that, 'Language development can also affect emotional development because language is necessary to describe and regulate emotions and is therefore an important part of emotional intelligence' (pp; 11). The

mother of this child also complained that the school where her daughter studied before did not detect her dyslexia where as currently she was in a small special needs school in Dubai where academically socially and emotionally she had progressed. This again suggested here that academic interventions is the most important factor when a child has dyslexia and this would lead to better social and emotional results(see 10 appendix 3.2 , Q1 & 2). The learner in 10 appendix 9.1, Q: 7 said; *'I am a more confident person than I was when I started this school'* showed that identification and intervention (academically) had helped her in building her self confidence. Whereas the learner in 10 appendix 9.2, Q: 6 informed that, *'Yes, when I am doing my spelling test I feel frustration and scared because I feel if I get bad grades then I will fail in class'* shows that academic issues caused by his dyslexia develops into emotional difficulties for him. Shoopman (2002) strongly argues that, *'If you ever have a chance to attend a Learning Disability Simulation, I would strongly suggest you go. You will learn first hand how humiliating a learning disability can be and how emotions just start to take over your life'*. It was also concluded from (see 10 appendix 3.1, Q: 11) a mother's comment; *'he thought he was stupid because he forgets his spellings'*. Parent's explanation to their children that they are intelligent but their brain works differently will greatly reduce the emotional stress felt by their children. Thus it was concluded from the mothers, learners and the teacher perspective that dyslexia is associated with social and emotional difficulties caused by low academic achievements but these issues vary from person to person and depend on the support provided including on-time diagnoses, teachers support and understanding, and caring physical environment both inside and outside school built on parents and teachers support.

The Head of Dyslexia Unit in a private school (see 10 appendix 4, Q: 9), said Early identification facilities at their school, parents support and all school dyslexia support has limited the impact caused by dyslexia. Rejection of being kicked out from a mainstream school also lead to poor self esteem and special tailored program provided to them can help them academically, socially and academically as informed by the teacher in a special educational needs school(see 10 appendix 5, Q:6, 7, 9, 10 & 12). Tailored programs will lead to successful academic, social and emotional life for the learner, confirmed the head teacher of the special school .She also stressed that parents feel more pressured than the learners themselves and further said that

emotional difficulties related to dyslexia further cause difficulties in behaviour at school. Realistic and achievable targets would be the key element for the learner's success she informed (see 10 appendix 6: Q: 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 & 12). There is a relationship between dyslexia and social and emotional issues confirmed the learning support tutors in private mainstream schools (see 10 appendix 7, Q: 11 & appendix 8, Q: 9).

Research findings from questionnaires distributed between teachers gave very diverse results. When the teachers were asked if the learners felt any social difficulties; 60% said yes, and 40% said no (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.4, Q: 6). The findings for social difficulties experienced by learners with dyslexia varied and for withdrawal from peers for 13.33% it was significant and for 33.33% it was somewhat significant. For difficulty in making friends for 20% it was significant, and for 20% it was somewhat significant. For disliked or ignored by peers; 13.33% said it was significant, 20% said it was somewhat significant. For the relationship between dyslexia and social difficulties; 33.33% confirmed negative impact on self-esteem, 6.66% confirmed that there is frustration due to academic performance, 20% confirmed poor self confidence (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.8, Q: 10). This also showed that many teachers agreed that the relationship between dyslexia and social difficulties exists. For emotional difficulties though 53.33% said yes, 40% said no (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.10, Q: 12). To understand if there was any stress involved in school for the learner; 53.33% said yes, 40% said no (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.14, Q: 16). These results show that many teachers agree with the emotional impact of dyslexia.

About the relationship between dyslexia and emotional difficulties; 13.33 % each responded, difficulty in answering questions and feeling embarrassed, inferior to others, academic failures, peer pressure, unable to deliver in class, 26% responded that dyslexia impact on self esteem and confidence, while 40% didn't answer (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.17, Q: 19). This again shows that dyslexia can emotionally reduce a learner to a feeling of inadequacy, low-self concept, and embarrassment. Where as for the academic impact of dyslexia; 26.66% said low academics lead to low self esteem and poor self concept, 13.33% said if children have difficulty in all areas it can make them anxious around peers and tend to hide their learning difficulty, 6.66% said all children like to do tasks at school and receive good grades, 13.33 %

said success at school is important, 46.66% didn't answer (see 10 appendix 11: table 11.b.20, Q: 22). These results also show that academics play a vital role in a learner's social and emotional life. These teachers provided recommendations for academic, social and emotional development of learners with dyslexia (see chapter 6 recommendations).

6. Chapter 6- Recommendations

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Recommendations Based on Research Findings

Recommendations for this research are based on the research done in this field and the information that has been gathered from different sources like interviews, and observations. These recommendations are discussed:

6.1 Early Identification / Early Intervention

Early identification was one of the most important factor in supporting dyslexia and this was confirmed by the Head of Dyslexia Unit where she stressed on early identification (see 10 appendix 4, Q: 9). Early identification of a learning difficulty can greatly influence its effects in a positive way. Learning style, occupational therapies, Individual learning plan all can follow after a learning difficulty is diagnosed. Interview with the mother (in 10 appendix 3.2) also confirmed that without on-time identification and intervention the impact of dyslexia can deteriorate. The Learning support tutor also made a recommendation that teachers need to identify these children so they could be assessed as soon as possible so that support can be provided to them (see 10 appendix 7, Q: 11, 12). 13.33 % teachers reported on- time intervention for learners in questionnaires (see 10 appendix 11, table 11.b.9& 11.b.18).But Beveridge (1999, 2nd ed), stresses that, ‘the identification of special educational need is not an end in itself, but should be the starting point for action to help pupils overcome their difficulties’ (*pp*; 53).

6.2-Building School / Home Partnership to Enhance Learning:

The head of dyslexia unit (see 10 appendix 4, Q: 13) suggested that working together with parents could prove beneficial for the child with social and emotional issues. Mclaughlin & Mertens (2004) stresses that, ‘Parents provide a rich source of information about the strength and needs of their children’ (*pp*; 11).Lindsay & Thompson (1997, 1st ed) suggest that, ‘From the perspective of professionals where parents broadly accept their guidance and, more importantly, accept the authority of their expert judgement, partnership might be built upon a reasonably firm footing

(pp; 66). The learning support tutor (see 10 appendix 7, Q: 5) also informed that, 'Parent involvement is very important in their child's school life'. Their support is especially important if their children have a learning difficulty like dyslexia. The head of dyslexia unit says *'Which is why it is so good to have a parent in here because they can see how we work with children?'* (10 appendix 4, Q: 7) McLaughlin & Mertens (2004) further advises by saying that, 'They (schools) should form performance partnership with parents aimed at achieving the shared goal of creating effective educational practices that will lead to better results for students' (pp11). Only 6.66% teachers reported building school /home partnership (see 10 appendix 11, 11.b.9).

6.3-Caring Environment at Home and at School

Emphasis on a positive, loving and caring environment both at home and at school was stressed by the head of dyslexia unit (see 10 appendix 4, Q: 12) who said that, *'social and emotional difficulties will be impacted by the environment. You will have a child who is in a positive environment at home where these difficulties will be supported in a positive way and you may have a child who is in difficult situation at home perhaps impacted by other things in the family that will affect that child's confidence. So the social and emotional difficulties for that child will be bigger depending on what goes on at home'*.

The head teacher (see 10 appendix 6, Q: 3) also suggested a positive and caring environment for learners diagnosed with dyslexia. In 10 appendix 1.2, Q7, Serena's mother shares that;

'And it was ok, it was great for her to know that we accept her to be special; we think she is really cool to be special like that. And she needs to think that too that it doesn't make her a worst person because of her reading because she is struggling a lot with her reading, she can compensate her life with a lot of different things. She is very creative, absolutely adorable, she is very sensible, when somebody is sad or somebody has something, she will be the first person who notices, who gives the hug, or say something kind to make somebody feel better'. Serena's mother (see 10 appendix 1.2, Q 10) continued;

'Yes, I couldn't believe why. Things were probably bad at home and bad at school and maybe the fact that I stressed her so much was even worse' (see 10 appendix 1.2,

Q 10). It can also be suggested by observing Serena's mother's distress at dealing with her daughter's dyslexia that support could be provided to parents by educationalists so that they can deal with their child's learning difficulty and support their children by providing a caring learning environment at home. Beveridge (1999, 2nd ed) states that, '...positive expectations and confidence in themselves as learners may do much to promote their achievements, and in learning environments where their efforts and achievements are recognised and genuinely valued...' (pp; 98). Where as 39.99% teachers confirmed caring environment for learners (see 10 appendix 11; 11. b.9 & 11.b.18).

6.4-Set Realistic Goals / Don't Pressurize

The head teacher suggested that '*set realistic goals and do not put pressure on the child*' (see 10 appendix 6, Q: 12). Parents sometimes try to put pressure on their children to perform well in their class and this was obvious when Serena's mother said that, '*I remember the days when I was screaming that I wanted her to try harder. And then I thought that I needed to compensate everything that if she didn't understand it at school I had to get it into her brain*' (10 appendix 1.2, Q:7).

Mclaughlin & Mertens (2004) states that, 'what are the reasonable accommodations to make in curriculum and instruction to ensure the students acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to perform on assessments' (pp;9).

6.5-Special Programs to Enhance Learning

Need of special programs to enhance learning of individuals diagnosed with dyslexia was recommended by a special needs teacher. She said that, 'we have tailored programs for these individuals and we give them a reason for why they are/have a problem and yes, we can work with that. Their self esteem normally rises (see 10 appendix 5, Q: 7). Also she stressed that, '*neurological occupational therapy that we do over here makes a huge difference*' informed the teacher' (see 10 appendix 5, Q: 5). 13.33% teachers confirmed that special dyslexia programs can enhance their learning (see 10 appendix 11, 11.b.9) and 20% said indirectly that academic help is needed for them (see 10 appendix 11.11.b.18). The head of dyslexia unit also informed that they provide special dyslexia programs.

6.6--Maximizing Learning Opportunities

13.33% teachers said they would want to maximize the learning opportunities provided for these learners (10 appendix 11, table 11.b.9). Cited in Porter, (2005, 2nd ed) where Baum et al (1994, 1995) and Clement et al (1994) suggests that, ‘Tap into children’s interests. Using these as a vehicle for teaching allows children to learn in their preferred style, produce in their favourite mode, and concentrate on their areas of strengths. This is a fundamental to motivating them to learn, particularly as they will have experienced so much failure’ (pp; 196)

6.6- Focussing on Their Strengths

20% teachers recommended concentrating on the learner’s strengths rather than their weaknesses to help their social and emotional development (see 10 appendix 11, 11.b.18).

6.7- Providing Social and Emotional Support

It was concluded from Serena’s mother’s behaviour towards her daughter’s dyslexia that she provided a lot of social and emotional support to her (see 10 appendix 1.2). 13.33 % teachers also emphasised the need of social and emotional support (see 10 appendix 11, 11.b.9).

6.8- Showing Sensitivity as Everybody Learns Differently

The mother in her interview explains that,

‘He has realised that in this special school there are children who all have some sort of issue and nobody in his school is perfect and that in itself has proved to boost his moral because he thinks he is not the only one and that there are other children too who are not perfect and need to work hard to learn. He is ok now’ (10 appendix 3.1, Q: 8). Individuals with dyslexia are sensitive can be best understood by Ryan (2004) who argues that, ‘The dyslexic’s self- image appears to be extremely vulnerable to frustration and anxiety’ (pp; 3). Also the special teacher, *‘And they need to be very*

careful about what they say to them ...Try not to be negative... these children need a lot of oral feedback; because their visual perception is faulty' (10 appendix 5 , Q:13).

6.9-Explaining to the Learner about Dyslexia is Very Important

From interview conducted with a mother in appendix 3.1 she explains that her son doesn't know that he has dyslexia and he thinks he is stupid when he cannot learn spelling words (see 10 appendix 3.a, Q11). But the teacher teaching in a special needs school (see 10 appendix 5, Q: 5). She further went on in Q: 9 by saying that, '*And I said to him it's not your fault that you are this way and I took the blame away from him. Its not that you are lazy, its not that you are stupid, it's just the way your brain operates and it's different from everybody else's so you have to work twice as hard*' (the researcher though does not agree with the highlighted text) *And once you can explain it to them, if they have a reason on explanation they can deal with it a lot more easily and it helps a lot.* 20% teachers agreed that it is better to explain to them their learning differences (see 10 appendix 11, 11.b.9).

6.10-Inclusive Education be Made Available to Learners with Dyslexia

The mother in an interview stressed on inclusive education for future recommendations she said, '*First, of all I would like to see schools going towards inclusion. Because I don't see any reason why children having learning difficulties should be denied access to normal school life. I would also suggest that schools/ teachers understand the academic, social and emotional needs of each individual child to help them go forward towards a good future'* (10 appendix 3.1, Q: 9). UNESCO Paris (2005) also stresses on inclusive education, 'UNESCO views inclusion as a dynamic approach of responding positively to pupil diversity and of seeing individual differences not as problems, but as opportunities for enriching learning' (pp;12).

6.11- Academic Environment is Important.

This can be concluded from the learning support tutors perspective, '*...they are so*

happy when they come to us once or twice. I don't see the hesitation there because out of the learning environment they don't realise that they are so different, but they realise that they are different' (see 10 appendix 8, Q: 9).

6.12-Value Children for Who They Are

'We value the 'who you are' and that makes a huge difference on a child emotionally. That affects the child socially also because if you feel good emotionally you are good socially too' (see 10 appendix 8, Q: 12).

6.13- Self –Esteem Comes First

Serena's mom said , 'I find for me now I have to work on the self esteem first to make my child happy and when the child is happy she is going to learn quicker, the academics will follow better' (see 10 appendix 1.2, Q13).

6.14-Grouping /Peer Support

Teachers usually encourage peer support in their classrooms when they have a child with a learning difficulty. Peer support can be very helpful from teacher's perspective confirmed 13.33% in the questionnaires (see 10 appendix 11, table 11.b.5 & 11.b.9) Sousa (2003) identifies that 'Grouping can be an effective component in educating all students' (pg: 69).

6.15- Teacher's Encouragement

Teacher's encouragement also plays a major role in a child's social and emotional development confirmed 6.66% of teaching staff (see 10 appendix 11; 11.b.9). A supporting and caring and experienced teacher would understand the academic, social and emotional needs of the learners diagnosed with dyslexia. This was concluded from Serena's teacher who cared about Serena by providing a caring environment for inside the classroom.

7. Chapter 7- Reflection

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7.1 Discussion

Research findings of the social and emotional impact of dyslexia from three private schools in Dubai gave realistic results because of the research methodology primarily being based on the individuals who were involved with them on daily basis. Literature from the past informed that the social and emotional effects of a learning difficulty can be detrimental for the learners themselves and also for educationalists and parents. This was confirmed by interviews, observations and questionnaires that were used as research materials for the research findings. Mothers of learners diagnosed with dyslexia (see 10 appendix 1.2, 3.1& 3.2) and also from teachers , special educators, learning support tutors and learners themselves confirmed the presence of stress, anxiety, frustration due to poor academic achievements(see appendices; 1, 2,3,4,5,6,7,8& 9). These academic frustrations lead to social as well as emotional issues. Social issues would mean either feeling inferior to peers because of their learning difficulty leading to social isolation or emotional issues arising from being not able to achieve the academic targets required from them (see 10 appendix 3.1, Q:6 & 7). Findings from the mothers showed that they themselves were going through stress and emotional strain because of their children's dyslexia. They wanted the society to except their children for who they are (see 10 appendix 1.2, Q: 7)and were scared if they would be able to succeed in life and in future or if they would be able to higher level of education (see 10 appendix 3.1, Q: 7). But Hulquist (2006) argues that, 'Back in 1960's Margaret Rawson (a teacher at a private school in the United States) found that even children with severe reading disabilities grew up to be doctors, lawyers, educators, entertainers, business owners, scientists and so on'(pp;15).

Teachers, special educators and learning support tutors(in interviews) were mostly of the opinion that dyslexia is accompanied by social and emotional difficulties and they related it to their academic failure and low self esteem caused by this specific learning difficulty. Though out of these three schools it was concluded that only one school provided special dyslexia programs on a pull out session and they had been very successful. Parents were fully involved in this school with their children and the social and emotional pressure experienced by the learners in this

school was not much significant. Also parent and teacher involvement in the child's learning process made a huge difference (see 10 appendix 4, Q: 12), and on-time assistance was another factor that made positive difference (see 10 appendix 7, Q: 10 & 11). Research conducted in the special needs school proved to be very knowledgeable. The learners studying in this school had Individual Learning Plan, occupational therapies and low curriculum expectations. This lifted the academic pressure from these learners and all of them were found to be happy (see 10 appendix 1.3, 9.1 & 9.2). Though there were previous notions from the researcher's side that there will be huge social and emotional stress for them because of their isolation in special needs school. But this was not true because they already left the mainstream system due to academic failures that had caused them emotional pain (see 10 appendix 3.1, Q: 6) and from learner's perspective that in a special needs school they got more attention (see 10 appendix 9.2, Q: 3). The data from the third school was not very informative on the subject area because they were new in providing dyslexia support to their students (see 10 appendix 8).

Some of the teachers in the questionnaires confirmed the presence of social and emotional effects related to dyslexia but many did not answer these questions. They also gave recommendations for future teaching of these learners to enhance their academic performance (see chapter 6-recommendations). But Hultquist (2006) stresses that, 'They also need teaches to adapt and modify what takes place in the classroom in order to bypass the effects of their reading, writing and related problems (*pp*; 12).

7.2 Conclusion

This research was carried out to examine the social and emotional impact of dyslexia on learners in private primary schools in Dubai. One of the reasons behind carrying out this research was to ensure successful learning process for the future of learners diagnosed with dyslexia. 'Yates (2004, 1st ed) 'The idea that good education research must be directed to 'improvement of learning', just like other attempts to insist that it must be directed to 'effectiveness' or 'employability' or 'developing every child's potential', is an attempt to define and restrict what can count as education

research...'(pp;20). Three schools (two mainstream and one special needs school) were selected as a sample size and teachers, learning support tutors, special educators, parents as well learners were interviewed. Also observations were conducted with one learner to regard if there was an impact of dyslexia on learner in academic and non-academic setting. These learners studied in the special needs school (their ages were between eight and eleven years). It was found that the effect of this specific learning difficulty (dyslexia) was not visible for one learner(Serena) as far as social and emotional impact was concerned even though academic difficulties were present. It was found that the learner followed special Individual Learning Plan, speech as well as occupational therapies. The learner had a supportive caring environment (at home) and followed special dyslexia programs at home (see 10 appendix 1& 2). All in all the learner was a happy caring individual due to the on-time support and supportive physical environment provided for her both at home and at school.

The other two learners (see 10 appendix 9.1& 9.2) were also happy at their schools but one of them wanted to be in the mainstream school due to limited facilities provided by the school(swimming, play ground, etc) and not due to any impact (see 10 appendix 9.1). This learner's social and emotional difficulties deteriorated due to late diagnoses and interventions (see 10 appendix 3.2, Q; 1& 2) but the learner was happy at her present school due to academic support provided to her. The learner showed positive growth in terms of emotional and social development (see 10 appendix 9.1, Q: 7) even though there were social and emotional stress before intervention started. The third learner was scared that the mainstream school may not be able to provide assistance to him in terms of extra academic attention that he got at this special needs school (see 10 appendix 9.2) but his mother did provide information about how dyslexia affect the learner at his previous mainstream school and that the learner lost his self confidence and self esteem because of his struggles with academics. She informed that;

'I must tell you that his self esteem went very low because of his frustration with academics (see 10 appendix 3.1, Q: 6). And further said; *'I think in his case academics played a major role in getting him frustrated, unhappy, insecure, and withdrawn from peers'* (see 10 appendix 3.1, Q: 7). Findings from this learner showed that dyslexia had its impact both socially and emotionally in addition to academic difficulties and the learner felt rejected inside his classroom and showed frustrations

at home. This has been confirmed by researchers like Ryan(2004), Riddick(1997), Orton(1925), Elias et al (1997), Bryan et al (2004), Herman et al (2002) and Hazel & Mellard (1992). So these findings from the current research cannot be generalized but they have to be considered. Goldstein (2000) and Ryan (2004) emphasize that, 'Depressed individuals with a learning difficulty foresee a life of continuing failure.'

Findings from the teachers, learning support tutors and special educators also gave insight to how they felt about the difficulties caused by dyslexia. They were mostly of the opinion that dyslexia does have emotional and social impact on an individual but certain factors if considered would prove helpful in reducing the impact. These suggested factors were mainly; special dyslexia programs, caring environment, early identification, on-time interventions, school and home partnership, parent support, teacher support, peer support, understanding their learning differences, showing sensitivity towards their social and emotional needs, and also helping the learners understand that they are not stupid or unintelligent but their brain function differently. These findings were very valuable as the educationalists themselves identified them and they recommended them for future learning of learners diagnosed with dyslexia. Since academics are main concerns for educationalists and parents when learners are diagnosed with dyslexia, these findings will provide assistance in terms of social and emotional needs of these individuals. Ryan (2004) argues that, 'Firstly, listening to children's feelings, anxieties, anger and depression are daily companions for dyslexics. Their language problems often make it difficult for them to express their feelings. Therefore, adults must help them learn to talk about their feelings' (*pp*; 4).

This study was designed to examine the social and emotional effect of dyslexia on learners in private schools in Dubai and it was found that while children may seem to be supported by getting intervention strategies there are still other factors (discussed in recommendations) that can further support them in academic as well as non – academic areas of learning for their better overall future. The study thus recommends that further research in the area of social and emotional impact of dyslexia is needed to provide good learning opportunities for these learners in the educational institutes with the support of their parents and educationalists. Elias et al (1997) informs that, ' Research shows that social and emotional skills are the most

Student ID 60129

consistent indicators of success for students with LD, even more so than academic factors (*pp;1*).

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8. Chapter 8- References

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10. Chapter 10-Appendices

10 Appendix 1

10 Appendix 1.1

**Interview with Serena's Teacher in a Special Educational Needs
School (9 June, 2007)**

10 Appendix 1

10 Appendix 1.1

Interview with Serena's Teacher in a Special Educational Needs School (9 June, 2007)

Q1: What is the age of the child?

A1: 11 years.

Q2: Where is she from?

A2: She is from mixed places, but I believe Swiss mostly.

Q3: When did she start this school?

A3: She started in January 2007, so it was the second term.

Q4: Was she diagnosed for her al learning difficulty and when?

A4: I believe before she entered this school she was diagnosed and it was apparent that she had a learning difficulty. When I am not sure and I believe here she got assessment also.

Q5: Was she given support like special education, you can mention Individual Educational Plan, therapies: like occupational therapies etc?

A5: Yes I know that here she is going to therapies, occupational therapies I believe and we do IEP as you mentioned, Individual Learning Plan actually I should call it. Where we look at the child's weaknesses and try to work with them to get them stronger.

Q6: Did she have any learning difficulties in her previous school that her parents mentioned to you?

A6: The parents actually the mum specially, was quite open she didn't mention much the difficulties but she did say her child was 'special' and 'talented'. And I really believed her on that.

Q7: How is she now academically and have you seen improvement in her recently?

A7: Yes, I have actually in this respect; particularly her spelling patterns are becoming better. She is paying more attention to these details while she is spelling and I have seen improvement from term two to the end of this term, yes.

Q8: Would you say she has dyslexia?

A8: Well..., at times I do notice her mixing up her words and letters in different positions but the thing is she catches it quickly, and she changes it right on the spot . I guess it is a form of mild dyslexia.

Q9: How is she with her peers or what kind of relationship she shares with her peers in class and at school?

A9: She is a very helpful girl, very positive, very cheerful and very supportive. I think she is liked by everybody. She is very caring.

Q10: How is her self esteem, knowing she has some learning difficulties? Do you think it has affected her emotionally and socially?

A10: She is a confident girl. This is how I will describe Serena, quite confident. She may be put in a situation sometime where she doesn't know how to answer a question or she may feel that she doesn't know how to answer it. Usually she comes up quite confidently.

Q11: If you ask her to read in the class, do you do that sometimes like read a small paragraph?

A11: Small paragraph, yes out loud I do, but I make sure that it is a very small paragraph easy for her to go through.

Q12: Is there anything special that you would like to share with me in respect to her learning difficulty, social or emotional behaviours?

A12: In regard to social or academics?

Q13: Social and emotional?

A13: Can you repeat the question please?

Q14: Can you tell me something about her social and emotional difficulties in the class?

A14: She is the only girl in the class, let me start by this. And I think she is a little pressured by the other boys, being she is the only girl. She can become very quite and withdrawn if she is in an unpleasant situation. And she will not really stand up for herself, however on the contrary I have seen her times really put her foot down and say I have enough and stop. So I think she may be weak at times but usually she can really stand up for herself, and that's very important.

Q15: Do you think that dyslexia and social and emotional behaviours are related? Please explain from your perspective.

A15: If you are doing poor academically you will not be confident emotionally and that will obviously affect you socially. However on the contrary the brighter side is, children with learning difficulties have a great capacity for imagination and looking beyond things and I see more of a talent. But there still is a phase where I believe they experience a very difficult time until they are able to overcome that awareness of their difficulty so to say.

(The interview finished after this and the researcher thanked her for her time and cooperation)

10 Appendix 1.2

Interview with Serena's Mother (11 July, 2007)

10 Appendix 1.2

Interview with Serena's Mother (11 July, 2007)

Q1: How old is your child?

A1: (Says name) is 11 years old.

Q2: Where are you originally from?

A2: (Chuckles), starts already as a difficult expat question. We are originally from Switzerland. All the children's were born abroad, so (says child's name) was born in Italy. We speak Italian at home, which is an official language in Switzerland. But we also speak English and mix it with French, because children go to English speaking system. Which might make the whole family, a little bit language confused (laughs) but we are originally Swiss, all of us.

Q3: So how many languages do you speak then?

A3: Three and a half languages I would say. She is fluent in English, in Italian, French a little bit less and she understands Swiss German but she speaks very little. But she understands it because I was speaking to her Swiss German the first five years of her life until people told us that she might be language confused. So we started to speak only Italian that she already spoke with her father and English at home. So I stopped with Swiss German when she was five but she still understands it.

Q4: Which language you would say is her first language?

A4: No I would say after many years of English speaking school system I would say she is more comfortable in English than in Italian. But we have kind of two languages it's more the emotional language which is more Italian, I would think in the house she would tell us about her feelings or impressions that would probably come in Italian. When she comes home from school and she tells about things that happened, facts, things that she learned. It will definitely come in English.

Q5: How did she start school with these languages?

A5: She started kindergarten or pre- K in the United States. She did not speak any English at all, so we just moved from Italy. So she had Swiss German speaking mom and Italian speaking daddy, so she didn't surprise us with her language. The teacher said she was a little bit language confused. But she didn't talk a lot because probably she didn't know where to pick the words from. She knew that in United States nobody will understand her if she speaks Swiss German or Italian. She probably just didn't say it. But she was very confident she loved to go to school, mm..., she did her own things, very independent in many ways but not very verbal.

Q6: When did you see that she had some problems at school?

A6: It was this one moment where I actually had to a little earlier, because I should have noticed before. But I found so many excuses because of the language confusion because she was the first child of the three children born one after the other. Her brother is only sixteen months younger; her little sister is only four years younger. So I thought it was quite normal because so many things were going on like languages, places, siblings that have been born so that might have changed a little bit her personality compared to a child who didn't have all these exposures to changes in life.

But when we moved away from the United States, Serena was about five years old; she was exactly five years old. And the teacher took my hand the very last day when we left and said I would like you to have a very close eye on Serena, there might be a problem. And I want you to have a very close eye on the development of Serena. So she was the first one who actually told me that there might be something. She was also the same person who told me to come in to school for the classes to the little ones because she thought the involvement in her class from my side would be a good thing for Serena but I think now that, she wanted to tell me that I see my child compared to other ones that I will find out myself and she wanted me to be involved in the class in order to see my child in class. But she was a very delicate very sensible person. She didn't want to come and tell me, Hey your child has a problem. A very experienced teacher and she tried to involve me in the class activity,

make Serena my assistant in class activity, things like that to show me probably that my child was different. Then we went to the India. Of course I got very angry, thinking who she thinks she is to tell me something like this. In India she went to the American Embassy School in New Delhi. And that's where it really all started. Less and less receptive and that's where we found out that Serena was very sick. She had a thyroid condition, hypoactive thyroid and she actually didn't have any eye contact anymore with us she. She was very tired. She got plumper, her body changed and she put on a lot of weight. She had no energy at all and she was basically hanging around and her tongue was almost at times hanging out of her mouth. I sometimes looked at her and said; she looks like she has slight Down' Syndrome. But it was this expression on her face that I couldn't understand this puffiness around her neck and her cheeks and everything and then we started to do a lot of research. At that point we also thought she may be a little bit autistic, which was totally ruled out by the professionals .We had big meeting with the school, paediatrician, neurologists, learning development people, teachers, principal we had at time meetings with 8 or 9 people. Trying to work in the same direction especially the paediatrician who found out this thyroid condition and explained what is going on, that the thyroid was producing hormone that nourished the brain. And that the brain is not nourished like a shower it just goes down it doesn't go in. So she got some support in the school but of course it was a mainstream big International school. They didn't have all the possibilities that they now have here in this school (she meant the special needs school that Serena was going currently). She got a little bit of speech therapy then she had another person who sat with her 30 minutes a day to do one on one that they did in the class, whether it was math or reading. That was the time where I started to do a little bit different activities with her, trying to recuperate a little bit on things that have been lost. Playing again with blocks and legos, sorting colour and shapes because we didn't know she lost it. So we didn't want to be on sand and we wanted to have a good foundation so. Because we didn't know she had gone through lots of tests, she had to put pictures in order and see exactly how much or where was her level. We very much had to categorise Serena's academics like in reading she was in an age group so and so. Math she corresponded five years and nine months, so we could build from there. Then

we left the American school in India and moved to Paris. And it became very difficult to find the school for Serena. The only possibility after trying really hard was a 'Special Montessori School'. Which is a bilingual school, which said every child has it's own pace. They accepted Serena, who at that time was a good one year back compared to the other children her age.

Q7: What was her age at that time?

A7: Umm... (Thinks) at that time she was eight, seven and a half or eight. She couldn't read except cat, mat, short little phonetic words. And we went to the first school, this didn't work out. Then we found this very big International bilingual school where Serena was the only child in the English section of this school. So instead of going French in the morning and English in the afternoon or the other way around, she did English the whole day. To make her not language confused so we made her learn how to read in one language only. After year of that school she was two years back, after two years of that school she was three years back. After three years of school she was about three or four years back. So at the same time she went to speech therapy, she had other therapies like primary movement therapy. They tried to train primary reflexes to make space for secondary ones. They said that they had big success with dyslexia specially. She also did 'Centre des ecoute' , a hearing therapy over one year, where she had to go five times per week for one hour to put on some ear phones , she heard classical music with the heart beat and my voice in the back ground in Italian mother tongue back. Because they said it was not good for me to change from Swiss German all of a sudden to Italian that was actually one of the worst mistake I probably I ever did. But you know I was talking to professionals and they were all American and they had no concept of bilingualism, trilingual. And how important emotional language is or mother tongue is. As my husband could not switch to Swiss German but I could switch to Italian and that's the switch we made. Years later I started again because I realised that it was wrong to say again in two languages. So I took away this mother tongue from her which I thought was very important. So we put my voice in Italian and heart beat the way she heard it when she was in my tummy, when I was pregnant and tried to get this Italian mother

tongue, which this was an emotional language for her too. Which I think now it seems to be the language of her heart when she is sad or anything like that it seems to be the language that she would express herself and certainly not Swiss German. So she also did this therapy , you know you never know , I think what if we didn't , what if she didn't do the primary movement , what if she didn't do 'Centre des ecoute', we don't know what it would be . She certainly did a lot of progress over the year especially emotionally in terms of self confidence especially in the last three or four years with all these things going on. But at some point I said 'stop everything' because I thought we stressed her out we made her feel different all the time. Because when everybody came from school and played football in the garden Serena had to go to the speech therapy, to this therapy to that therapy. Just to make her more a mainstream girl. And she wasn't she was just a very special little girl. And it was ok, it was great for her to know that we accept her to be special; we think she is really cool to be special like that. And she needs to think that too that it doesn't make her a worst person because of her reading because she is struggling a lot with her reading, she can compensate her life with a lot of different things. She is very creative, absolutely adorable, she is very sensible, when somebody is sad or somebody has something, she will be the first person who notices, who gives the hug, or say something kind to make somebody feel better. So this is a great gift she is not a selfish person. And my husband who put it that way once I was crying at night because I just so much wanted the society to accept her. I wanted her to be the perfect girl so that the society would not judge her. It was not because I needed her to be like that for me because it's your child and you love your child no matter what. Actually even more because you get more protected as I said before. But I said what if I am not here. I want every body else to like her just the way she is. And that is why I tried to make her as normal as possible. And the more I tried that the worse I think I did at the end. I should have just left it alone at some point. And tried to give her the strength that it's ok to be different; it's cool to be different. And my husband always said that, 'every idiot can read and write in this planet, but who can go out and hug a tree and say , 'thank you for my oxygen' and that was Serena' . And I thought that this was just so special. So since I am more laid back Serena is more laid back , I have to think that it was actually a lot of

things that I needed therapy much more than she did . I should have had somebody told her leave her alone. It's going to be alright. Don't worry. I put so much energy and I was scared and I did so much out of these reasons that was not good at the end. And from the moment I accepted that I had a child who was different, who was probably always going to be different. And I accepted this and let her alone, she tried to make the biggest progress ever. So that's why I said at some point leave those poor kids alone. Remember I was crying in some classroom with teachers and I said, 'Can I just be the mom of this child'. She was scared of me at some point. And I asked her, are you scared of me, because I made it out of love. (she started crying). It's because she always thought that she had to perform to show me. That if she can do it mommy is happy. Big stress! I think also the fact that Serena off course is more dependent in certain ways, I was always scared I said to myself that this is this very sweet girl who likes to please and make people happy and make you know...But she will always need somebody who will do may be things in her life . May be not, but what if she will need this bad guy just because she cannot sign the contract of her apartment because she cannot read this and that and because she is dependent on somebody will be bad to her , or somebody will not be respectful to her, will hurt her physically , emotionally. I don't want my child to be dependent on any body and I want her to be able to able to say no, I don't need you; you are not good for me. And I would say the more dependent she is on other people the more people will not have to be able to make those choices. I always pictured my sweet girl with the bad guy out there who is going to hurt her just because she needs him and because she doesn't have the independence and the courage to live her life alone. There are a lot of people out there in shows, in books and everywhere that women are with men because they don't have the courage to go because they are dependent. And that is something I don't want for her, because maybe one day I am not there to protect her. And I think out of all these fears I was putting so much pressure on her, and the more pressure on her the more I paralysed her, totally paralysed her. I remember the days when I was screaming that I wanted her to try harder. And then I thought that I needed to compensate everything that if she didn't understand it at school I had to get it into her brain. And I was just not the mom anymore. I was just the person who basically gave her one task

after the other, ok and here flash cards and then we do this and then the board and then we tick this on the wall and tick this there (starts speaking loudly with emotions). And making all those sheets and books and printed books out of the internet that she could read because I thought it was her level it was her level. I did right books , I did illustrate books that she liked , wrote little stories that the words she could read and illustrate them with little dolphins and things that I knew she liked and colored them and made her own little books (excitement in her voice now) . Just because I always tried to ... (left sentence incomplete). It was just too much, and every restaurant and pizzeria we went to, I would say you only order your pizza if you can read you menu. I was really tough. I stressed her constantly and I hate myself for that. I did it only because I was stupid not because I was evil. You know what I mean.

Q8- How do you see your child socially in school and with peers?

A8- There is a lot of bullying around in school when children are different. And this is so painful for a child and so painful for a mother and you want to stay there in front of the door of the class and protect your child. Remember how many times did I drive to school in Paris to be sure that when the children are playing outside I would be so scared that somebody would hurt her. She was not the popular girl invited to birthday parties. She was maybe invited to the birthday party but like an individual play day she was not the top runner in the class. She would go to play dates where the moms were already my friends. She never had friends who tell each other every thing and they want to be together, she never had that. She never ever had that (she stressed).

Q9: Were you scared that children would do something bad to her? How old was she at that time?

A9: Eight or nine may be. We had one of these stories that were really sad. She always wanted to go with her pocket money to 'Toys are Us' (children's toy store). And she always wanted to get 'Pockeman cards' (children's theme cards). I said to her you are not into cards and you cannot waste your pocket money on this. I said to her, 'You never play cards, you don't collect them. Then why would you waste your pocket money on that'. She said, ' I can do

what ever I want to do with my pocket money'. I said, 'Yes and no. If I think it totally doesn't make any sense and I think out of the wrong motivation. I will allow myself to say no. You are not going to buy those cards. Just to show other friends that you have those cards'. So she was very frustrated and then she wanted me to go back and she brain washed me again and we went back and then she wanted to buy those cards and that's it. And I always thought her very stressed but I didn't realise. Until I found a letter in her backpack that said, ' If you are not going to bring me those cards , I am going to beat you up again and I am going to hit you until you bring these cards to me to school'. She had this boy bullying her forcing her to do something that she didn't want to do. She didn't tell me. And she just got beaten up. And when I saw this card you can imagine it took me about ten minutes to be down with the letter and three photo copies of that letter in the school to parents , to teacher , to the principal(she started laughing) . And requested from that boy a written apology to my daughter, he was in her class. I think these are bad things to happen but these things don't happen to Jess (her brother), these things don't happen to some other child. The guy who wants to do that and would bully a child would pick Serena. Will pick a child who may be is insecure. And she was so relieved when the story came out. She was actually scared that I would talk to the parents of the boy.

Q10: Did she like to go to school?

A10: Yes, I couldn't believe why. Things were probably bad at home and bad at school and maybe the fact that I stressed her so much was even worse. I have to say that most of the time Serena was quite popular just for her very kind personality. People liked her because even the children realise that Serena has the heart on the right spot. And there is another thing; we have been talking a lot. Serena at some point knew how to defend herself. She knew she had 'dyslexia', she knew that this had nothing to do with her IQ or with any other thing, or even if she had it doesn't make a person more or less important. So she learned to defend herself, like I cannot read because I have this and this. Because it's a condition or how do you say 'I am dyslexic'. And she said, 'I am very much back in this and that because something didn't have anything to

do with dyslexia, because I was very sick when I was a little girl when I was living in India'. And she was very sick, she had hormones taken everyday, and she had blood works every week. I still in Paris had to take her out of school to get her blood works done and things like that.

Q11: What about her self – esteem, did you ever feel her self esteem got affected?

A11: She seems to be happier. She seems to be happier now though emotionally and in terms of self esteem she always said that, 'mommy! I am the best and I have got a star here and I have got another merit there and I am working on the fifth so I am going to get that. And daddy and mommy you have to come to the assembly because you are going to see. I want everybody to come. I was the fastest'. I am like hey..., if John (her brother) would say something like, I would say 'be a little bit more modest'. But with Serena she can show off as much as she can'. We are so happy when she shows off and it shows us that she is happy and confident. So even the fact that she is in a class only with boys which scared me at the beginning. But it turned out to be perfect. There is no competition as girls can be very how you say when they are pre-teeny age and they are a little bit bi---- towards each other. Here she doesn't to compete with anything, she is just a girl and they are the boys and they all think that she is cool because they think she is the only one.

Q12: Do you think the school is providing proper intervention strategies to help her?

A12: Yes, lets say that I see it for the first time that all is going in the right direction. She is definitely improving, she is still not learning as quickly as her siblings would learn. So she is still not going to close that gap and that's the reason she is in special needs school.

Q13: If you think of Serena, do you think her academic needs, social and emotional needs are all linked together and how important are they for her?

A13: Absolutely! Well because the emotion part has a lot to do with self-esteem, and how you feel about yourself and how you feel the others feel about you.

And this society is cool. The society measures you on your performance and your performance the academics what you give facts figures. And if you don't give all that, you are judged and if you are judged you feel miserable. So of course it affects your self esteem and then you are less likely to go towards other people and tell them something so if you know verbally maybe you don't know how to do. They are going to feel bad about you so you feel bad to start with. It's a spiral that almost turns downwards. I think that it works together (academic, social and emotional needs). What I don't know is where do you start? I find for me now I have to work on the self esteem first to make my child happy and when the child is happy she is going to learn quicker, the academics will follow better. It's not going to make her a quick learner, her capacity in learning, the way she learns she might need an extra story or an extra picture or if we measure we have to back a cake because it takes more time because that's how she is going to learn about the two hundred grams rather than just a piece of paper. But this is not going to change it, but it's going to make her happier. And I think that it's all very much linked together. And I don't think that we should start with the academics and the emotions are going to follow. But I think the other way around. Because I have been observing over the years in different International schools the unhappiest children I have met and that's going through every single school and country were the British children. Unhappy children who were pushed too, early too hard and too academic they seem to be reading by four and know their times tables by six or seven and so on, very competitive in terms of academics, but those children are emotionally immature and it's crazy to classify a whole nation like that. But their school system is like that. And I think it's totally wrong. Now you look at the Swedish children and the Swiss children who are home with their mummies until seven years old because they think that's the most important age and the level of happiness is a lot higher. But a lot of children in Switzerland cannot read by the age of seven and that's when they start first grade. So to make somebody happy and emotionally confident and then teach him, I think is the right way to do. And I am the first one who did it wrong because the system stressed me, like she should be doing this by now and she should be doing that by now. And I was like oh my God! I tried to push it and I wish could sometimes turn the clock down six years and start all

over again with what I learned over those six years I cannot. But definitely if somebody had a child like Serena five or six years old, I would really like to sit with them and tell them all that I did wrong. Serena would have been happier much earlier. You know what I mean. I took at least two or three very important years away from her in terms of stressing her, of happiness but that doesn't mean that we didn't have cuddles and laughs and things. I pushed her I made her uncomfortable too many times; I spoiled too many days, too many moments because of that.

Q14: Does your daughter know that she has dyslexia?

A14: Yes she knows.

(The interview finished after this and the researcher thanked her for her time and cooperation)

10 Appendix 1.3

Short Interview with Serena (*27th Nov, 2007*)

10 Appendix 1.3

Short Interview with Serena (27th Nov, 2007)

Q1: Do you like your school>?

A1: Yes

Q2: Do you feel happy when you go to school everyday?

A2: I am very happy to go to school.

Q3: Would you like to be in the big school?

A3: No, I would not want to be in a big school because it is scary and confusing. I like my little school.

Q4: Do you have many friends at school?

A4: Everybody is my friend in my school; we all know each other because it is a small school with only fifty children.

Q5: Would you like to explain your friendships. For example your friends who you want to be with and others that you don't want to be with?

A5: I like Joe the most. He is always respectful. And he never acts weird. Bella confuses me . He hurts people, is loud, always talks and I cannot concentrate.

Q6: Do you feel some emotional issues (like stress, frustrations etc) at school?

A6: No I am happy all day. But sometimes there is too much confusion and I wish I had a quiet time.

Q7: How is your self-esteem, are you a confident person at school and in your class?

A7: I am very confident. I am popular in school. People want to be my friend because I am nice to everybody. I never hurt anybody on purpose. I feel bad and sorry when someone is upset. I am one of the smartest students in my

class and I never talk badly or swear like the ninth graders do. I find it disrespectful and embarrassing. They should set good example for the smaller kids. I want the smaller kids to learn only nice things and kindness from me.

Q8: Do you feel that you are lucky then?

A8: I am a very happy girl. I feel lucky with my family and my school. The only thing that I miss sometimes is a best friend who is a girl.

(The interview finished after this and I thanked her)

10 Appendix 2

10 Appendix 2.1

Summarized Account of Observation in Art Class

10 Appendix 2:

10 Appendix 2.1: Summarized Account of Observation in Art Class

Time:	8:15am
Date:	13 June, 2007
Setting:	Special Needs School in Dubai, UAE Primary & Middle School
Lesson:	Art (Making of a paper collage)
No. of students:	8
Teachers:	1(Female)
Teaching assistant:	1
Gender of class:	1 girl, 7boys
Grade	6
Age	11 to 12 years

The name of the student that is observed will be called Serena. This is an imaginary name given to her due to privacy reasons. Students will be referred by P1, P2, P3... due to ethical reasons and consideration of anonymity. 'P' stands for pupils and the numbers refer to different students that are in the class. The pupils will be called consistently with these numbers through out this observation. It is important to mention here that the class teacher was unwilling to have an observer sit and observe her lesson. But due to the support from the parent of the child she had to comply. I gave her reassurance that I was not there to observe how she was teaching and that I only wanted to observe the student. This reassurance made her somewhat satisfied. The teacher wanted the pupils to make a paper collage in this class. So she started by explaining what she wanted to them to make.

Teacher: The importance of collage is to combine pieces of paper together.
(She went near P1 and said)

Teacher: What are you doing? Is this part of your collage? If you go on a bigger table it will be good for you.

Serena is busy cutting and working with P2. She looks totally absorbed in her work and seems to enjoy art work and the collage she is supposed to make.

Teacher: Please make something that has a meaning for you.

Teacher turns to the teaching assistant and asks for a scissor. Teacher turned to Serena and said ...

Teacher: What does this remind you?

Teacher said to P2.

Teacher: Before you cut can you show me what is in the newspaper.

The teacher then suddenly asks Serena to go to another teacher's class and fetch some newspaper. The teacher reads the newspaper that that one of the children is cutting and gives it back. Another child comes inside and asks for a swimming cap that he forgot in the class and asks the teacher about it. Serena is deeply engrossed in the cutting and looking at a magazine she brought from another class for pictures.

Teacher to P4...

Teacher: You choose a theme and start working on it.

Teacher to P6...

Teacher: Did you start? Oh that's Dubai Marina (she looks at one picture).

(Teacher goes to Serena and says)

Teacher: Oh this book is on interior designing. Once you have collected enough papers fill this paper on my desk and start your collage (she puts white A3 papers on her desk).

Serena: Miss this is Eiffel Tower in Paris (Serena tells her teacher and also points to P2).

Serena: Do you know what this is? (She asks P3 & P5).

P4 & P6 are fooling around with each other and at the same time cutting. Serena is still busy in her work and stays quiet while focusing on her work.

P3: I am cutting romantic pictures.

Teacher: What does it mean when people are romantic?

(She goes on to explain)It means they care about each other.

Teacher: P4&P6 if you are not cutting your paper pieces then you are doing something else. Do you know what it is?

(Noise in the class she tries to stop the noise. P3 draws on the A3 paper and shows to the teacher. Serena is laughing looking at one of the pictures. Teacher talks to P1...)

Teacher: There was an advertisement that I thought you will be interested in.

(P5 reads one of the newspapers)

Teacher: Oh, this is about Titanic. It says that the boat structure was in such a way that even if it did not with stand mountain it would still not withstand the stormy conditions of the sea.

(Teacher to P3 ...)

Teacher: Please go and practice your handwriting in the book that I have asked you.

P4 and P7 are fooling around and running around tables while working. Serena asks the teacher for some assistance with the paper collage.

Serena: I am going to the beach.

(Suddenly P8 opens the door and comes inside at 8:55am)

Teacher: You are not late today (she jokes).Do you know what we are doing? We are making a paper collage. You can take a magazine and newspaper etc.

P8: I will use a newspaper.

Teacher: The important thing of a collage is that the papers are stick together. (Suddenly the teacher looked at her watch and announced that the lesson time was finished and they can finish the collage at home)

Student ID 60129

(The observation finished after this and the researcher thanked the class teacher for her cooperation)

10 Appendix 2.2

Summarized Account of Observation in Literacy Class

10 Appendix 2.2

Summarized Account of Observation in Literacy Class

Time:	8:15am
Date:	14 June, 2007
Setting:	Special Needs School in Dubai, UAE Primary & Middle School
Lesson:	Literacy
No. of students:	8
Teachers:	1(Female)
Teaching assistant:	1(Female)
Gender of class:	1 girl, 7boys
Grade	6
Age	11 to 12 years

Observation two was conducted for Serena's in a literacy class to observe her during this lesson. Pupils will be referred again with P1, P2, P3, and so on consistently as in observation 2.1. The teacher has written on the white board,

‘A Farewell Letter for a Classmate’

Teacher: I need you to write a farewell letter to a classmate. You have a picture of your classmate on your desk. Let me write the questions that you need to ask in the letter (she goes to the board and starts writing...)

Q1 How old are you?

P4 is disruptive and talking. She gives him time out and asks him to leave the class. P4 moves the desks on his way out and slams the door and leaves.

P2: Serena is bossing me.

Teacher: What did she say?

(P2 says something that I don't understand as his speech was blurry since I was sitting away in the corner that made it further impossible. The teacher did understand and turned towards the class and asked)

Teacher: Class what do you think was it a suggestion or a command? (She meant what Serena said to P2).

(Two students raised hands for command and four raised hands for suggestion)

Teacher: So it was a suggestion. So why don't you start your work in rough note book.

P2 She is bossy again (sitting beside Serena).

Teacher: **Is this because she is the only girl in the class. Please have respect for your class mates.**

Serena: If the classmate has a dog can we ask in the letter have you got a dog?

(The teacher goes to the board and writes Q2)

Q2 What do you like to do?

P4 raises hand and wants to ask a question. The teacher gives permission.

P4: I am going to summer camp and if they ask me how is your relationship with your teacher. Can I ask this question?

Teacher: Yes, sure.

Serena: Can I ask what is your favourite subject in the school?

(The teacher reminds them from by pointing to the questions on the board)

Teacher: These are the guidelines for writing the letter you can ask other questions too (Teacher writes questions on the board).

Q3 How many brothers and sisters do you have?

Q4 Have you got a pet?

Q5 What are your strengths?

Q6 What are your hobbies?

(Suddenly P4 makes a rude remark. I couldn't hear it due to my position in the corner of the class. The teacher hears it and says)

Teacher: The next time I hear an insulted remark. What exactly will you do to others, what will be done to you and you will face as consequences?
(Teacher shows the class an example of a picture on a paper and explains)

Teacher: This is how you do this.

By this time the pupils in the class have started fooling around and say silly things that irritate the teacher. Some even used words like shut up and stupid words between themselves.

Teacher: Please stop talking and start your work. You can also give a name to your partner if you want a nick name.

This remark from the teacher was enough for the boys to go off the trolley as the boys started saying silly names to each other. Serena is busy working. She is already cutting the picture of the friend that she was to glue on the letter. Teacher claps her hands to stop the noise and tells everybody.

Teacher: Serena has begun that's very good.

P4&P6 are still talking and the teacher reminds them to stop talking and finish their work. The teacher goes to P3 and asks him.

Teacher: Do you want a body for the picture of the head.
(Teacher goes to P2)

Teacher: I want you to be quiet you are too noisy and then repeats again.
(She then turns towards P2 and says...)

Teacher: I want you to leave some place for the writing.
(Teacher goes to P5 and says...)

Teacher: I will draw lines for you.

Serena is very busy working and she already cut the head from the picture and has glued it on the paper and starts laughing when she looks at it. Students are quiet for a minute now. Suddenly the noise starts again in the class. P4 is talking loudly and fooling around with P6. There is quietness in the class for four more minutes. Serena has lost a picture. The teacher goes to the waste paper bin and looks into it. She finds it in the bin and brings it back to her. Teacher tells Serena...

Teacher: Please write between five to eight sentences.

Serena: I don't know what to name my class mate.

Teacher: Think.

Serena: What about 'Earthman P3'.

Teacher: That's great.

Teacher turns towards P4 who is again fooling around and she looks unhappy with him by now. The teacher goes to the board and write;

'How old are you?

(P3 and Serena this is your question)

'Rudy likes to listen to music and watch TV' she writes.

Teacher: P8 you start on your work

Teacher: Now I want the writing part to start.

(She addresses the class)

Teacher: Your time is up.

She then goes and writes on the board.

'Rudy has two brothers age 11 and 5. One sister aged 7'.

Teacher goes to Serena and explains to her how she should write the letter to her P3.

Serena turns towards P3 and asks him how old his sister is and tries to write on the paper. Serena looks at the board for the questions.

Teacher: Please don't overuse the name again and again. You can use he or she instead.

P4: Can we write when is your birthday?

Student ID 60129

Teacher: Oh, it is a very good question. If you are not done with it you can make it a question two. That is after the first question..

(The students try to finish their work after this and soon the lesson time was over)

10 Appendix 2.3

Summarized Account of Observation in Recess Time

10 Appendix 2.3

Summarized Account of Observation in Recess Time

Time:	12:00am
Date:	15 June, 2007
Setting:	Special Needs School in Dubai, UAE Primary & Middle School
Lesson:	Recess time
No. of students:	About fifty
Teachers:	1(Female)
Teaching assistant:	4(Female)
Gender of class:	Both boys and girls
Grade	KG1- grade

This observation took place at noon in the small play ground of the special educational needs school. Serena was the student who was observed for a period of forty minutes. Children had their lunch boxes and they sat outside on the tables and chairs laid for them to eat their lunch. The teaching assistants were present to keep an eye on these children for their safety. The researcher sat away from the children but found a place where there was a good visibility for children playing. Serena ate her lunch with her friends. These friends were two girls from younger grades and one boy also from a younger grade. After eating lunch they started to catch each other and played happily. Serena did not play with her own class boys and stayed all the time with the three children mentioned. There was nothing important that could be noted except she either played with her friends or sat on the chairs to rest after running. The boys that were in her class in observation 5.1 and 5.2 were playing with other children. Where as Serena stayed with grade four children and seemed very happy to be with them.

The recess period did not show any specific elements that could be mentioned or that could be significant because the recess looked like any regular school recess.

(The observation finished after this and the researcher thanked the class teacher for her cooperation)

10 Appendix 2.4

Sample of Serena's work in Literacy Class

10 Appendix 3

10 Appendix 3.1

**Interview with a Mother of a Child Diagnosed with
Dyslexia in a Special Needs School** *(25 October, 2007)*

10 Appendix 3

10 Appendix 3.1:

Interview with a Mother of a Child Diagnosed with Dyslexia in a Special Needs School *(25 October, 2007)*

Q1: How old is your child?

A1: He is ten years old.

Q2: Where is he studying?

A2: He is currently studying in special needs school

Q3: How long has he been studying here?

A3: He has been attending this school for the past two years.

Q4: When was he diagnosed for dyslexia?

A4: About two years ago.

Q5: Was he diagnosed in the school he is studying now?

A5: No! He was diagnosed from outside. Actually he finished grade 2 when we moved to Dubai from France. We put him in a mainstream school because he was not officially diagnosed for a learning difficulty. When he was in grade 2 in a mainstream school in France, his teacher suggested that he should be tested formally for a learning difficulty because she thought there could be problems. I was devastated when she told me. I got very scared thinking what will happen if he does have a learning difficulty. But soon we left and came to Dubai. We put him in grade 3, because it was supposed to be his grade level after we moved here. Then we had him tested through an American educational psychologist in Dubai. After a couple of days the educational psychologist gave the result of the report that shattered our life. She told me that he had dyslexia. I didn't think he would have a learning difficulty, I thought it would be more of a difficulty with languages because he spoke French and I put him in a mainstream English school. I thought he was

struggling with the English language. I was so sure about this that I argued many times with his class teacher who was adamant that my son had a learning difficulty.

After the professional assessment the school asked me to take him to a school that will cater to his needs and give him academic support. This also came as a huge shock. Because first they supported and guided us towards doing my son's assessment and then they asked him to leave because they said they were mainstream school and couldn't cater to his needs. By this time my son made many friends at school and his birthday was coming so we were deciding about the list of his best friends who will attend his birthday party. I wanted to do this for him because he was struggling so much with his school work. He was always working too many hours after school, to catch up with the rest of the class. My husband and I were not thinking about this issue because we thought the school will find a solution. Well...that certainly did not happen. By this time he had already spent 7 months in this school.

In order to prepare him for the new school that he would be attending I started to talk to him about it. He understood that he was struggling with class work and realized that the school will not let him stay. Even though I did not tell him this, he was smart enough to realize this. So I explained to him how important it is that he should be in a school that will be less stressful for him and that he would be happier if he can finish his homework early and have time to play. I just wanted to find a positive route for him and show him some light because my son is a very sensitive boy and through out the testing period he had been very anxious and wanted to know how he was doing on each test. When ever he struggled with his work he reminded his teacher that he cannot finish what is required because he doesn't speak English too well. This was true but not fully because he attended an English nursery when he was two and a half years of age. He did speak English but the written language was not there. In France proper written language comes much later than the American or British system. So when my son was asked by his class teacher to write some spellings in French he couldn't write. For me this was normal, but for a teacher teaching American curriculum it was out of norm. Also she was not

aware of the French system of education. I felt the school was rejecting my son and that hurt me. In the end we opted for special school.

Q6: Was it easy for him to settle in the new school?

A6: Yes, he did settle eventually. Now he is in grade six and he wants to go to a mainstream school like his sister. Since she goes to a big school and does a lot of other activities that my son doesn't, it's tempting for him. Like they do track and field, valley ball, basketball, swimming, etc. Since his is a small school there are only fifty children in it and thus the campus is very small. Also he liked his new school because the teacher gave him easy work and he was able to do it without much effort. That's because they found out his academic level and then tried to take it from there. They didn't want to burden him with higher level work till he was able to do it.

He has made friends at this school but very few. Many children had different issues. Some have ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder), dyspraxia, dyslexia, hearing problems and some could not speak so they had to communicate through sign language. There are also children who are gifted but have difficulties in academics. My son started to be happy here because he himself felt rejected at the mainstream school where as at his present school he thought that the work was easy and manageable for him.

Q7: Did you notice any emotional or social impact on your son during this time?

A7: We both used to work for more than two hours after school to catch up with the class work and the homework. This made him tired and cranky. He is a hard working boy so I had no problem with that. But due to working so hard he was losing his sleep time and became quite restless at night this was when he was in the mainstream school in Dubai. He started to eat lunch alone and sat beside his assistant teacher to eat; he didn't participate in any class play and sometimes tried to talk to some of the girls in the class because he said they were better than the boys. The boys made fun of him. When I asked him about this I found out that since he was not able to deliver his class work on time and also because many times he was not able to answer his teacher's

questions related to academics. He felt embarrassed and ashamed that he may make mistakes in words while reading. Also in spellings test he always scored five out of twenty even though we worked for hours to practice that.

You asked me about emotional impact, so I must tell you that his self esteem went very low because of his frustration with academics. He felt insecure and then I remember that at night time he would come to my bed and say ‘mommy I am scared. I want to sleep with you.’ This he never did before but at after his struggles with school work this was the first sign for me how insecure he has become.

Q8: Do you think that this due to his dyslexia?

A8: Yes, this is exactly what I think. I think in his case academics played a major role in getting him frustrated, unhappy, insecure, and withdrawn from peers. I can say this now because I remember I passed with a lot of stress when he was going through all these phases. I used to cry at night thinking why it’s my child. I had dreams for him. I wanted to be a caring mom helping him and guiding him till he needed me. But the sad part was that I was there with him but I couldn’t help him. Even he couldn’t help himself; his hard work couldn’t help him from what he was going to be exposed to the rest of his life. Sometimes I hated myself and sometimes I hated everything around me. It was not only frustrating for me it was also frustrating for my husband because he saw me taking this very seriously much seriously. We started having problems in our marriage also. I thought he should feel the same as I did he didn’t. I became insomniac. I couldn’t sleep all night thinking what his future will be if he has to follow this easy curriculum in future. I thought he will never make it to college and university. I was more into what he was doing and started neglecting my daughter. I started thinking about many different ways in which I could teach him spelling and how he could retrieve them and save them in his memory. My mind started working funny. I bought programs for him so that he could be helped with spellings, I made cards with spelling words, I bought boards that had magnetic spelling words stuck to them, I put a huge white board in his room so that he could write whenever he want and practice writing and spellings. I also put a lot of pressure on him (tears filled her eyes). I mean he was only eight and I wanted him to be normal like my daughter, like

all the other children in the mainstream school. I just forgot he would not be . I forgot that I should accept it and move on. It was difficult to accept all that. It was the sad part. My son thought working every hour after school will make mommy happy and that's exactly what he did. I realized that I was pressurizing him when he all the time said to me 'What would you like me to do' or 'Do you want me to read this chapter again' or do you want to take this spelling test again'. When this started coming again and again I started to realise that he is working hard for all the wrong reasons. He did want to work hard and be a good student in the class but more importantly he wanted to work hard for me. He wanted to make mommy happy. And that was not what I wanted him to do. This was the time when I realised that I am taking his childhood away from him by keeping him loaded with work and to make him a normal kid.

After I realised this I told myself, I had to stop or I will break him emotionally. So I left him alone for a couple of weeks and he finished all his school work on his own. I also wanted to do this because I wanted him to gain his confidence back by feeling proud that he did his homework on his own. Since this school already give him easy work. I felt that my presence was not needed that much. I requested his school to adopt program according to his needs so that he can improve better.

Q9: Do you think that the school is providing appropriate curriculum based on his needs?

A9: They have made an ILP (Individual Learning Plan) for him. They have identified his strengths and weaknesses and have promised me that they will work hard towards achieving those targets but my son is still at least three years behind in literacy and in math. I guess he will become better but he has realised that in this special school there are children who all have some sort of issue and nobody in his school is perfect and that in itself has proved to boost his moral because he thinks he is not the only one and that there are other children too who are not perfect and need to work hard to learn. He is ok now.

Q10: What would be your recommendations for teaching professionals for dealing with social and emotional effects related to dyslexia?

A10: First, of all I would like to see schools going towards inclusion because I don't see any reason why children having learning difficulties should be denied access to normal school life. I would also suggest that schools/ teachers understand the needs (academic/social/emotional) of each individual child to give to help them go forward towards a good future.

Q11: Does your son know that he has dyslexia?

A11: No, I didn't tell him because I was not sure how he will take it. But he has been saying now quiet often that I am stupid I forget my spellings all the time

(The interview finished after this and the researcher thanked her for her time and cooperation)

10 Appendix 3.2

**Interview with a Mother of a Child Diagnosed with Dyslexia in
a Special Needs School (10 October, 2007)**

10 Appendix 3.2

Interview with a Mother of a Child Diagnosed with Dyslexia in a Special Needs School *(10 October, 2007)*

This was an informal interview taken with a mother of a child diagnosed with dyslexia. The interview questions were explained before the interview but the interview became very long containing information that was not related to the research. The mother got carried away explaining her child's history from the beginning. So those answers were not added in this interview due to their irrelevance to the concerned research. Here the girl is age nine, British born and diagnosed with this learning difficulty in England and had moved to Dubai beginning of January. She was detected very late at school in England that she had learning difficulty and that put her very behind academically, socially and emotionally. Currently she is attending a special needs school.

QI: Can you please explain if there were any social difficulties that your child experienced due to her learning difficulties?

A1: There is panic that crosses her face when somebody tells her off. Her words come out too quickly. Since she cannot process the information quick enough, she just screams. She would run away or she would black shout. She was not being mean she just couldn't handle the on-slot of words. But that didn't happen that very often, it was once in a while. It was very much in a blue moon. She was alone and she never played in a group. She is always happy with a book in a corner in the room playing on her own. She wasn't fussed that everybody else was playing. And if she goes to birthday party she screams when there are a lot of children in a room. She was fine when a she went to parties where she had her friends but if she would go to a party where she didn't know anybody then she wouldn't go inside the front door. She just couldn't handle being with too many children. And on my nieces birthday she sat in her bedroom for two hours because she felt comfortable and wouldn't come down to join the party. She wanted to come down only if nobody spoke to her and in her own good time. So it wasn't that she wouldn't join full stop but she wanted to assimilate the noise. We have found now that she also has

very sensitive hearing. So if she left on her own she will handle it really well. Like if we leave her on own and give her time and space then she is actually a very nice child. And that is exactly what happened when we went to friend and they have got small children like babies. She doesn't like two or three year olds because she associates them with noise. And these two girls were not noisy. They just followed her around. But if we tried to sit with her at the dinner table to eat, these people in the beginning didn't know that my daughter had an issue because she played with the children really well. They didn't know until about an hour in that my daughter had a problem. So what we did was we let her wander around and let them go outside and play. So being hungry out weighed the fear and she actually did come and sit down. If we were in a restaurant she has no problem sitting down because she knows that is expected of her and because there is a lot of people but if she is in a private home setting and its smaller group of people, then she needs to feel comfortable and if this friendship goes on further when she has met them a couple of times then there will be no issues for her sitting at the table. She is still too young at the age of nine to comprehend or understand what is appropriate and what is not appropriate and if I push it . When she hits maybe eleven or twelve , when we are hitting teenage years then maybe ... because socially I would say that she is eighteen months behind in some years for her actual age group . So yes you are dealing with a nine year old but you are dealing with a nine year old who missed out the first three years of discipline. So you are dealing with a nine year old behaviour but you are also dealing with a seven year old. So that was on the social side of the things. She cannot accept the answers you give because she can't make out why it is so. She can't accept 'no' and I can understand that but she has to understand that as well. On the other hand we have another side where she is a fourteen year old which is the complete different spectrum . She can analyse things and can come up with the most logical answers that even my son eleven wouldn't come up with.

Q2: Do you want to give an example?

A2: She actually analyze a song and she works out with words and she fitted it into who she is as a person . Which if you ask an eleven year old child to listen to pop song and then fit in words into that song . They will probably take a while

to think about that. And she on the other hand will listen to a song only two or three times and she will analyze that first song and she had listen to the words and she has been able to relate that to her own personal experiences. She has got the wicked sense of humour. She came out with something yesterday we were laughing. My husband was making a song up and he was putting on his silly voice and I put my fingers in my ears. And she came up with like she made up the rest of the song, which was something like, ' if you don't stop it now I am going o spank you with my dummy or something like that I don't remember. She had made up this two wording sentence. The way she had said it and then put it in such a rhyme that it made sense and it was the way she had put it that made us laugh. She doesn't do this quite often but when she does it in a sing song voice , and how she managed to get the rhyme , the theme , the words just by bringing it out spontaneously. So she put the tunes , the music and the singing all together in a matter of a second.

Towards May or June we started to get some attitude from her which we never had before. It was almost having a teenager arriving one day in the house. This nine year old is just going from doing nothing to completely mouthy and we have gone from one extreme to another. It actually got to the stage where she was actually verbal back -chatting the teacher. Which the teacher said she was such a calm quiet when she came in and now she has got this horrible child seems to have evolved. But I think a lot of that has been because suddenly she had confidence. She believed in herself. She was some kind of supper hero. She was the best in the class and she was on a high and I think it also gave her so much confidence.

(The interview finished after this and the researcher thanked her for her time and cooperation)

10 Appendix 4

**Interview with the Head of Dyslexia Unit in Private Primary
School of Dubai (4 November, 2007)**

10 Appendix 4:

Interview with the Head of Dyslexia Unit in Private Primary School of Dubai (4 November, 2007)

Q1: Do you have dyslexia support at your school?

A1: Yes, we have dyslexia support at our school which is provided on a one to one basis and we are using a structured cumulative phonic based approach.

Q2: From academic point of view what kind of support do you offer?

A2: Children will come down for about forty minutes a week with a specialist teacher who goes through a structured program of phonic based teaching. And they support what they are doing in the mainstream.

Q3: So this support is totally outside the classroom?

A3: Yes, the support that they are receiving is totally separate. But each term there is an Individual Educational Plan drawn up and the teacher and the dyslexia teacher would sit and go through that together. So the teacher is aware of what's being done down here. The other thing is each term we have a meeting with each teacher to go through each child's work to make sure that we all know exactly where they are.

Q4: Do parents offer support in terms of cooperating with the school, teachers, and special teachers to help their children?

A4: The children that we teach and they come for their withdrawal lesson in the dyslexia unit, the parents attend that lesson every week. They actually sit in and at the end of the lesson they have a copy of the lesson plan that's been taught with that lesson and at the end of it they get homework that is required to be done that week. And they have a copy of that.

Q5: Is once a week support enough?

A5: Once a week we have a lesson here but there is homework for twice a week at home and then they come back and have another lesson next week. So they are getting forty minutes with those and usually they are about two more periods of twenty minutes at home with their parents.

Q6: Has there been an overall academic success?

A6: Yes, definitely.

Q7: While working with them did you come across any social difficulties?

A7: Social and emotional difficulties of dyslexia are very wide in that the impact could be much more than the academic. The best way to talk about this would be my own daughter; she came through this dyslexia unit a few years ago. And obviously because I see in her environment outside of school that is much easier for me to talk about in great detail. The difficulties arise when the child is of reasonable intelligence and is able to understand that they are failing. When they are younger they don't realise that they are struggling. So there is social impact when they get integrated into grade three, and four because they have intelligence to understand but they can't do what their friends can do. And this can start having an impact and that would be things like their spellings, their writing they won't have the confidence to write new things because they are told that they get it wrong so that's why they don't want to try anything new. They restrict their ability to try things. They are also very forgetful, some of them are very gentle but some of them are very forgetful. So they won't have the right equipment, the right time, the right play, PE (Physical Education), lunch boxes and pencil cases, planners all that sort of things they quite often won't have where they should have. So that impact on their ability to do things. And they will have friends who will find it quite easy to do things. They will say just one line comment like, 'You never have your stuff' and then they will come home at night upset about that. For the person who said it, it was just a throwaway comment, so that impact on them and their confidence in their social groups. They also don't always, because there is difficulty with information processing and they don't understand the rules of a game and when it's played the first time so the kids will have to explain the rules of the game, and then they may not quite get it. And then they might explain it again and then they might get it. But all the time their friends

will say, oh... you never understand and that impacts on their ability socially. And then you have got after school activities where you have got some teachers who are very well aware of the difficulties especially if they have been in a school but if you go to something like ballet and where you have to follow a routine and its all your integration and things , a dyslexic child needs to over learn. Over learning means if the child needs something to explain once, a dyslexic child would need that thing to be explained four times. So if the child is not dyslexic and you need to explain twice then a dyslexic might need explaining eight times. So you go to a class where you are supposed to skip three steps to the right and then turn and skip three steps to the left, the rest of the people in the class will get it and you (she meant a dyslexic child) may skip three steps the wrong way and crash. And then its kind of you should have been more careful I explained it to you once, so all that and this can have an impact. And with in a family environment there is an impact where you have siblings who are not dyslexic and who can be quite, I mean they don't necessarily do it on purpose just a comment that they say which can be very demoralising for child. And the other thing is that if they come from a family of people who are all well educated and they are expecting the child to do very well and even the parents can have a lot of difficulty when the parent get frustrated, they may not be angry with the child but they get frustrated because their child get homework and the child can't do it. They parent get frustrated and upset. And that the child sees and feels it. They feel inadequate in their own performance and that can have an impact as well. Which is why it is so good to have a parent in here because they can see how we work with children? And then quite often they start to adopt that way of working so it's always very positive, well-done undo brilliantly. Rather than the frustrations and the anger side of it.

Q8:How do you deal with these social difficulties?

A8:Explanation, because the parents come in every week thus anything that has occurred you have instant feedback from the parent and then you can provide support. Like some of the children, they have homework from us but they also have their class homework. And if the parent is finding that the child is pressured by the amount of homework and by what's required from that home work. The parents will come in every week for every lesson and so we build up a relationship with the parent and then you may go to the class teacher and you say, at the moment this is all too difficult

how we can change it. So because you have got that parent feedback every lesson we can try to limit the impact that has.

Q9: Have you been successful in dealing with these social difficulties?

A9: Yes, I think so. And I think there is a very positive ethos with in the school with regard to dyslexia support. Because it is identified as quickly as possible here and the opportunity for the child to fail is limited and therefore the peers don't have as much reason to be negative and it fits very well and managed in this school . I do have friends in England who do have children who have learning difficulties and instances where they have been picked on and bullied because of that difficulty. But here there has been minor instances and because we have the instant feedback from the parent who can react straight away in the nip and the bud, just stop it. It is also because of the awareness with in the school; it's because of the parents coming in to support. In most schools you won't have that. Most parents will drop there children off. In England the support will be provided at school in small groups perhaps and if the specialist dyslexia support is required, it might be provided by the dyslexia institute and the child might leave school on Wednesday to go to the dyslexia lesson. But the parents will drop them off and then later pick them up. Here where you have parents in you have got much more potential to help the child socially and emotionally through helping the parent.

Q10: While working with them did you notice any emotional difficulties?

A10: Yes, mostly frustration. It's not very often but occasionally I have seen it. I used to work at high school providing dyslexia support and you would find that the frustration element would be most pronounced towards the exam time because of that additional pressure. And this would cause feeling of inadequacy and frustration and fear , I think fear is the other thing . That they are failing going to be at a definitive mark because no negotiation and that this is the mark that you got and its fear of that .This can cause difficulties but again because there is dyslexia support in the school even if it was a high school when exams are on the time table the children are aware that the people in the dyslexia support will help and you will get children coming down saying you are doing very well in this and then you will be able to support them

immediately which is what I have done in the past.

Q11: So if they have emotional difficulties then you can support them?

A11: Yes.

Q12: Do you think there is relation between these dyslexia and these social and emotional difficulties?

A12: Yes, it's the difficulty with dyslexia that impacts the social and emotional difficulties. But the difficulties that the children display socially and emotionally are whether the child is dyslexic or not, these difficulties may have been there anyway depending on the child's personality. Because you can have two children with the same difficulties and one will have social and emotional difficulties and the other won't. So there is an impact of the environment or environmental impact of their own personality, the other thing is that social and emotional difficulties will be impacted by the environment. You will have a child who is in a positive environment at home where these difficulties will be supported in a positive way and you may have a child who is in a difficult situation at home perhaps impacted by other things in the family that will affect that child's confidence. So the social and emotional difficulties for that child will be bigger depending on what goes on at home.

Q13: Do you have any recommendations for teachers, parents, learning support tutors and special educationalists for how to deal with social and emotional difficulties of children diagnosed with dyslexia?

A13: I think the biggest one is to work together. To have the professionals in contact with the parent, the children and the teacher and to work together to support the child. That's got to be the way to do it.

(The interview finished after this and the researcher thanked her for her time and cooperation)

10 Appendix 5

**Interview with a Teacher of Children diagnosed with
Dyslexia in a Special Needs School** *(14 November, 2007)*

10 Appendix 5

Interview with a Teacher of Children diagnosed with Dyslexia in a Special Needs School *(14 November, 2007)*

Q1: Do you receive many pupils diagnosed with dyslexia at your school?

A1: At an average in every school with my experience between five and ten percent particularly of boys. Girls are much rare.

Q2: Can you explain how they are supported academically at your school, for example do you have special programs to facilitate their learning?

A2: Yes we do. We have a reading teacher who pulls the children from the class to teach reading. We also have very small classes in here and every child in here is on an 'Individual Learning Plan'.

Q3: Have you been successful?

A3: Oh yes.

Q4: Are these children happy at your school?

A4: I think they are because they have a programme that is tailored to their needs. If a child is unhappy at school it is one or three reasons. One the program is not suitable for the child. Two, they will be bullied and three something is going on at home or on the way to school. In my experience those are the major things or they don't like the teacher. You know you can get a personality clash just one of those things.

Q5: Do children diagnosed with dyslexia feel isolated in any way because they are at an age where they understand that they are not in a mainstream school?

A5: Well I found with these children if you can give them a physical reason why they are having problems and explain to them that in order to be dyslexic they have to be highly intelligent and its not that they are stupid. And if you can give them an actual reason, why they are having difficulties they feel awful lot better. And this is what we do. We can actually change there with the

therapists in here the neurological occupational therapy that we do over here makes a huge difference.

Q6: Some of these children may have shifted or asked to leave the mainstream school. Does it put emotional strain on these children?

A6: It puts a huge emotional strain, the rejection of being kicked out of the school because they are not good enough or they are bad. These children know that they are having problems; they know they are not good at reading. And to add rejection on top of that it's hugely traumatic for them.

Q7: Can you explain self esteem and self confidence of these children?

A7: Because we have tailored programs for these individuals and we give them a reason for why they are/have a problem and yes, we can work with that. Their self esteem normally rises.

Q8: Did you ever come across children having emotional difficulties due to their learning difficulties and in this case I mean dyslexia?

A8: Yes, I have lived with a child that had emotional problems because of dyslexia. My son was dyslexic and my husband was dyslexic, which is one of the reasons I got into this in the first place. There are huge emotional issues and they feel the want to give up. They don't find any school work easy because the dyslexia, the reading difficulty affect spin on a fake like ripples on a pond. Because every subject you have to read to read the instructions, or the questions in an exam. Failure upon failure upon failure, they get quite depressed.

Q9: How do you deal with these emotional difficulties, you may give example if you wish?

A9: Um..., one you give them a reason for it and say look this is not your fault and dyslexia is usually inherited from father to son and boys are prone to it. I am generalizing of course. In my case it is definitely inherited with my son. And I said to him it's not your fault that you are this way and I took the blame away from him. Its not that you are lazy, its not that you are stupid, it's just the way your brain operates and it's different from everybody else's so you have to

work twice as hard. And once you can explain it to them, if they have a reason on explanation they can deal with it a lot more easily and it helps a lot.

Q10: You think that their emotional difficulties could be related to dyslexia?

A10: Yes I do. One of the reasons is that dyslexic children not only have trouble reading words , they have trouble reading body language so quite often they don't realise that when the teacher says, clear your desk and sit with your arms folded that they are expected to sit with their arms folded . But they get their legs all tangled down the chairs and you actually have to teach them that , when I say clear your desk and sit up straight , this is what I expect of you; and have a look at Joe and say, very nice Joe that's exactly what I want; or Sally that is perfect. And you keep putting him in a positive input. Especially if you can see an improvement and you say 'that's much better'. You have got to find small things to praise, because praise works wonders to the peoples self-esteem.

Q11: Do you think that these children may face social difficulties due to their dyslexia when they have difficulty in learning?

A11: Yes I do because the other children say 'Oh you are stupid you are thick'. You get this in the normal mainstream school and their friends from other schools give them a really had time sometimes. And if they are feeling depressed about the fact that they are not succeeding and we all feel depressed when we are not succeeding and trying the very hardest .And especially when people say that you are stupid and they know they are not and they are trying very hard. It's bound to make an impact on them.

Q12: So you think that social difficulties are related to dyslexia?

A12: I think in a lot of cases yes. I think this inability to read what other people are doing, what is expected of them, actually causes a problem because it starts in a very young age. And dyslexic children tend not to know their left from their right for quite along time. And when I had my son tested, he didn't know if he was using his right or his left hand. So their perception of right and left and place in the world is quite distorted. So he had difficulty at working out what was going on and we had to sit down and explain to him that little Johnny was

angry with him because he did such and such or he is upset with him because he forgot to go back and say, thank you or forgot to go back and return his toy. These things have to be explained very clearly to a dyslexic child. Now most of them are orally very good. Their oral language is excellent. So if you explain it carefully to them they will understand quite clearly. Once again with depression and everything else if they are depressed and miserable they are not going to be good friends or nice to be around. So they tend to withdraw into themselves.

Q13: Would you like to make some recommendations for teachers, and educational professional who are teaching these children in how to limit these social and emotional difficulties?

A13: Teachers need to be very careful about labelling children. And they need to be very careful about what they say to them. If they are misbehaving and you say I hate your behaviour, you are useless why you can't do this etc. Try not to be negative and try to target what they are doing which you are displeased with. Because dyslexic children can be orally pedantic they like it exact because orally they know what's going on and are extremely bright. So if you say to them, 'Don't be stupid', so you tell them that they are stupid. So be specific about what behaviour it is that you don't like you are actually giving them some positive feedback because these children need a lot of oral feedback; because their visual perception is faulty.

(The interview finished after this and the researcher thanked her for her time and cooperation)

10 Appendix 6

Interview with a Head Teacher of a Special Needs School

(28 October, 2007)

10 Appendix 6

Interview with a Head Teacher of a Special Needs School

(28 October, 2007)

Q1: How are children supported academically at your school when they are diagnosed with dyslexia?

A1: First of all when they are diagnosed with dyslexia it's very hard to diagnose. It takes a few professional bodies to actually come up with the diagnoses. One we don't want to label children. So if there is strong evidence that the child has dyslexia. First of all we use like a ruler shaped card which is covered over all the text in a book. So they are just tracking one word not all the words on the page. So we use that. There is colored film, plastic sheet which you can put over the words. Certain colours of dyslexia may be yellow, blue, green or red etc. It depends on a child's predominant colours. If they look at the blank white page with a print on it runs into one, if you put a coloured film over. Then the words stay individual and it helps them track better. So we do use colours in severe cases. Again this resource we did have, without this it's very difficult to get on to the proper dyslexia. We also then use the OT (Occupational Therapies) to a program of handwriting to help the children, do individual handwriting programs. Where they use sticks for the orientation of letters. With all of these things sorted out, we break texts down into small texts. Not long sentences or paragraphs but break it down and leave spaces.

Q2: Have you been successful?

A2: Yes we have. Dyslexia tends to follow students through the life. It's not something that is curable as such. It will follow them to the rest of their lives. But they learn as they get older to actually correct and see their mistakes as they read back to themselves. Not initially they will make all the mistakes even as adults. When they read it back they will see there mistakes and experience. As children get older they will rub out or tepax their mistakes.

Q3: Are these children happy at you school?

A3: Yes, all children are happy. If they are in a friendly environment no matter what their problems are. If they are in a friendly caring environment and they are not put under too much pressure, no matter whether they are in mainstream school, dyslexic or what ever they are. They are going to look at, if their goals are achievable and the attainment target is with in their reach they will be happy students. So dyslexia, dyspraxia, anything something that is something that is a labelling a child for their social skills is their environment and what they are working at.

Q4: Do you think these children feel isolated in a way because they are studying in a special needs school because they are in an age where they understand that they are not in a mainstream school?

A4: I don't feel that they feel isolated. You get some children that are frustrated in our case because of our facilities in the school for example in our case if these children get older and especially who are athletes and are into sport and they want that big swimming pool or that big gym because these are the facilities that unfortunately are premises do not cater for. But the friends that they make and in the communal areas, I have never come across any body that feel that they are not in the right place. We practice a mainstream curriculum and we have this normal social setting and environment as any other school.

Q5: Some of these children may have shifted from a mainstream school does it put emotional strain on these pupils?

A5: At times parents again are looking for labels they see this school as a school that they wouldn't be proud to tell their friends that their child is here. Again stigma, labels, and then they put pressure and in many cases, I have known of may be five or six, of the top of my head where they have put their children in the mainstream schools and the children are suffering because they cope. They are isolated in the mainstream school where as they were not isolated in the here. Socially they are not coping, the children have gone back, and now parents bring them to therapy in the afternoon sessions to compensate, what's happen to them in the mainstream school.

Q6: Do the children feel that they are in the special needs school?

A6: The children don't see themselves as they are in the special needs school. It's the parents. The parents see it not the children. The parents are behind this not the child. And if you said to any child in the school are you happy in this school? they will say yes. If you ask them do you have friends? they will say yes. They get a normal curriculum, they get a normal environment and they are happy. If a child for what ever reason is not functioning as he would , I hate the word 'normal' but what people perceive as normal , a child here would not comment on that . Not that they don't notice it . They are not that way inclined to make bond but, in a mainstream school that child will be made fun off. And we have got children who are mainstream children in particular in my class I have got eleven students and I have got four mainstream children. Now you could come in my class and you can try and pick up the mainstream children and you couldn't.

Q7: Can you explain self-esteem and self-confidence of these pupils when they are in a special needs school?

A7: Yes, the emotions come from man made frustrations and anger comes from frustrations. If a child is in class and they are asked to do a simple task, it's like a mountain to them. And the rest of the peers are coping with this, whereas they have to read something in a group or the point of pressure the way they get out of it is to be naughty. More often then not a child with behaviour problems is the child that is not coping in any school. I am talking mainstream, secondary etc. It's their way of disguising the fact that they can't cope. It's easier to say to a teacher 'I am not doing this, I don't like you, I don't like the class, and show behaviour problems that they can't do it.

Q8: Do you think that there are emotional difficulties related to dyslexia?

A8: Some cases but not all cases again in my experience I had children that are emotionally mm... (left sentence incomplete). I had one case in particular who is a year six student and he became naughty and his behaviour very bad because as his peers all progressed he was still not able to read because he was severely dyslexic and when I say severely dyslexic it was everything. To read a page of English writing it was like reading Russian and I struggled terribly with this child because he had this bizarre writing. When he was younger he

could get away with it but as he got older he realized himself the extent of what he was struggling with and this turned into behaviour problems and it was emotional and it was down to dyslexia.

Q9: Do you think that these pupils may face social challenges due to dyslexia, because they have a learning difficulty?

A9: As older children would get an argument. One child might say to another child you cannot even do your three's the right way. You are like a baby. So yeah there is the danger of this kind of thing sort of told to another child. As tip a tap kind of a thing, but in general no. The peers they don't see friendship connected. They wouldn't say we are not friend with him because he is dyslexic or something like that.

Q10: So the child would not be made fun off, etc?

A10: No, not really. Its more down to when they are exposed to a group is when they might be made fun off. You see people with dyslexia and other problems in a mainstream school are usually very clever people and they are very clever at disguising problems from their friends and the rest of the world. I will tell you a case of a child that is forty years of age now and went to a very good school in England and whose father was on the board of governors of education. And were very keen on their children and was only diagnosed with dyslexia when she was fifteen. So she pulled out of this school, getting low grades. But it holds her back because after that she never went to the university and she has got five brother and sisters and they all went to the university.

Q11: What do you think about the social and emotional impact of dyslexia on pupils life?

A11: Again it depends on the situation, the child and the environment. All of these things contribute to this happening.

Q12: What are your recommendations in terms of social and emotional difficulties and dyslexia?

A12: Well again in my opinion do not put someone who is struggling with dyslexia or other problems in a group work where we put them under pressure. Only set realistic targets. And the attainment targets must be within their reach. And this way you give them confidence. If they are confident they will overcome whatever is bothering or whatever goals, anything that they can't achieve. So that's my strategy 'set realistic goals and do not put pressure on the child at all. Call upon them to read or to display their work when you as the educator are confident that they are not going to fail. Don't set them to fail.

(The interview finished after this and the researcher thanked her for her time and cooperation)

10 Appendix 7

**Interview with a Learning Support Tutor of a Private Primary
School in Dubai with a Special Dyslexia Unit for Children
Diagnosed with Dyslexia (8 October, 2007)**

10 Appendix 7

Interview with a Learning Support Tutor of a Private Primary School in Dubai with a Special Dyslexia Unit for Children Diagnosed with Dyslexia (8 October, 2007)

Q1: Do you have dyslexia support at your school?

A1: Yes we have a whole dyslexia unit at our school.

Q2: From academic point of view what kind of support do you offer?

A2: They are offered support on a one to one basis which is paid by the parents separately. It's an over and above school fees to make this clear. They are given this support once or twice a week depending on the case situation. We have three dyslexia teachers, sometimes four because the head of inclusion will also take some of these children. Yeah that's it.

Q3: So this support is provided outside the classroom?

A3: Yes, this support is provided outside the classroom. However there is a whole school policy in regard to dyslexia whereby the teachers are given short notes in how to identify dyslexia kids, how to deal with dyslexic children in the classroom. So it's a whole school policy however the one on one situation, the academic extension is exclusive of the classroom and the children are taken out.

Q4: Do you have a certain criteria for a minimum number of children having dyslexia in each classroom?

A4: We don't. It wouldn't be an issue. However we wouldn't take parents recommendations that their child has dyslexia. It will start from the teacher. So the teacher would be the first point of contact, they would identify the child as possibly having dyslexia for the various reasons. We have a check list and if there are a lot of ticks on the check list then they become a read flag. Then they fill out what we call the achievements into a referral form it would come to the 'Head of Inclusion', who would then let that child sit at a test which

covers a variety of areas. It was a test by an educational psychologist in the UK, and it's been very successful let's put it that way. So that is how we would identify a dyslexic child. If it came up and they were dyslexic, there would be a parent teacher interview meeting to explain the situation. The parents any way would have given the prior agreement to give the child the test. We wouldn't do it without parent permission and then they would be placed in the unit dependent on where the parent agrees.

Q5: So the parents are involved and support their child?

A5: Parents are extremely involved because there is no choice. The parent has to be there. So they are involved heavily and they take extension work home.

Q6: Has there been an overall academic success after interventions?

A6: Yes, there has been supper success with these programmes.

Q7: While you were working with them did you come across any social difficulties experienced by these students, if yes please explain?

A7: Again it's a stigma issue. Sometimes the child might feel vary about being pulled out of the classroom and his peers might say, 'where are you going?' and it might be very embarrassing to say, 'I am going to the Dyslexia Unit'. But usually once they start to see success in what they are doing, they don't have a problem. Actually they quite enjoy going down the stairs because they know they are going to gain from it. So initially yes their might be a few problems involved but after a couple of sessions they actually see themselves improve. They are able to read more fluently, etc. Then we have a much positive attitude and the initial stigma of having dyslexia is over written by their renewed confidence.

Q8: Did you come across any emotional difficulties that these children experienced due their dyslexia?

A8: Yes, the programme that we teach will take the child right back to the understanding of the forty four main sounds. So I think there have been tears in the past, a sort of the first couple of weeks and finding it difficult so there is definitely emotional problems but again short lived. And in fact it's expected

from them that there would be a few emotional problems in the first couple of weeks.

Q9: Did any of your students having dyslexia expressed their feelings in this respect, something that you might want to share?

A9: For confidential issues, I wouldn't be able to share with you. There is a reaction but the reaction disappears.

Q10: So how do you deal with these emotional difficulties?

A10: Well we have a very tight unit, we have a counsellor, and if the issue is gone to stay that the child does need counselling. I have not known that yet. Then we have one on board, mm..., I think the parents would be brought in as well to give support from home from home-side. And all round teacher, parent the learning support department the dyslexia department there would be support on all sides.

Q11: Do you think there could be a relationship between dyslexia and the social and emotional issues?

A11: I would say so. Because if it's not caught the child is going to sink further and further. And a lot of a time it's not indicative (meaning dyslexia) and the child has a high IQ and just the frustration of not being able to express themselves is severe in some cases and not being able to read what they want etc, this is extremely frustrating . So yes I think if a child who hasn't been caught early and who is now in year six or year five and is still carrying issues that have not been resolved then I think you are going to have problems.

Q12: What would be your recommendations for parents, teachers and educational professionals regarding the social and emotional issues caused by dyslexia?

A12: Again it would be the class teacher who would immediately pick up, in our school we have these guidelines for them to look at and say, 'We think they are falling within the spectrum', for it would start there. That's where it would start. And I don't think that we would have that problem because we catch them early because we have a system in place. However, the child coming from overseas and they haven't been assessed because they have slipped

through the net and we suddenly found that we have a year five child who is showing strong dyslexia tendencies then we have a problem. But I think that they would be picked up with in the first three weeks. In fact this week we have assessments and we are picking up all sorts of things.

Q13: Do you mean you do dyslexia screening?

A13: No, we don't do dyslexia screening individually. No...no that would be a huge task. Dyslexia screening would only take place once the child has been a possibility of dyslexia.

(The interview finished after this and the researcher thanked her for her time and cooperation)

10 Appendix 8

Interview with a Learning Support Tutor of a Private

Mainstream School (*New in establishing their special needs facilities*)

(1st October, 2007)

10 Appendix 8

Interview with a Learning Support Tutor of a Private Mainstream

School (*New in establishing their special needs facilities*)

(1st October, 2007)

Q1: Do you have dyslexia support at your school?

A1: Yes, we do.

Q2: What kind of support do you offer from academic point of view?

A2: We have got certain programmes. We have a new program that we started now.

Q3: Do you offer this support inside or outside the classroom?

A3: At this point we are looking into methods where technically we can use both the methods, a sort of a combination method. A programme that is new. We just thought that a combination method would be good.

Q4: So do you have learning support tutors going into the classroom and assisting them?

A4: Yes, because we don't know yet how dyslexic they are. Because some of them are getting support from outside, and those children who are not getting support from outside and they need the basic help. We might get a one to one support for them.

Q5: Do parents offer support in terms of cooperating with school, teachers and learning support tutors to help their children?

A5: Oh yes, the parents are very supportive. Majority of them are very supportive. They have arranged for private tutors to help their children. Some of them have done their assessment actually going to a specialist and that sort of thing .So parents are very supportive and we are continuously meeting up with parents and telling them about the programmes that we are using.

Q6: So you don't offer educational assessment at school?

A6: We don't have educational assessment from a psychologist at school because we don't have a regular educational psychologist. So if we feel that a child needs extra support other than what we are able to give then we request for an assessment. We just do a developmental assessment in the language area at school.

Q7: Has there been academic success with these children?

A7: This program has been only for four months. This is the fourth month that it's been introduced. So we have been just doing lots of assessment and observations. So if you really want to know if we have been successful I would not be able to tell you anything more. But yes, there is a lot of cooperation between teachers and parents they seem to be enthusiastic about it and I foresee that it is going to be successful because this is something that we did not offer before and I am sure we are going to make progress when these children get the attention that they require.

Q8: Is this support one to one or you worked in group centred educational programs?

A8: We feel that its not only dyslexic children that we have other children as well who need support. So if offer one to one then the number that we have its not going to be feasible because you need to have more small groups . It's not possible to give them one to one support here but we do recommend that from home they do get support from home on one to one level.

Q9: While working with them did you come across any social difficulties?

A9: Teachers have not said much about that. Even the conversation that I had with them, they wanted to participate, and were up and alert. The social isolation happen more with in the classroom because they are isolated as far as learning is concerned. They have things that they can't complete that make them socially isolated and emotionally down that ah...they are struggling. Because there are a couple of children who are dyslexic and they are so happy when they come to us once or twice. I don't see the hesitation there because out of

the learning environment they don't realise that they are so different, but they realise that they are different.

Q10: They know they are different?

A10: Yes, they are told. Those who had the diagnoses they know they are different.

Q11: Then how do you deal with these social difficulties?

A11: Actually it's the teacher who gets more interaction with them.

Q12: While working with them did you come across any emotional difficulties experienced by these students?

A12: They do feeling that they are different. In some cases they do feel that they are different. However in some cases it depends on the classroom teacher. How she/he manages them, for example what happens in a certain situation and how much work load that they get. Because when they are given little bit of work and that work is achievable, emotionally they don't feel that upset. They feel ah.... This work is achievable. But those who are struggling, they do feel down and they do feel depressed. And that sort of carries on, as long as they don't get the pressure, because when they do get the pressure they get emotionally upset. Also we do have some teachers who really understand that dyslexic is a condition, they start to break down the things that they have to teach, so that the student don't feel the pressure that I have to do this much. And with the system that we have, the school's learning system where the student know that I don't have to do A, B, C, D and then I am a good student. Here you do A, B you are still a good student. We value the 'who you are' and that makes a huge difference on a child emotionally. That affects the child socially also because if you feel good emotionally you are good socially too. And that's another reason that I feel that the children are happy. They are not isolated and feeling so down feeling that, oh I am dyslexic nobody is going to be with me. They sit with in a group where they can be also supportive, because that is a happy phase. I mean the ones that I have seen are happy faces they are not pushed to their limit.

Q13: When you pulled them out of the class for educational support what is their reaction?

A13: They are happy actually. They do feel special because we tell them that they are special. We also tell them that they are special because we are doing something different with you. We just make sure that the child doesn't feel inferior or they feel different for the wrong reason. We tell them that they are different for the right reasons so they feel good. And they do feel good that someone has recognised them and are giving them the support.

Q14: So you explain it to them that they have dyslexia?

A14: Yeah, absolutely. It's how you explain it to the kids

(The interview finished after this and the researcher thanked her for her time and cooperation)

10 Appendix 9

Appendix 9.1

Short Interview with a Learner in a Special Needs School

10 Appendix 9

10 Appendix 9.1

Short Interview with a Learner in a Special Needs School

The learner interviewed here is a nine year old girl studying in a special needs school.

Q1: Do you like your school?

A1: Yes

Q2: Do you feel happy when you go to school everyday?

A2: Most of the time.

Q3: Would you like to be in the big school?

A3: I would like to be in the big school so that I can do swimming, French, Spanish, Art, and after school activities.

Q4: Do you have many friends at school?

A4: Yes I do.

Q5: Would you like to explain your friendships. For example your friends who you want to be with and others that you don't want to be with?

A5: I like to be with my friends in my class. I don't like some of the boys as they fight and call me names. They are rude and they hurt people.

Q6: Do you feel some emotional issues (like stress, frustrations etc) at school?

A6: This question her mother answered for her as she was also young to express her feelings in this respect.

Mother: Any good behavior that has been instilled into a child at home can be easily undone when in the school she is in (she referred to the special needs school she was currently studying). She is emotionally held back as she is cannot take normal social

Student ID 60129

queues from normal mainstream children as there are none in the school.

Q7: How is your self-esteem, are you a confident person at school and in your class?

A7: I am a more confident person than I was when I started he school.

10 Appendix 9.2

Short Interview with a Learner in a Special Needs School

Appendix 9.2

Short Interview with a Learner in a Special Needs School

This interview took place with an eight years old boy diagnosed with dyslexia

Q1: Do you like your school?

A1: Yes

Q2: Do you feel happy when you go to school everyday?

A2: Not really, because kids bother me at school.

Q3: Would you like to be in the big school?

A3: No, because being in a small school we get more attention and I can work harder

Q4: Do you have many friends at school?

A4: Yes

Q5: Would you like to explain your friendships. For example your friends who you want to be with and others that you don't want to be with?

A5: I like people who are kind to other kids. And I like to talk to my friends. Some of my friends that I want to be with; because they are kind and very nice and the others use bad language so I don't want to be with them.

Q6: Do you feel some emotional issues (like stress, frustrations etc) at school?

A6: Yes, when I am doing my spelling test I feel frustration and scared because I feel if I get bad grades then I will fail in class.

Q7: How is your self-esteem, are you a confident person at school and in your class?

A7: Yes, because I ignore the people who annoys me, like a boy in my school.

(I thanked the student after the short interview)

Appendix 10

Appendix 10.1

What is 'Dyslexia'?

Appendix 10.1

What is 'Dyslexia'?

Dyslexia is sometimes called 'specific reading difficulty'. The word 'dyslexia' comes from the Greek word 'dys' meaning difficulty with, and 'lexia', meaning words or language. So dyslexia means 'difficulty with words'.

Different educationalists define it differently, For example:

The British Psychology Society defines it as, 'Dyslexia is a learning difference which is constitutional in origin, independent of socioeconomic or language background and can occur at any level of intellectual ability. It can cause unexpected and persistent difficulties in acquiring certain skills on one or more of the following areas: reading, writing and sometimes numeracy or spoken language'. Miles and Miles (1990) in Ott (1997) states that 'there is, in our view, a good case for saying that it is a medical matter in origin and an educational matter in its treatment' (pg: 17). Snowling (1987), cited in Ott (1997) emphasises that 'Dyslexia is associated with phonological difficulties originating within spoken language processes' (1st ed, pg: 28). Rice and Brooks (2004) cited in Backhouse and Morris (2005) states that, 'Dyslexia is not one thing but many – to the extent that it may be a conceptual clearing house for a variety of difficulties with a variety of causes' (pg: 16).

Thus it is a specific learning difficulty that manifests itself in many different ways varying in each individual case. Generally the main areas of learning that are affected are literacy, language and at times numeric skills. Yet another simpler way to describe it is, 'individuals having dyslexia show difficulty in reading, writing, spellings and math.' It can also be defined as a neurological or biological condition that greatly depends on the severity in each individual person. It also refers to a range of symptoms including poor memory and lack of physical coordination. Dyslexia may vary in severity from mild, moderate to severe. It is important to realise that dyslexia is not related to intelligence and IQ (Intelligence Quotient) as many individuals having dyslexia are very intelligent and their learning difficulties lay in other areas of learning. Thus we may say dyslexia is characterised by some areas of weaknesses and some areas of strengths.

Dyslexia sometimes may interlink with other conditions such as ‘dysphasia’, ‘dyspraxia’, and attention deficit disorder. Statistics show that generally 10% of population is affected by dyslexia. Some researches indicate that the percentage of dyslexia in males is four times higher than that in females. Dyslexia may occur due to genetic history, or it may be acquired through accident or a sickness. In addition to poor reading, writing, spelling and math skills individual with dyslexia may show difficulties in the following areas of learning:

- a) Processing information (receiving, keeping, retrieving and organising information).
- b) Speed of processing information
- c) Poor phonological awareness
- d) Problems in short term memory
- e) Difficulties in sequencing skills
- f) Difficulties in reading comprehension skills.
- g) Difficulty in organisational skills
- h) Poor ability of expressing themselves verbally
- i) Poor ability in handwriting
- j) Poor bilateral integration(left and right side perception)

Poor abilities in the areas mentioned above can result usually in frustration for the individual. This may lead to low self esteem and poor self confidence causing behaviour difficulties if left unchecked and unsupported on time. Different teaching methods, strategies and approaches are adopted to teach an individual having dyslexia. These teaching strategies are extremely important. These usually include multi-sensory methods, precise teaching of developing memory skills, special programmes, and thinking techniques called mind mapping. In addition to this different developmental programmes are adopted to develop muscle tone. Occupational therapies are highly recommended by educationalists as a part of intervention strategy for dyslexia. In addition to all this, the individual may be advised for language and speech therapy programmes to enhance learning.

10 Appendix 10.2

Types of Dyslexia

10 Appendix 10.2

Types of Dyslexia

Broadly speaking dyslexia is classified into two main types:

- a- Developmental Dyslexia
- b- Acquired Dyslexia

The first kind of dyslexia refers to the general dyslexia that occurs in individuals and which usually lasts through entire life of an individual. The second one is acquired through accidents or brain traumas that damages normal reading abilities.

Marshall and Newcombe (1973) subdivided dyslexia into following:

- 1- Surface Dyslexia
- 2- Phonological Dyslexia
- 3- Double deficit Dyslexia

If we take English language for example, many times there is no consistency in the rules of English and a person with dyslexia would tend to make mistake there, this is called 'Surface Dyslexia'. For example, pretty is read as if it rhymed with "jetty", and bowl is read as if it rhymed with "howl". Phonological dyslexia is the poor ability to acquire the phonic nature of English language. A person with phonological dyslexia will show great difficulty in reading and comprehending new words. If both the symptoms exist in an individual then it is called 'Double deficit Dyslexia'. Poor visual and auditory information processing leads to two other types of dyslexia called 'Auditory Dyslexia' and 'Visual Dyslexia' respectively. So a child with poor hearing skills but with average visual skills might be diagnosed with Auditory Dyslexia where as poor visual but average hearing will be diagnosed as Visual Dyslexia.

There is yet another type of dyslexia called Orthographic dyslexia.

Appendix 11

Appendix 11.a

Sample of Survey Questionnaire Distributed between Teachers

Appendix 11.b

**Research Findings from the Questionnaires Distributed between the
Teachers**

Appendix 11.b:

Research Findings from the Questionnaires Distributed between the Teachers

Section 1: Dyslexia Support

Table 11.b.1

	Questions asked	(Yes) Response in %	(No) Response in %
Q1	Are you familiar with the term 'Dyslexia'?	100	0
Q2	Have you ever come across children having dyslexia in your classroom?	100	0
Q3	Do you have special provisions inside or outside the classroom to meet their needs?	73.33	26.66

Table 11.b.2

Q4	Question Asked	If yes please explain briefly what kind of provision provided for these learners?
	Teachers Response	Response in %
	Dyslexia unit in the school	26.66
	One to one	6.66
	Inside the classroom	13.33
	More time	6.66
	Trained teachers in the school	6.66
	Learning support	6.66
	Different programs	6.66
	Not applicable	26.66

Table 11.b.3

Q5	Question Asked	Did you notice any improvement in the student's academic performance?
	Teachers Response	Response in %
1	Did not answer	26.66
2	Some improvement	33.33
3	Considerable improvement	26.66
4	Too soon to tell	13.33

Section 2: Social Impact

Table 11.b.4

	Questions asked	(Yes) Response in %	(No) Response in %
Q6	Did the learner show any social difficulties	60	40

Table 11.b.5

Q7	Indicate the level of social difficulties the student faces in the school:	(Significant) Response in %	(Somewhat significant) Response in %	(Insignificant) Response in %	(Did not answer) Response in %
1	Withdrawal from peers	13.33	33.33	0	53.33
2	Difficulty in making friends	20	20	13.33	46.66
3	Violent behaviour towards peers	6.66	20	26.66	53.33
4	Disliked or ignored by peers	13.33	20	26.66	46.66
5	Participation with peers in group centred activities at school	0	33.33	26.66	40

Table 11.b.6

Q8	Any other difficult social behaviour that you would like to mention?(each person put many answers, all included)	Response in %
1	Stigma attached to dyslexia and feeling inferior	6.66
2	Peer rejection	13.33
3	Unable to follow written instructions	20
4	Often naughty to get attention	26.66
5	Difficulty in communicating with adults because of low self esteem	33.33
6	Did not answer	66.66

Table 11.b.7

Q9	Question Asked	(Highly agree) Response in %	(Agree) Response in %	(Neutral) Response in %	(Strongly disagree) Response in %	(Did not answer) Response in %
	Do you think there is a relationship between having dyslexia and these social difficulties	26.66	33.33	6.66	0	66.66

Table 11.b.8

Q10	Please ex-plain the relationship between dyslexia and social difficulties(open-ended question)	Response in %
1	Negative impact on self-esteem	33.33
2	Frustration due to academic performance	6.66
3	Poor self -confidence	20
4	Did not answer	60

Table 11.b.9

Q11	What recommendations can you make to minimize the social effects of dyslexia?(open-ended question)	Response in %
1	Good academic support	26.66
2	Partnership between home/school	6.66
3	Peer support	6.66
4	Teacher's encouragement	6.66
5	On-time intervention	13.33
6	Caring environment	13.33
7	Providing social and emotional support	13.33
8	Whole school awareness	13.33
9	Achievable targets	13.33
10	Explaining to the learner about his/her learning difference	20
11	Special programs	13.33
12	Focusing on Strengths of the learner	13.33
13	Boosting confidence	13.33
14	Due to dyslexia it is difficult to help them	6.66
15	Did not answer	46.66

Section 3: Emotional Impact

Table 11.b.10

	Question Asked	(Yes) Response in %	(No) Response in %	(Sometimes) Response in %
Q12	Did the student show any emotional difficulties at school?	53.33	40	6.66

Table 11.b.11

Q13	Question Asked	(Very good) Response in %	(Good) Response in %	(Neutral) Response in %	(Poor) Response in %	(Did not answer) Response in %
	How would you grade this child's self-esteem?	0	26.66	26.66	33.33	6.66

Table 11.b.12

	Question Asked	(Yes) Response in %	(No)Response in %	(Did not answer) Response in %
Q14	Is the student willing and happy to come to school?	66.66	26.66	6.66

Table 11.b.13

	Question Asked	(Mostly) Response in %	(Sometimes) Response in %	(Rarely) Response in %	(Not at all) Response in %	(Did not answer) Response in %
Q15	Does the student get uncomfortable and tense in situations where asked to deliver in front of the class?	46.66	46.66	6.66	0	6.66

Table 11.b.14

	Question Asked	(Yes) Response in %	(No) Response in %	(Did not answer) Response in %
Q16	Does the student get upset on small issues inside or outside the classroom?	53.33	40	13.33

Table 11.b.15

	Question Asked	(Yes) Response in %	(No) Response in %	(Did not answer) Response in %
Q17	Does the students stay unhappy or quiet at school	33.33	60	6.66

Table 11.b.16

	Question Asked	(Highly agree)	(Agree)	(Neutral)	(Disagree)	(Strongly disagree)	(Did not answer)
		Response in %	Response in %	Response in %	Response in %	Response in %	Response in %
Q18	Do you think there is relationship between having dyslexia and these emotional difficulties ?	26.66	40	26.66	0	0	6.66

Table 11.b.17

Q19	Please explain the relationship between dyslexia and emotional difficulties? (open-ended question)	Response in %
1	Dyslexia impact on self-esteem and confidence	26.66
2	Difficulty in answering questions and feeling embarrassed	13.33
3	An impact of a learning difficulty	13.33
4	Inferior to others	13.33
5	Academic as failure	13.33
6	Peer pressure	13.33
7	Uncomfortable to deliver in the class	13.33
8	Did not answer	40

Table 11.b.18

Q20	What recommendations can you make to minimize the emotional difficulties caused by dyslexia? (open-ended question)	Response in %
1	Emphasis the importance of trying , practicing	6.66
2	Teach the child on a one to one basis	6.66
3	Concentrating on building the child's strengths	6.66
4	Caring environment	13.33
5	Minimize visual contact to help work through difficult areas	6.66
6	Maximizing learning opportunities	6.66
7	Do not single out the child in class activities	6.66
8	Get help for the child to assist him academically	20
9	Not to judge him on his learning difficulty	6.66
10	Did not answer	33.33

Section: Academic Impact

Table 11.b.19

	Question Asked	(Highly agree) Response in %	(Agree) Response in %	(Neutral) Response in %	(Don't agree) Response in %	(Highly disagree) Response in %	(Did not answer) Response in %
Q21	Do you think that academics play a certain role in a student's social and emotional life?	20	40	26.66	6.66	0	6.66

Table 11.b.20

Q22	If you agree can you explain how?(open-ended question)	Response in %
1	All children would like to do tasks at school and receive good grades	6.66
2	Low academics lead to low self-esteem and poor self concept	26.66
3	Yes only if the child does not have good self perception	6.66
4	If children have difficulty in all areas, it can make them anxious around peers and they may tend to hide their learning difficulty	13.33
5	Success at school is important	13.33
6	Did not answer	46.66

10 Appendix 12

Brief History of United Arab Emirates

10 Appendix 12

Brief History of United Arab Emirates

United Arab Emirates is commonly called UAE. It was formed in 1971. It is situated between Saudi Arabia and Oman on one side and Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman on the other side. There are seven Emirates in UAE. They are: Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras al- Khaimah, Sharjah and Umm al-Quwain. The capital of the country is Abu Dhabi. UAE practices the religion Islam. It is mostly a desert area and has tropical arid climate with little to almost no rain at all. The local population is called Emirati and is only twenty percent of the total population where as the rest of the population consists of a large international community. Arif & Gaad (2008, pg: 4, forthcoming)states that, ‘The discovery of crude oil and its commercial production in the United Arab Emirates created a new economic situation...’.Currently Middle East has become a big attraction to foreigners because of its huge economic growth.Dubai

is one of the seven Emirates and has a strong local Arab culture and at the same time has very modern social environment due to the blending of different cultures and nationalities. Dubai is currently flourishing economically and is a huge attraction to foreigners for tourism and for work because it is a tax free Emirate. Brendan McGuigan (2007) reported that Dubai has a population of just over one million'.