

## Self-Esteem and Anxiety of Students with Dyslexia: Article Review

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### Abstract

Psychological issues of dyslexic students have received little attention from researchers, although awareness about dyslexia worldwide is increasing. This is a review articles that aims to investigate factors influencing the self-esteem of dyslexic students, teachers' strategies to enhance the self-esteem of dyslexic students, and the relationship between dyslexic students' self-esteem and their anxiety. The databases used include Eric, Scopus, ISI Web of Science, Semantic Scholar, Google Scholar, etc. Approximately 225 articles related to dyslexia were identified, and a screening process was conducted. Based on certain criteria, some articles focusing on self-esteem and anxiety among dyslexic students were included in this study. The study found that dyslexic students have lower self-esteem compared to their non-dyslexic peers due to negative experiences resulting from reading difficulties. Phonological awareness training, specific cognitive strategies, and the Phono-Graphix Method significantly increased dyslexic students' reading ability, leading to an increase in their self-esteem and a decrease in their anxiety.

**Keywords :** *Self-Esteem, Anxiety*

### Abstrak

Masalah psikologis pada siswa disleksia telah mendapatkan sedikit perhatian dari para peneliti, meskipun kesadaran tentang disleksia di seluruh dunia meningkat. Ini merupakan artikel review yang bertujuan untuk menyelidiki faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi self-esteem siswa disleksia, strategi guru untuk meningkatkan self-esteem siswa disleksia, dan hubungan antara self-esteem siswa disleksia dan gangguan kecemasan mereka. Basis data yang digunakan diantaranya Eric, Scopus, ISI Web of Science, Semantic Scholar, Google Scholar, dll. Sekitar 225 artikel terkait disleksia telah diidentifikasi, dan proses penyaringan telah dilakukan. Berdasarkan kriteria tertentu, beberapa artikel yang berfokus pada self-esteem dan gangguan kecemasan pada siswa disleksia direview dalam penelitian ini. Studi ini menemukan bahwa siswa disleksia memiliki self-esteem yang lebih rendah dibandingkan dengan teman sebaya yang non-disleksia karena pengalaman negatif akibat kesulitan membaca. Pelatihan Phonological awareness training, specific cognitive strategies, and the Phono-Graphix Metode secara signifikan meningkatkan kemampuan membaca siswa disleksia, menyebabkan peningkatan self-esteem mereka dan penurunan kecemasan.

**Kata Kunci:** *Harga Diri, Kecemasan*

### INTRODUCTION

The efforts to raise awareness about dyslexia worldwide are increasing. Dyslexia is defined as a specific learning disability which characterized by difficulties in word recognition, reading, writing, spelling, structure of words that is due to neurodevelopment disorder despite normal intelligence, appropriate education and adequate socio-economic status (Naqvi, S.U., Aslam, A., & Jamil, M.,2023; Ghisi M, Bottesi G, Re AM, Cerea S and Mammarella IC., 2016; Giovagnoli S, Mandolesi L, Magri S, Gualtieri L, Fabbri D, Tossani E and Benassi M.,2020).

According to the International Dyslexia Association, 10-15% of the global population suffers from dyslexia. In Indonesia, the Executive Director of the Indonesian Dyslexia Association stated that 5 million out of 50 million school children in the country experience dyslexia (Sinaga, R., & Tanjung, D. S., 2019). As reported by Detiknews on October 6, 2023, October has been designated as Dyslexia Awareness Month globally to raise awareness about dyslexia and show concern for those experiencing it. Specifically, on October 8, 2002, the first World Dyslexia Day was commemorated in the United Kingdom (Kompas.com, 08/10/2023). Indonesia is also playing a role in addressing dyslexia. D'Genius Learning, founded by the Global Genius Indonesia Foundation in Tangerang, serves as a therapy center for children with dyslexia (IDN Time, May 29, 2023). Hafod Primary School Wales, located in Bali, is also a dyslexia school with a mission to address dyslexia issues accurately and purposefully (Antaraneews.com, November 28, 2023). Dyslexia requires special attention from relevant parties, including both the teaching methods and the psychology of dyslexic students.

Psychological issues of dyslexic students have received little attention from researchers. Existing studies may be divided into four categories. First, studies that examined the teaching media for dyslexic students. These studies have found that information and communication technology (ICT), including computers, educational platforms, e-learning, electronic games, and multimedia applications were helpful for dyslexic students as a means of prevention and as tools to enhance reading skills (Vouglanis, T., 2023; Katerina Kalyvioti and Tassos A. Mikropoulos, 2012). Second, studies that highlighted visual recognition deficits among dyslexic students. The studies indicated that dyslexia occurs due to their reliance on a single process for object recognition (B. Jozranjbar et al., 2021; M.M. Shovman, M. Ahissa, 2006). Third, studies that investigated teaching methods for dyslexic students. These studies found that the application of narrative therapy accounted for a 60% reduction in reading errors (Parisa Rahmani, 2011), and there was no significant effect of rehearsal on the working memory performance of dyslexic students (Ali Akbar Arjmandnia et al., 2012). Fourth, studies that focused on the psychology of students with specific learning difficulties in general. IbourS et al. (2021) conducted a quantitative study in Morocco and found the need for a multidisciplinary approach that integrates emotional needs assessment into the rehabilitation care of dyslexic students. These studies have insignificantly considered the psychological issues of dyslexic students.

Many studies have investigated psychological issues among dyslexic students. A study conducted in Pakistan by Naqvi, S.U., Aslam, A., & Jamil, M. (2023) found that dyslexic students are aware of their condition and face academic challenges and family relationship problems. They further explained that the emotional consequences of their learning difficulties affect their psychology, making them victims of verbal bullying (being labeled as idiots for not being able to spell things correctly). This finding aligns with Ibour, S., Anarghou, H., Boulhana, A., Najimi, M., & Chigr, F. (2021), which indicated that dyslexic students experience higher levels of depression, anxiety, and disturbed self-esteem compared to their peers. Therefore, this article aims to address the following questions

1. What factors influence the self-esteem of dyslexic students?
2. What can teachers do to enhance the self-esteem of dyslexic students?
3. Is the self-esteem of dyslexic students related to the anxiety they experience?

These three questions are addressed in the following sections.

## **METHOD**

A systematic review was performed in the following electronic databases. The databases used are; Eric, Scopus, ISI Web of Science, Semantic Scholar, Google Scholar etc. The studied included must met the following criteria; 1. Were conducted in educational setting; 2. Focus on dyslexic students; 3. Discussed the intervention, supports, service on dyslexic students; 4. Were published between 2016- December 2023 and open access journals. Approximately 225 articles related to dyslexia were identified, and a screening process was conducted. Some articles focusing on self-esteem and anxiety among dyslexic students were included in this study.

## **RESULT AND DISSCUSSION**

### **Self-esteem among Dyslexic Students**

As a concept, self-esteem is defined as an individual's perception of oneself and the values that affect one's attitudes, manifested behaviors, confidence in thinking, and dealing with problems (Adams et al., 2006; Branden, 1990; Airon, 1998). Furthermore, Nathaniel Branden (1992) stated that self-esteem is the experience gained from living and fulfilling the requirements of life. In the case of dyslexic students, they often have lower self-esteem compared to their non-dyslexic peers due to negative experiences resulting from reading difficulties (Ihbour, S., Anarghou, H., Boulhana, A., Najimi, M., & Chigr, F., 2021). Ihbour, S et al. (2021) found that dyslexic students obtained lower scores in four dimensions of self-esteem: general, academic, social, and family. Additionally, Ghisi M, Bottesi G, Re AM, Cerea S, and Mammarella IC (2016) further found that Italian dyslexic students have lower self-esteem than control groups because they encounter difficulties in academic tasks that demand good reading and writing skills, leading to negative self-perception. They often compare their performance with non-dyslexic students, thus decreasing their self-esteem. The experiences gained significantly impact students' self-esteem.

There are several possible solutions for improving dyslexic students' self-esteem. Moshkani, M., Nuori, E., Lotfi, M., & Ebadinya, G. (2017), found that phonological awareness training significantly increased dyslexic students' self-esteem due to its significant effects on their ability to read words, understand words, delete vowels, read pseudo-words, and recognize rhyme. Another study conducted by Thangarajathi, S., & Menaha, P. (2020), showed that a can enhance reading comprehension by increasing dyslexic students' phonemic awareness. Another solution is the use of the Phono-Graphix Method to improve students' phonological awareness, including blending, phoneme manipulation, segmenting, and coding knowledge (Antonio, M. B., & Santillan, J. P., 2020). These strategies can be employed by teachers to enhance phonological awareness and support dyslexic students hence their self-esteem improved as well.

### **Anxiety Among Dyslexic Students**

Besides lower self-esteem, dyslexic students may also experience other psychological issues including attentional problems, a high level of somatic complaints, and increased depression and anxiety (Ihbour, S., et al., 2021; Ghisi, M., et al., 2016). Some researchers define anxiety as a psychological and physical response to a threat to self-concept, characterized by subjective, consciously perceived feelings of tension and cognitive deficits during such experiences (Vitasari, P., Wahab, M. N. A., Othman, A., & Awang, M. G., 2010). Anxiety among dyslexic students is associated with their low level of self-esteem, specifically academic anxiety rather than social anxiety (Ihbour, S., et al., 2021; Abbott-Jones, A. T., 2021). However, Zuppardo, L., Serrano, F., Pirrone, C., & Rodriguez-Fuentes, A. (2023), contended that students with dyslexia exhibit anxiety and low self-esteem in social and academic situations more frequently than non-dyslexic students. Eissa, M. (2010), found that dyslexia lead to lower feelings of well-being due to the sense of being different from others and poor school achievement. She further explained that dyslexic adolescents suffer from externalizing and internalizing symptoms, withdrawal, and high scores of depressions and anxiety. In short, anxiety is the most likely psychological issue experienced by dyslexic students, among other issues.

There are several articles discussed psychological issue of dyslexic students, some of them are summarized as in the table below;

<b>Author/ Year published</b>	<b>Focus of the study</b>	<b>Research Design</b>	<b>Subject (n)/ setting</b>	<b>Sampling Procedure</b>	<b>Instrument, Validity &amp; reliability</b>	<b>Result of the study</b>
Ihbour, S., Anarghou, H.,Boulhan a, A., Najimi, M., & Chigr, F. (2021)	self-esteem, anxiety, and depression in dyslexic Arabic- speaking children and adolescents	Survey Questionnaire	205 students (56 dyslexic s and 149 good readers)	Not Mentioned	Taylor's Self- Assessment Scale of Anxiety, Beck's Depression Questionnaire, the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI)	The dyslexic students were more anxious, more depressed, and had disturbed self- esteem compared to their non-dyslexic students
Ghisi M, Bottesi G, Re AM, Cerea S, Mammarella IC (2016)	The psychological features of Dyslexic students of Italian	The learning tasks and the self- report questionnaires	28 students with dyslexia	voluntarily	Learning Tasks, Reading Tasks, Writing Tasks, Self- report Measures	Italian university students with dyslexia experience higher levels of somatic complaints, social and attentional problems, lower self-esteem, and higher depression scores than controls, while no difference emerged between the two groups' resilience scores.
Giovagnoli S, Mandolesi L, Magri S, Gualtieri L, Fabbri D, Tossani E and Benassi M (2020)	The symptomatology of developmental dyslexia (DD)	Experimental and Self- report questionnaire	First Experiment (65 DD, 169 Controls , Second Experiment ( 44 DD, 51 Controls )	Not mentioned	the Child Behavior Checklist, Youth Self Report questionnaire, the Melbourne Decision Making Questionnaire, the Clipper test.	The high levels of internalizing symptoms in DD were associated with a low level of self- esteem and the tendency to react to problematic situations with hyperactivation

Soriano-Ferrer M, Morte-Soriano MR, Begeny J and Piedra-Martínez E (2021)	The psychoeducational impact of Quarantine among dyslexic students and family during Covid-19 in Spain	Some Tests and Questionnaires  Survey Questionnaire	32  174 (102 Dyslexic, 72Non dyslexic)	The recommendation of teachers based on students' low reading achievement in the classroom	Some Different Tests and Questionnaires Completed by dyslexic children and their mother  State-Trait Anxiety Inventory	The children with dyslexia had increased levels of depression and anxiety symptoms, and parents perceived their children as having more emotional symptoms, hyperactivity-inattention, and conduct problems  The dyslexic students indicated statistically significant higher levels of academic, but not social anxiety in comparison to the non-dyslexic sample
Abbott-Jones, A.T. (2021)	The anxiety Among dyslexic students at Higher Education			Not Mentioned		

## CONCLUSION

This article sheds light on some psychological issues faced by dyslexic students, namely low self-esteem and anxiety. Low self-esteem can lead to anxiety, particularly in academic situations such as exams, as well as social anxiety. Phonological awareness training, specific cognitive strategy, Phono-Graphix Method significantly increased increase dyslexic students' reading ability which leads to the increase of their self-esteem and the decrease of their anxiety. Additionally, it is essential for teachers to consider the emotional difficulties of dyslexic students and be equipped to assist them in coping with these challenges. This awareness can also contribute to the understanding of family members, peers, and educational practitioners regarding low self-esteem and anxiety among dyslexic students. Hopefully, there will be appropriate support and guidance available to enhance the psychological well-being of dyslexic students, provided by school and society members. Implementing programs to improve their motivation, self-esteem, and peer-network building could contribute to their academic success.

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