

Challenges faced by Grade Seven teachers when teaching pupils with Dyslexia in the mainstream lessons in Mzilikazi District Bulawayo Metropolitan Province

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Abstract: *This research sought to establish challenges faced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream lessons in Mzilikazi District in Bulawayo Metropolitan province. The qualitative approach with a case study research design was used to enable an in-depth establishment of challenges faced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream lessons. Convenience sampling and purposive sampling techniques were employed in the selection of a sample of 20 respondents out of a target population of 170 potential respondents. Questionnaires and interview schedules were employed for gathering data. Thematic analysis of data revealed that grade seven teachers in Mzilikazi district had minimal knowledge or understanding of dyslexia. The results also disclosed that grade seven teachers' lack of knowledge and confidence with teaching dyslexic pupils also hindered their provision of support for dyslexic pupils. The study revealed that grade seven teachers' lack of training on how to deal and handle dyslexia pupils, grade seven teachers' lack of adequate knowledge and understanding of dyslexia and severity of dyslexic among the pupils were some of the main challenges they experienced when teaching pupils with dyslexia in their mainstream classes. The study recommends that Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education through its department of Schools Psychological Services and Special Needs Education should provide all grade seven teachers with training on dyslexia for them to have basic knowledge about how to deal and handle dyslexia pupils in their mainstreams. This can be done by carrying out routine workshops and seminars on teaching pupils with dyslexia in grade seven for the benefit of producing good results.*

Definition of terms

Dyslexia: *Dyslexia is a disorder manifested by difficulty in learning to read despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence, and socio-cultural opportunity (Frederickson and Cline 2009).*

I. Introduction

The manner in which teachers relate to pupils with dyslexia is critical to the educational and behavioral development of these children. When the primary school teachers cast dyslexic learners in a negative light, it may have adverse ramifications on the pupils' future. In Zimbabwe, it has been established that teacher attitudes and expectations can have lasting consequences, particularly in the case of a grade seven classroom teacher who holds a higher expectation towards students with a learning disability such as dyslexia. It is well documented that if not properly addressed, dyslexia leads to alienation and disenfranchisement, placing grade seven pupils at risk and potentially fuels depression and anti-social behavior, which can affect academic achievement.

1.1 Background of the study

Dyslexia is a disorder manifested by difficulty in learning to read despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence, and socio-cultural opportunity (Frederickson and Cline 2009). Rontou (2010) view dyslexia as an imperfect reading and problems with written speech in both reading and spelling. It is suggested that dyslexia is a combination of disabilities and difficulties that affect the learning process in one or more of reading, spelling, and writing. The processing, spoken language and motor skills are a challenge to persons with dyslexia. Thomson (1990) refer dyslexia to a cognitive difficulty affecting language skills in reading, writing and spelling and writing.

Some of the strategies that can be used to identify learning difficulties arising from dyslexia include a four phase assessment that represents a continuum. The initial identification of learning differences between 3-5 years should be observed by parents and teachers where the child's failure to develop pre reading skills is noted. The second stage is at age 5-7, the teacher should observe the child's learning outcomes. If necessary if the learning difficulties persist there is need for screening and diagnostic testing. The third procedure after confirming the dyslexia nature of the child's learning difficulties, a program has to be put in place in order to help the child. A multi-disciplinary team that includes the parents, teachers, psychologists need to make tests in order to ascertain the kind of help to be provided to the child. Annual reviews should be done in order to revise the learning tasks given to these dyslexia learners.

According to Thomson and Watkins (1998), the problem of dyslexia has been noticed because of the human need to communicate via the written word. Dyslexia is evident when accurate and fluent word reading and spelling develops with great difficulty. Difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition, poor handwriting, difficulties with reading comprehension or math reasoning are associated with dyslexia (Lowell, 2014). However, children with dyslexia are often reported to be bright and able in other intellectual domains (Reid, 2009).

According to the study by Rontou, (2010), in New Zealand, recognition of dyslexia as a clinical disorder was absent in the educational field, and no training was offered or available for teachers. The official ministerial response to dyslexia at that time was: “ schools through the Ministry of Education does not wish to develop an education system which defines and categorizes students in terms of their learning disabilities, but prefers a system that makes assessments on their needs for additional support” (Marshall, 2008;12). Ministry of Education did not specifically recognize the use of the term dyslexia in the school context because of the issues associated with labeling students. Instead, individual needs were identified and appropriate interventions across a range of learning difficulties were implemented. This phenomenon is experienced by grade 7 teachers in Mzilikazi district where they are facing various challenges when teaching dyslexia pupils in their mainstreams.

International research, by (Riddick 2005; Rowan, 2010; Campbell, Gilmore & Cuskelly, 2014) had the following findings: Observed a significant correlation between a negative attitude towards students with dyslexia and poor teacher-student interactions. Teacher expectations were categorized as judgments, and the consequences of bias potentially affected pupils’ academic performance. A study of dyslexia in Greece showed lack of teachers’ training on dyslexia, lack of teaching resources, no collaboration between professionals and parents (Constantopoulou 2002; Arapogianni 2003; Lappas 1997).

In Zimbabwe, generally, there has been an increase of enrolments over the years raising student- teacher ratios. The phenomenal growth in primary schools enrolment point to a huge possibility of dyslexic pupils thereby overstressing the utilization of grade seven teaching staff and compromising quality and creating more need for differentiation of dyslexic pupils in order to produce improved reading, writing and arithmetic skills in aspiring students for secondary education. The increasing student- teacher ratios in grade seven classes also influenced the researchers to explore challenges faced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in Mzilikazi district.

According to Tafirenyika (2015) Zimsec statistics show that the 2015 grade seven national pass rate had increased by 95 % from 20.11 percent in 2011 to 38.12 percent in 2015. Although the pass rate had increased, 2015’s Grade seven candidates fared averagely in Mathematics, General Paper and English, while excelling in indigenous languages. Candidates performed better in indigenous languages than in English, 46.64% pass rate (Matabvu, 2015). Tafirenyika (2015) reported that the pass rate, however, was average in Maths (52,2%) and General Paper (45.38%), probably because candidates were limited by the use of English Language as a medium of instruction or learning disability called dyslexia. Thus, most of the candidates had some difficulties in reading, writing and calculating.

However, one of the parents argued that the high grade seven pass rate could also be attributed to parents who had gone out of their way to facilitate extra lessons for their children (Matabvu, 2015). Extra lessons were helping although the Zimbabwean Ministry of Primary and secondary education had ordered a stop to the practice. These findings and pass rate speaks negatively for a country which boasts of having the highest literacy rate on the African continent especially now that Zimbabwe is now boasting of an increase in the use of literacy development. These statistical revelations have also increased the researcher’s curiosity to carry out a study to investigate, assess and describe the challenges faced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in Mzilikazi district.

Educational officials, parents and policy makers have commonly shown increased concern regarding the low grade seven overall pass rates around the country (Sibanda, 2011). From the Zimbabwean Archive (2013), parents of school going children reveal specific mixed feelings over the trend from 2007- 2014 grade seven public examination pass rate announced by Zimsec, with educationists calling for more funding towards education to allow for increased dyslexic mitigation. According to the Education experts, Zimbabwean primary schools that record high pass rates contribute a small fraction of the number of schools in the country (Zimbabwe Archive, 2013). The implication of this observation to teaching-learning processes is that there is need for instructional leaders to ensure dyslexic pupils are taught effectively and that they benefit from their teachers. The average pass rate in Zimbabwe clearly shows that something is lacking in the primary schools’ grade seven instructional processes, and that there are various challenges faced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia hence the study.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The grade seven teachers in Mzilikazi district are experiencing difficulties when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream which require great effort and determination to solve thereby prompting the researcher to explore the challenges faced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia.

1.4 Research question

Which are the challenges experienced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream lessons?

1.5 Sub questions

- What is the extent of teacher knowledge about dyslexic pupils in primary schools?
- What are the perceived barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils?
- Which are the challenges experienced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream lessons?

1.6 Purpose of the study

To establish the challenges faced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream lessons in Mzilikazi District in Bulawayo Metropolitan province.

1.7 Significance of the study

Results from this study, when finally published, may benefit primary school grade seven teachers, district remedial tutors researchers, policy makers and administrators in ministry of primary and secondary education, in Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

1.7 Assumptions

- The researcher's assumption is that there is some form of teaching pupils with dyslexia taking place in primary schools' grade seven classes.
- It is further assumed that all participants will provide accurate and honest responses to interviews and questionnaires.
- that grade seven teachers, primary school administrators and district remedial tutors will act and respond to interview questions and questionnaires in natural manner..

1.9 Delimitations

The study concentrated on challenges faced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream lessons in Mzilikazi District in the Bulawayo Metropolitan province.

1.10. Limitations

As the main instrument interacting with the participants in this study, the researcher's presence during interviews may influence participants not to give honest and correct responses. However, the researcher made pre-visits to selected primary schools for two weeks before data collection to promote researcher-participant familiarization, rapport and trust. The researcher also informed the participants the purpose and benefits of the study before collecting data.

II. Literature review

2.1 Overview of Dyslexia

Dyslexia is manifested in a continuum of specific learning difficulties related to the acquisition of basic skills in reading, spelling, and/or writing, such difficulties being unexpected in relation to an individual's other abilities and educational experiences (Anastasiou 1998). Dyslexia can be described at the neurological, cognitive and behavioral levels. It is typically characterized by inefficient information processing, including difficulties in phonological processing, working memory, rapid naming, and automaticity of basic skills. Difficulties in organization, sequencing and motor skills may also be present. According to Reid (2009) dyslexia is a processing of different experiences by pupils, often characterized by difficulties in literacy. It can affect other cognitive areas such as memory, speed of processing, time management, co-ordination and directional aspects. There may be visual and phonological difficulties and there is usually some discrepancy in performances in different areas of learning. It is important that the individual differences and learning styles are acknowledged since these will affect outcomes of assessment and learning. It is also important to consider the learning and work context as the nature of the difficulties associated with dyslexia may be more pronounced in some learning situations.

2.2 Teacher knowledge about dyslexic pupils in primary schools

What teachers know and can do about dyslexic pupils in primary schools is one of the most important influences on what pupils learn. The manner in which grade seven teachers relate to students with dyslexia is critical to the educational and behavioral development of these children. If grade seven teachers cast dyslexic pupils in a negative light, it may have adverse ramifications on their future. Therefore, if not properly addressed,

dyslexia leads to alienation and disenfranchisement, placing dyslexic pupils at risk and potentially fuels depression and anti-social behavior (Macdonald, 2012). Teachers' training on dyslexia is one of the criteria for dyslexia friendly schools according to Mackay (2004). It influences the way teachers teach and assess students with dyslexia, mark their work and collaborate with their parents.

Reid (2009) emphasize the importance of positive teacher beliefs towards students with dyslexia that teachers with a higher degree of self-efficacy were consistently found to be more open to new ideas and more willing to experiment with new methods to meet the needs of their dyslexic pupils. Research also suggests that when teachers have limited access to information, training or support, a sense of learned helplessness (Kerr, 2001) develops in the teacher and pupil. This conversely affects the level of support grade seven teachers provide for dyslexics. Being well-versed in the symptoms of dyslexia would allow a grade seven teacher to identify its occurrence, and additionally, develop the skills necessary to support a dyslexic pupil's learning. Therefore, grade seven pupil's dyslexia should not be a condition that disables a learner, nor should it be a condition that disables a teacher in the classroom (Rontou, 2010).

According to the Dyslexia Foundation of New Zealand (2007), classroom teachers often have minimal knowledge or understanding of dyslexia. The research tries to express that lack of widespread recognition of the disability means primary school teachers, including grade seven teachers, will continue to encounter difficulties in having their child assessed, having the diagnosis of dyslexia recognized, and consequently having their child supported as well as taught in mainstream classes.

A study by Constantopoulou (2002) in Greece reveal that school principals who were language teachers as well did not have good knowledge on signs of dyslexia and possible causes. Majority of the teachers stated that they were not competent to teach students with dyslexia as there was a lack of teachers' training on dyslexia and that there was confusion about the types of dyslexia (auditory, visual, mixed groups). The researcher also discovered that the school advisers in most of the Greece schools had not organized any seminars on dyslexia in their regions. Therefore, the support to students with dyslexia was affected by teachers' poor knowledge on dyslexia

2.3 Barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils at schools

When dyslexia is discussed as a learning disability or disease at most of primary schools, blame is attributed to the individual and manifests itself negatively (Kerr, 2001). Dyslexia turns a seemingly simple task into a battleground of emotional, mental struggles, inevitably affecting the pupil's self-esteem. Most pupils with dyslexia require additional educational support. However, dyslexic pupils may struggle to succeed academically in a mainstream teaching environment, when demands on a teacher are too high. A pupil who grows detached through lack of engagement or support could eventually exhibit diminishing self-belief and depression. Pupil's poor self-esteem can act as one of the barriers to providing support for dyslexic students in schools. It is very difficult for the teachers to keep on supporting a pupil who always exhibit diminishing self-esteem.

Carreker, Joshi & Gooden (2010) discovered that the majority of teachers may not struggle with identifying indicators of dyslexia among the pupils but what is required beyond this detection appears to be where the problem begins. The researchers explained that simply having an established diagnosis does not necessarily provide a direct solution for support. Lack of knowledge was found as a barrier for teachers to provide support to the dyslexia pupils (Carreker, Joshi & Gooden, 2010). Lack of knowledge and confidence with teaching, reading and spelling barred majority of teachers from supporting pupils with dyslexia. Practically, recognition, diagnostic assessment, positive educational experiences and emotional support are all necessary provisions for children with dyslexia. Many individual pupils with dyslexia need one-on-one help, or small groups of similarly-abled peers so that they can move forward at their own pace.

Kerr, (2001) indicated that large class sizes also impinged on time that could be spent one-on-one with higher-needs students such as dyslexic pupils. Majority of participants in the study mentioned that large class sizes of pupils had a negative impact on teachers' ability to better support dyslexic pupils, and that large pupils' numbers impede on teaching opportunities to master or extend teaching concepts. This also affected their knowledge of what scaffolding would look like. The implication is that large class size with students of varying ability is a barrier support for pupils with dyslexia. Finding the time to prepare documents and sitting down with dyslexic students is difficult.

A study in Greece by Arapogianni (2003) showed that the majority of the teachers did not know what to do to support students with dyslexia in the classroom. They did not have any training on dyslexia and had a lack of understanding about the nature of the students difficulties. Due to their lack of knowledge they felt that they were not responsible for providing intervention.

According to Reid (2009), differentiation is about making school work and the texts used in class more accessible for students with dyslexia but also about making their assessment more appropriate and effective. Differentiation enables pupils to demonstrate what they can achieve and experience satisfaction in their learning. Teachers can differentiate material in a task and they can accept different kinds of response according to the abilities of pupils. For example, differentiating material by task in a listening exercise may involve some pupils

writing their responses while some pupils draw them and other pupils put them in audiotape (Crombie 2000). According to the Salamanca Declaration, students with special educational needs, like dyslexia, must have access to regular schools which should accommodate their needs using a child-centered pedagogy capable of meeting these needs (Johnson 2004).

The use of adapted or specialist materials and resources for students with dyslexia is closely linked to classroom based learning support for students with dyslexia. The availability of appropriate materials is one of the criteria of dyslexia-friendly practice according to Mackay (2004). Hunter Carsch (2001) interviewed experienced teachers and special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) in the English midlands about policy and practices relating to learning support in schools for students with specific learning difficulties. The study showed that there is a trend towards class teachers using adapted materials. The use of special resources and especially ICT resources was also reported by SENCOs to have been found to be effective for dyslexia support (Hunter Carsch 2001). The voice-to text and text-to-voice technology had a lot of potential although there were many teachers and students who were not aware of it (Crombie and Crombie 2000).

According to Mackay (2004) dyslexia-friendly schools enjoy the trust of parents. A key element that leads to parental trust is a quick response to issues raised and the dialogue maintained between the school and the parents. When parents raise the issue that their child might have dyslexia, teachers can agree to teach the child differently, offer advice to parents about how to help children at home, offer to seek further advice, set agreed improvement targets and ask for a teaching assistant to support the child. Parents can also be consulted about effective approaches and the effectiveness of approaches used with their children.

2.4 Challenges experienced by teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream

Rontou (2010) in New Zealand revealed that recognition of dyslexia as a clinical disorder was absent in the educational field. No training on how teachers deal and handle dyslexia pupils in the mainstream was offered or available for teachers. The majority of schools in New Zealand did not wish to develop an education system which defines and categorizes pupils in terms of their learning disabilities such as dyslexia. They did not specifically recognize the use of the term dyslexia in the school context because of the issues associated with labeling pupils. Therefore, the researcher discovered that there was a lack of training for teachers on teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream. Moreover, school administrations were not comfortable for the teachers to use the term dyslexia since it was associating with labeling.

III. Research methodology

A qualitative research method was used and it allowed the researchers to understand the participants' thoughts, feelings and viewpoints on the difficulties pupils face if they have dyslexia. The researchers opted for a qualitative study to influence methods of data collection that afforded them opportunity to record and understand the participants' views regarding the challenges faced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream classes in Mzilikazi district. A case study method was considered the most appropriate approach to employ in this study because it provides a systematic way to collect data or multiple perspectives rooted in a specific context (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Yin (2003) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context.

3.3 Population

The population comprised of 15 primary schools with an approximate target population of 150 grade seven Teachers, 15 Administrators and 5 Remedial Tutors at District level in Mzilikazi district, Bulawayo Metropolitan province. Therefore, the approximate total target population of this study was 170 people. The chosen sample was made up of individuals from three primary schools in Mzilikazi District- Bulawayo Metropolitan province with rich data on the teaching of pupils with dyslexia. Grade seven teachers, school administrators and remedial tutors were part of the sample. Questionnaires and structured interviews were used as measurement instruments to express the views and opinions of respondents on challenges faced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream classes.

3.4 Ethical consideration

An informed consent was obtained from the study sample population of the study. The researcher of this study explained the nature of the study, conditions, risks and benefits of the study to the participants without jeopardizing their privacy. The selected primary schools and participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality.

IV. Data Presentation, Interpretation and Analysis

Data from the questionnaires and interviews was coded, sorted, and presented according to themes

4.2.1 What is the extent of teacher knowledge about dyslexic pupils in primary schools?

This question intended to find out the extent of teacher knowledge about dyslexic pupils in Mzilikazi district primary schools. Question 1 required Grade seven teachers' responses on whether they have minimal knowledge, access to information, signs and causes of dyslexia among pupils in primary school or not.

The participants admitted that they have minimal knowledge, access to information, signs and causes of dyslexia among pupils in primary school. One of the participants personally expressed herself by saying "*Although we heard this term in Theory of Education at teachers' college we don't know how to diagnose dyslexia*". Another grade seven teacher said "*The big challenge we have is we don't have good knowledge on signs and possible of dyslexia. We have limited access to information, training about dyslexia*".

The other participant also personally expressed herself by saying "*We never have workshops or seminars on dyslexia and we have confusion about types of dyslexia*". Thus, grade seven teachers in Mzilikazi district felt that they had minimal knowledge, access to information, signs and causes of dyslexia among pupils in primary school

Question 2 required Grade seven teachers' responses on what characterizes dyslexic pupils in their grade seven class?

The respondents felt that dyslexia pupils were slow learners with dyslexic pupils as those who are below average performance. The dyslexic pupils were viewed as those with calculating, reading, writing and spelling difficulties. Most of grade seven teachers in Mzilikazi district primary schools felt that dyslexia pupils were slow learners as well as those who are below average performance.

The same question was also addressed by item number one on the interview guide for school administrators and remedial tutors. The same view was shown to be the views of administrators and remedial tutors. The Grade seven teachers have minimal knowledge about signs and causes *these teacher do not have knowledge about signs and causes of dyslexia*". The teachers expressed their views that they were not keen to teach pupils with dyslexia. One personally expressed himself by saying "*Most of these pupils can hardly construct a grammatical sentence.*" The Grade seven teachers believe that dyslexic pupils were slow learners. The school administrators and remedial tutors said that some of the grade seven teachers believe that dyslexic pupils were below average. The participants indicated that their grade seven dyslexic pupils were learners with calculating, reading, writing and spelling difficulties

4.2.2 What are the perceived barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils?

The respondents felt that provision of support for dyslexic pupil in their mainstream grade seven classes was very difficult. The major challenges that the teachers face were that they had too many responsibilities as a result given that they were required to fulfill all these tasks they tend to ignore the challenges faced by dyslexia pupils. Since these pupils fail to do any exercises properly or read effectively in class as a result they become demotivated, lose interest from their work and develop poor self esteem. The participants explained that they do not have adequate skills to deal with pupils with dyslexia. The challenge is exacerbated by the large classes that the teachers teach. Some classes vary from 45 to 50 in each class. Participants felt having to fulfill the demands of the school and then cope with dyslexia pupils becomes impossibility. One of the participant stated "*The headmaster expects us to ensure each pupil writes a composition every fortnight, a comprehension every week, language exercises daily. Then one is expected to provide individualized learning to the pupils with dyslexia. Its unmanageable. I am not a miracle worker.*"

The grade seven teachers revealed that lack of training on dyslexia was perceived as one of the barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils in Mzilikazi district primary schools. The participants disclosed that lack of knowledge and confidence with teaching dyslexic pupils also hindered the provision of support for dyslexic pupils. They indicated that too high demands on the teacher such as finishing the syllabus, preparing for final national examination, too much work for marking and lesson preparation was another burning barrier to providing support for dyslexic pupils in Mzilikazi district primary schools.

The participants disclosed that difficulty in identifying indicators of dyslexia also one of the barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils. They revealed that large class sizes were another barrier to providing support for grade seven dyslexic pupils. They stated that they lack resources and materials for student with dyslexia to use. The teachers also highlighted that they were discouraged by the attitude of the pupils with dyslexia due to the fact that some of them had very low esteem and do not bother to put any effort in their work.

School administrators and remedial tutors revealed that lack of training on dyslexia was perceived as one of the grade seven teachers' barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils in Mzilikazi district primary schools. The participants disclosed that grade seven teachers' lack of knowledge and confidence with teaching dyslexic pupils also hindered their provision of support for dyslexic pupils. They indicated that too much work on the grade seven teachers like finishing the syllabus, preparing for final national examination, marking and lesson preparation was another burning barrier to providing support for dyslexic pupils in Mzilikazi district

primary schools. The participants disclosed that grade seven teachers' difficulty in identifying indicators of dyslexia was also one of the barriers to their provision of support for dyslexic pupils.

V. Discussions, conclusion and Recommendations

Collected data using questionnaires and interviews was concerned with the challenges faced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream in Mzilikazi District Bulawayo Metropolitan province. A discussion was also carried out in an attempt to answer research questions. The findings were linked with literature reviewed in chapter two in order to confirm or fail to confirm with findings from other studies on challenges faced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream in developed countries.

5.3.1 What is the extent of teacher knowledge about dyslexic pupils in primary schools?

According to responses from questionnaires and interviews on the extent of teacher knowledge about dyslexic pupils in Mzilikazi district primary schools, the seven teachers and school administration and remedial tutors admitted that Grade seven teachers in Mzilikazi district had minimal knowledge about signs and causes of dyslexia among pupils in their classes. This concur with a study by Constantopoulou (2002) in Greece reveal that school principals who were language teachers as well did not have good knowledge on signs of dyslexia and possible causes. Majority of the teachers stated that they were not competent to teach students with dyslexia as there was a lack of teachers' training on dyslexia. According to the Dyslexia Foundation of New Zealand (2007), classroom teachers often have minimal knowledge or understanding of dyslexia.

New generated knowledge from this study revealed that grade seven teachers had a similar point of view with the school administrators and remedial tutors that Grade seven teachers understood dyslexic pupils as slow-learners. On the other hand, the grade seven teachers and school administrators and remedial tutors said that some of the grade seven teachers believe that dyslexic pupils were below average performers. All the participants had the feeling that grade seven teachers described dyslexic pupils as learners with calculating, reading, writing and spelling difficulties. Therefore, the results of this study revealed that grade seven teachers in Mzilikazi district had minimal knowledge or understanding of dyslexia.

5.3.2 What are the perceived barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils?

Results from questionnaires and interviews on the perceived barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils in Mzilikazi district primary schools depicted that the grade seven teachers indicated that provision of support for dyslexic pupil in their mainstream grade seven classes was more difficulty.

Grade seven teachers, school administrators and remedial tutors agreed that grade seven teachers' lack of knowledge and confidence with teaching dyslexic pupils also hindered their provision of support for dyslexic pupils. The above results concur with Carreker, Joshi and Gooden, (2010) that lack of knowledge was found as another barrier for teachers to provide support to the dyslexia pupils. Thus, lack of knowledge and confidence with teaching, reading and spelling barred majority of teachers from supporting pupils with dyslexia. This study concluded that grade seven teachers' lack of knowledge and confidence with teaching dyslexic pupils also hindered their provision of support for dyslexic pupils.

Grade seven teachers, school administrators and remedial tutors concurred that too much work on the grade seven teachers like finishing the syllabus, preparing for final national examination, marking and lesson preparation was another burning barrier to providing support for dyslexic pupils in Mzilikazi district primary schools. The above findings were evidenced in the study by Kerr (2001) that most pupils with dyslexia require additional educational support. However, dyslexic pupils may struggle to succeed academically in a mainstream teaching environment, when demands on a teacher are too high. Therefore, the results concluded that too much work on the grade seven teachers like finishing the syllabus, preparing for final national examination, marking and lesson preparation was another burning barrier to providing support for dyslexic pupils in Mzilikazi district primary schools.

Grade seven teachers, school administrators and remedial tutors disclosed similar opinion that grade seven teachers' difficulty in identifying indicators of dyslexia was also one of the barriers to their provision of support for dyslexic pupils. This evidence concur with the findings from the study by Carreker, Joshi & Gooden (2010) the majority of teachers may struggle with identifying indicators of dyslexia among the pupils but what is required beyond this detection appears to be where the problem begins. The researchers explained that simply having difficulties in identifying indicators of dyslexia among the pupils disturbed the provision of support for dyslexic pupils. Therefore, the results of this study concluded that grade seven teachers' difficulty in identifying indicators of dyslexia was also one of the barriers to their provision of support for dyslexic pupils.

Grade seven teachers, school administrators and remedial tutors mentioned the same view that lack of resources and materials for student with dyslexia was one of the burning barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils by the grade seven teachers in Mzilikazi district in Bulawayo metropolitan province. The use of

adapted or specialist materials and resources for students with dyslexia is closely linked to classroom based learning support for students with dyslexia. The availability of appropriate materials is one of the criteria of dyslexia-friendly practice according to Mackay (2004). Even Hunter and Carsch (2001) showed that there is a trend towards class teachers using adapted materials. The use of special resources and especially ICT resources was also reported by SENCOs to have been found to be effective for dyslexia support (Hunter and Carsch 2001). Therefore, the study concluded that lack of resources and materials for student with dyslexia was one of the burning barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils by the grade seven teachers in Mzilikazi district in Bulawayo metropolitan province.

Large class size was another barrier to providing support for grade seven dyslexic pupils. This evidence concur with the findings from the study by Kerr, (2001) that large class sizes also impinged on time that could be spent one-on-one with higher-needs students such as dyslexic pupils. Majority of participants in the study mentioned that large class sizes of pupils had a negative impact on teachers' ability to better support dyslexic pupils, and that large pupils' numbers impede on teaching opportunities to master or extend teaching concepts. This also affected their knowledge of what scaffolding would look like. Therefore, the results of this study concluded that large class sizes was another barrier to providing support for grade seven dyslexic pupils.

The participants revealed that pupils' poor self-esteem was one of the barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils. Thus, dyslexia turns a seemingly simple task into a battleground of emotional, mental struggles, inevitably affecting the pupil's self-esteem (Kerr, 2001). Thus, a pupil who grows detached through lack of engagement or support could eventually exhibit diminishing self-belief and depression. Impliedly, it is very difficult for the teachers to keep on supporting a pupil who always exhibit diminishing self-esteem. Therefore, the results of this study concluded that pupil's poor self-esteem act as one of the barriers to providing support for dyslexic students at schools.

Grade seven teachers admitting that shortage of time was one of the barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils. They agreed with school administrators and remedial tutors that lack of training on dyslexia was perceived as one of the grade seven teachers' barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils in Mzilikazi district primary schools.

5.3. 3. Which are the challenges experienced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream lessons?

The study showed that grade seven teachers agreed school administrators and remedial tutors that grade seven teachers' lack of training on how to deal and handle dyslexia pupils was one of the main challenges they experienced when teaching pupils with dyslexia in their mainstream classes. The above challenge was discovered from a study by Rontou (2010) in New Zealand that no training on how teachers deal and handle dyslexia pupils in the mainstream was offered or available for teachers. The majority of schools in New Zealand did not wish to develop an education system which defines and categorizes pupils in terms of their learning disabilities such as dyslexia. Therefore, this study concluded that grade seven teachers' lack of training on how to deal and handle dyslexia pupils was one of the main challenges they experienced when teaching pupils with dyslexia in their mainstream classes.

The teachers and the school administrators and remedial tutors had a similar opinion that grade seven teachers' lack of adequate knowledge and understanding of dyslexia was one of the burning challenges they experienced when teaching pupils with dyslexia in mainstreams at Mzilikazi district primary schools. These findings shared a common view with Arrow, Chapman, Greaney, Prochnow, & Tunmer (2013) that majority of teachers in New Zealand did not have as good an understanding of dyslexia as in other countries where the disability has been recognized for decades. The researchers added that dyslexic pupils' reading recovery was ineffective due to teachers' lack knowledge on dyslexia. Therefore, the study concluded that grade seven teachers' lack of adequate knowledge and understanding of dyslexia was one of the burning challenges they experienced when teaching pupils with dyslexia in mainstreams at Mzilikazi district primary schools.

The severity of dyslexic among the pupils was one of the crucial challenge experienced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia. Riddick (2005) portrayed that most of the dyslexic pupils were at the highest risk of illiteracy. Generally, the researchers argue that certain pupils were not suited to the literacy development programme, particularly those at the highest risk of illiteracy, and that many teachers were not equipped to cope with the challenges. Thus, severity of dyslexic among the students was one of the major challenges experienced by teachers during the teaching of pupils with dyslexia. Teachers had no teaching skill of dyslexic pupils especially in the mainstream. Therefore, this study concluded that severity of dyslexic among the pupils was one of the crucial challenge experienced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia.

The school administrators disclosed that grade seven teachers' attitude was another challenge experienced during the instruction of dyslexic pupils in a mainstream class. This concur with the findings from a study by Hornstra, Denessen and Bakker (2010), in the Netherlands that teacher attitudes toward dyslexia was one of the major challenge faced by teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia. It was difficulty for the

teachers to teach dyslexic pupils due to their negative attitude towards dyslexia. The researchers added that teacher expectations were categorized as judgments resulting in less teacher-students interactions. Therefore, it was concluded that grade seven teachers' attitude was another challenge experienced during the instruction of dyslexic pupils in a mainstream class.

The participants revealed that grade seven teachers' poor communication with parents of dyslexic pupils made teaching of pupils with dyslexia more difficulty in the mainstream classes. The above findings concur with the results from a study by Reid, (2005) that there was no parent involvement in the treatment of pupils with dyslexia in majority of schools. The researcher portray that there was no communication and effective relationship between parents of dyslexic pupils and teachers to promote effective teaching of pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream classes. Hunter-Carsch, (2001) reiterated that these situations were exacerbated when parents were not perceived as partners in the educational process of their children particularly when teaching pupils with dyslexia. Therefore, the results of this study concluded that grade seven teachers' poor communication with parents of dyslexic pupils made teaching of pupils with dyslexia more difficulty in the mainstream classes.

5.4 Findings and Conclusion

5.4.1 What is the extent of teacher knowledge about dyslexic pupils in primary schools?

After the administration of questionnaires and interviews the study reveals that grade seven teachers and school administration and remedial tutors admitted that Grade seven teachers in Mzilikazi district had minimal knowledge about signs and causes of dyslexia among pupils in their classes. Grade seven teachers had a similar point of view with the school administrators and remedial tutors that Grade seven teachers understood dyslexic pupils as slow-learners. The results also revealed that the grade seven teachers and school administrators and remedial tutors said the grade seven teachers viewed dyslexic pupils as below average pupils. Therefore, the results of this study concluded that grade seven teachers in Mzilikazi district had minimal knowledge or understanding of dyslexia.

5.4.2 What are the perceived barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils?

Findings from the study depicted that the majority of the grade seven teachers indicated that provision of support for dyslexic pupil in their mainstream grade seven classes was more difficulty. Majority of grade seven teachers and some of school administrators and remedial tutors agreed that grade seven teachers' lack of knowledge and confidence with teaching dyslexic pupils also hindered their provision of support for dyslexic pupils. This study concluded that grade seven teachers' lack of knowledge and confidence with teaching dyslexic pupils also hindered their provision of support for dyslexic pupils.

Some of grade seven teachers indicated the same feeling with a number of school administrators and remedial tutors that too much work on the grade seven teachers like finishing the syllabus, preparing for final national examination, marking and lesson preparation was another burning barrier to providing support for dyslexic pupils in Mzilikazi district primary schools. Therefore, the results concluded that too much work on the grade seven teachers like finishing the syllabus, preparing for final national examination, marking and lesson preparation was another burning barrier to providing support for dyslexic pupils in Mzilikazi district primary schools.

Some of grade seven teachers and majority of school administrators and remedial tutors disclosed similar opinion that grade seven teachers' difficulty in identifying indicators of dyslexia was also one of the barriers to their provision of support for dyslexic pupils. Therefore, the results of this study concluded that grade seven teachers' difficulty in identifying indicators of dyslexia was also one of the barriers to their provision of support for dyslexic pupils.

A number of grade seven teachers and some of school administrators and remedial tutors mentioned the same view that lack of resources and materials for student with dyslexia was one of the burning barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils by the grade seven teachers in Mzilikazi district in Bulawayo metropolitan province. Therefore, the study concluded that lack of resources and materials for student with dyslexia was one of the burning barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils by the grade seven teachers in Mzilikazi district in Bulawayo metropolitan province.

Majority of the grade seven teachers revealed that large class sizes was another barrier to providing support for grade seven dyslexic pupils. Therefore, the results of this study concluded that large class sizes was another barrier to providing support for grade seven dyslexic pupils.

New knowledge generated by this study revealed some of grade seven teachers admitting that shortage of time was one of the barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils. Majority of grade seven teachers and some of school administrators and remedial tutors revealed that lack of training on dyslexia was perceived as one of the grade seven teachers' barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils in Mzilikazi district primary schools.

5.4. 3. Which are the challenges experienced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream lessons?

According to responses from questionnaires and interviews majority of grade seven teachers agreed with most of the school administrators and remedial tutors that grade seven teachers' lack of training on how to deal and handle dyslexia pupils was one of the main challenges they experienced when teaching pupils with dyslexia in their mainstream classes. Therefore, this study concluded that grade seven teachers' lack of training on how to deal and handle dyslexia pupils was one of the main challenges they experienced when teaching pupils with dyslexia in their mainstream classes.

Most of grade seven teachers and some of the school administrators and remedial tutors had a similar opinion that grade seven teachers' lack of adequate knowledge and understanding of dyslexia was one of the burning challenges they experienced when teaching pupils with dyslexia in mainstreams at Mzilikazi district primary schools. Therefore, the study concluded that grade seven teachers' lack of adequate knowledge and understanding of dyslexia was one of the burning challenges they experienced when teaching pupils with dyslexia in mainstreams at Mzilikazi district primary schools.

Majority of the grade seven teachers and some of the schools administrators and remedial tutors in Mzilikazi district indicated the same opinion that severity of dyslexic among the pupils was one of the crucial challenge experienced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia. Therefore, this study concluded that severity of dyslexic among the pupils was one of the crucial challenge experienced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia.

Most of the school administrators disclosed that grade seven teacher attitude was another challenge experienced during the instruction of dyslexic pupils in a mainstream class. Therefore, it was concluded that grade seven teachers' attitude was another challenge experienced during the instruction of dyslexic pupils in a mainstream class.

VI. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study it is apparent that majority of Mzilikazi district grade seven teachers and school administrators and remedial tutor felt that there were many challenges experienced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream lessons which need a great attention from various stakeholders. In the light of the above findings and conclusions of the research, the researcher found it necessary to make the following recommendations:

The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education through its department of Schools Psychological Services and Special Needs Education should provide all grade seven teachers with training on dyslexia for them to have basic knowledge about how to deal and handle dyslexia pupils in their mainstreams. This can be done by carrying out routine workshops and seminars on teaching pupils with dyslexia in grade seven for the benefit of producing good results.

The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education should reconsider their proposed Special Education Needs (SEN) policy and curriculum on teaching pupils with Learning Disabilities (LD) especially pupils with Dyslexia in grade seven classes in order to promote standardized and effective teaching and learning of pupils with dyslexia. This can be achieved by carrying out a research or an analysis on the teaching and learning of dyslexic pupils in grade seven.

Primary school Heads and Administration should review and strengthen their school policies, protocols and strategies on teaching pupils with dyslexia in the grade seven mainstream classes in order to minimize reading writing and calculating difficulties among the grade seven pupils to improve the pass rate. This can be achieved by implementing some staff developments on teaching with dyslexia.

Grade seven teachers should carry out internal or mini-staff developments and staff briefings on teaching pupils with dyslexia to promote the awareness of challenges they face when teaching pupils with dyslexia in their mainstreams. Further research should be conducted to determine mitigations of identified challenges faced by grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in the mainstream.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FORGRADE SEVEN TEACHERS

Tick the most appropriate answer

1 Grade seven teachers have minimal knowledge, access to information, signs and causes of dyslexia among pupils in primary school.

Agree disagree not sure

2. What characterizes dyslexic pupils in your grade seven class?

Slow learners

Calculating, reading, writing and spelling difficulties

Below average performance

3. From your personal experience and observation how do you feel with the provision of support for dyslexic pupil in your mainstream grade seven class?

More difficult very easy not sure

Explain

.....
.....

4 State any 4 barriers to providing support for dyslexic pupils in your grade seven mainstream class.

- a).....
- b).....
- c).....
- d).....

5. List the challenges or difficulties experienced by you and your grade seven teaching colleagues when teaching pupils with dyslexia in your mainstream classes

- a).....
.....
- b).....
.....
.....
- c).....
.....
.....
- d).....
.....
.....
- e).....
.....
.....

Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SCHOOL ADMINSTRATORS AND REMEDIAL TUTORS

1. What is the extent of your grade seven teacher knowledge about dyslexic pupils at your primary schools?
2. From your personal experience and observation what are your grade seven teachers' personal perceived barriers to providing support for their dyslexic pupils in mainstream classes?
3. Which are the challenges experienced by your grade seven teachers when teaching pupils with dyslexia in their mainstream lessons?