

**Dyslexia in Higher Education: Exploring Lecturers'
Perspectives of Dyslexia, Dyslexic Students and Support
Strategies.**

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of
Liverpool for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy.

By

Toynarain Busgeet

November, 2008

Contents

Acknowledgement	<i>ix</i>
Abstract	<i>x</i>
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 The Background of the Study.....	11
1.2 The Purpose of the Research.....	25
1.3 The Main Aims and questions of the Research.....	27
1.4 The Professional Significance of the Study.....	29
1.5 The Rationale of the Research Principle.....	35
1.6 Principles underlying Qualitative Research.....	47
Chapter 2: Literature Review	51
2.1 Introduction.....	51
2.2 A Theoretical Review of Lecturers' Views of Dyslexia, Dyslexic Students and Support.....	52
2.3 An Empirical Review pertinent to Lecturer' Awareness and Understanding of Dyslexia, Dyslexic Students and Support.....	78
2.4 A Conceptual Framework of Help and Coping Strategy with reference to Lecturers' views of Dyslexia, Dyslexics students and Support.....	95
Chapter 3: Phase 1 Study (The Initial Survey)	124
3.1 The Rationale for conducting the initial Study.....	124
3.2 A Focus Group Activity.....	128
3.3 Principles underlying Focus Group.....	128

3.4 (i) The Participants.....	134
3.4 (ii) The Process.....	134
3.4 (iii) The Outcome.....	136
3.5 Principles underlying In-depth Interviews.....	137
3.6 3.6 (i) The Interview Schedule	142
3.6 (ii) A Trial Interview.....	144
3.6 (iii) The Participants.....	145
3.6 (iv) The Procedure.....	145
3.6 (v) Data Analysis.....	147
3.6 (vi) The Findings.....	159
3.7 Conclusion.....	162
Chapter 4: Phase 2 Study (Compiling the Survey Instrument).....	164
4.1 Introduction.....	164
4.2 Piloting the Survey Instrument.....	166
4.3 The Procedure.....	166
4.4 Testing the Internal consistency of the Survey Tool.....	167
4.6 Conclusion.....	170
Chapter 5: Phase 3 Study (The Main Survey).....	171
5.1 Introduction.....	171
5.2 The Rationale for Conducting the Main Study.....	171
5.3 The Aims.....	172
5.4 Locations & time-frame of the Study.....	173
5.5 Sample Selection.....	176

5.6 The Procedure.....	178
5.7 Data Analysis and Findings: (A Quantitative Survey).....	179
5.7 (i) (a) Data Analysis (Lecturers' Views of Dyslexic Students).....	179
5.7 (i) (b) Findings(Lecturers' Views of Dyslexic Students	185
5.7 (ii) (a) Data Analysis: (Lecturers' Approach to Dyslexia Support).....	187
5.7 (ii) (b) Findings (Lecturers' Approach to Dyslexia Support.....	190
5.7 (iii) Data Analysis and Findings: Lecturers' Perceptions of their own Role in the Support Strategy).....	196
5.7 (iv) Summary of the Findings (Lecturers' Views of Dyslexic students and approach to Support)	198
5.7 (v) Data Analysis (Views of Dyslexic Students between Lecturers who attended and not attended Dyslexia Awareness Training)	199
5.7 (vi) Data Analysis and Findings (Lecturers' Views of Dyslexic Students across the three Universities)	200
5.7 (vii) Data Analysis and Findings: (Lecturers' knowledge of Dyslexia)	202
5.8 Data Analysis and Findings: (A Qualitative Survey).....	214
5.8 (i) Lecturers' Awareness of Dyslexia.....	214
5.8 (ii) Lecturers' Views of Dyslexic Students.....	217
5.8 (iii) Dyslexic Students' Role & Responsibilities in the Support Strategy	219
5.8 (iv) Lecturers' own Role & Responsibilities in the Support Strategies.....	220
5.8 (v) The Nature of Support provided to Dyslexic Students	220
5.9 Conclusion: The Case for a Follow-up Study	223

Chapter 6: Phase 4 Study (The Final Survey)	225
6.1 Introduction.....	225
6.2 The Rationale of the Methodology.....	225
6.3 The Interview Schedule.....	226
6.4 The Participants & Sample Choice.....	227
6.5 The Location and Procedure	230
6.6 Thematic Data Analysis and findings	231
6.7 The detailed Findings.....	235
6.8 Conclusion	260
Chapter 7: Discussion	261
7.1 A brief Overview of the Study	261
7.2 Lecturers' Views of Dyslexic Students	262
7.3 Lecturers' Awareness and Understanding of Dyslexia.....	271
7.4 Lecturers' Orientation towards Support Modalities.....	282
7.5 Factors Influencing Lecturers' Behaviour towards Dyslexia Support.....	291
7.6 The Key Applications of the Research	296
7.7 Suggestions for Future Research	300
7.8 Concluding Remarks.....	304
References	307

Appendices	
Appendix A Views of lecturers concerning dyslexia, dyslexic students and academic support in higher education.....	334
Appendix B Pre-validated questionnaire items (Based on the interview codes).....	343
Appendix C Pre-validated questionnaire.....	358
Appendix D Reminder of research questionnaire.....	363
Appendix E Letter of request to directors seeking permission to conduct research in their respective departments.....	364
Appendix F Letter of request to participants to complete main questionnaire.....	365
Appendix G The main questionnaire.....	366
Appendix H The survey comments (Main questionnaire).....	370
Appendix I The interview schedule (Phase 4 study).....	397

Tables and Diagrams.....

Table 1 Attributing our own actions/behaviour and that of others (Heider, 1958).....	98
Table 2 Practitioner's attribution of responsibility about the client's problems, based on Bricman et al's (1982) framework of help and coping.....	102
Table 3 Consequences of attribution of responsibility in the four models of helping and coping.....	109
Table 4 Lecturers' attribution of Responsibilities on dyslexic students (based on Bricman et al's models of helping and coping).....	110
Table 5 Main issues generated from the focus group exercise.....	142
Table 6 Questions/statements of the interview schedule based on Bricman et al. framework of help and coping.....	143
Table 7 Example of 'statements' generated per set of items in each category.....	150
Table 8 Domains, themes, categories and questionnaire items, based on Bricman's framework of help and coping.....	153

Table 9	Lecturer's approach to dyslexia support based on Bricman et al's framework of Medical and Compensatory models of help and coping.....	158
Table 10	Faculties where the main study was conducted and whether dyslexia awareness training was held by specific institutions.....	174
Table 11	Level of seniority of respondents in number and percentage in each university.....	177
Table 12	Types and number of students taught across the three universities.....	178
Table 13	Survey questionnaires sent out with response rate.....	179
Table 14	Factor analysis of lecturers' conceptualisations of the dyslexic students.....	181
Table 15	Factor 1 (Derived from the rotated component matrix a - table14.....	183
Table 16	Factor 2 (Derived from the rotated component matrix a -table 14	183
Table 17	Factor 3 (Derived from the rotated component matrix a - table 14	184
Table 18	Factor 5 (Derived from the rotated component matrix a- table 14	185
Table 19	Factors on conceptualisations of dyslexic students representing Bricman's models of help and coping strategy/Lecturer role.....	185
Table 20	The score in each factor (Lecturers' conceptions of the dyslexic students).....	186
Table 21	Factor analysis on Lecturers approach to dyslexia support.....	188
Table 22	Factor 1 (Derived from the rotated Component matrix a- table 21.....	189
Table 23	Factor 2 (Derived from the rotated Component matrix a- table 21.....	190
Table 24	The score in each factor (Lecturers' approach to dyslexia support)	190
Table 25	Lecturers' facilitative and directive approach to dyslexia support.....	192
Table 26	Facilitative and Directive approach to dyslexia support across the three universities.....	194
Table 27	Component 4 (Derived from the rotated component matrix a- Table 21).....	196

Table 28	Lecturers' expectation in developing their own understanding of dyslexia and dyslexic students.....	197
Table 29	The need to raise own awareness of dyslexia between lecturers who had attended and not attended dyslexia awareness training	198
Table 30	Lecturers' views of dyslexic students: (between those who had attended and had not attended dyslexia awareness training).....	199
Table 31	Lecturers' views of dyslexic students across the three universities.....	202
Table 32	Lecturers' who had attended and those who had not attended dyslexia awareness training across the three universities.....	204
Table 33	Lecturers who had attended and not attended dyslexia awareness training by duration of service.....	205
Table 34	Effects of training on lecturers' knowledge and ability to support dyslexic students.....	206
Table 35	Knowledge and ability to support dyslexic students by lecturers who had attended dyslexia awareness training across the three universities..	208
Table 36	Lecturers' views about whether they taught or did not know they taught dyslexic students across the three universities.....	211
Table 37	Lecturers' self-rating of dyslexia knowledge, based on whether they taught or did not know they taught dyslexic students.....	211
Table 38	Lecturers' self-rating on their ability to support dyslexic students, based on whether they taught or did not know they taught dyslexic students.....	212
Table 39	Manager and non-manager lecturers' self-rating of dyslexia knowledge.....	213
Table 40	Manager and non-manager lecturers' self-rating of their ability to support dyslexic students.....	213
Table 41	Example of a coded item based on data extracts.....	232
Figures		
Figure 1	Scree Plot for factors regarding lecturers' conceptualizations of the dyslexic Students.....	182

Figure 2	Scree Plot for factors regarding lecturers' approach to dyslexia support.	188
Figure 3	Lecturers' level of dyslexia knowledge and ability to support dyslexic students based on dyslexia awareness training.....	207
Figure 4	Lecturers' rating of dyslexia knowledge across the three universities....	208
Figure 5	Lecturers' rating of ability to support dyslexic students across the three universities.....	210
Figure 6	The Thematic Map (Factors influencing lecturers' behaviour towards dyslexia support).....	233

Acknowledgment

I owe a sincere debt of gratitude to the many people who have helped and supported me, without whom this dissertation could not have been completed.

Foremost among them is my research supervisor, Professor Lin Norton for her consistent support, patience and sensitive guidance. Without her invaluable experience, expertise and, above all, putting up with me over the years I could not have dreamt to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

My thanks also go to Janet Strivens, my second supervisor for the kick-start and concerns to ensure things are going smooth.

I thank Jean Johnson, the Administrator to the Centre for Teaching and Learning and her predecessors at both Hope and Liverpool Universities for their timely support.

I am especially grateful to the many staff and colleagues throughout the region for their invaluable contributions and support without them completion of this thesis could not have been possible.

Also within my faculty, I sincerely thank those colleagues who gave me occasional tips and advice, above all, their personal encouragement and interest shown that helped me keep going.

I thank my management for some financial support and allowing me occasional time off especially towards the end of the study.

Lastly, I shall owe my warmest gratitude to my dear wife Sarojini for being always there thin and thick, encouraging and supporting especially when I needed it most. I am especially thankful to her for allowing me to go through a journey that I was hardly able to share with her.

I am also proud and grateful to my two lovely children Shaleena and Jayesh for their charm and, above all, patience in keeping their cool with a boring dad with head dug in books.

At last I dedicate this work to my future grandchildren.

Abstract

“Without the awareness and understanding of the academic staff who come in contact with students with dyslexia, no HEI can be said to be making satisfactory provision for such students” (Singleton et al.1999, p. 50). Following the introduction of the Special Education Needs Report (2001-2) much has been achieved regarding the provision of dyslexia support in higher education in the U.K . However, academic staff themselves remain largely unaware about dyslexia and how best to support dyslexic students (Borland and James, 1999; Tinklin et al., 2004; Mortimore and Crozier, 2006; Holloway, 2001; Goode, 2007). The finding is supported mainly by research which focuses on the disabled students’ perspective within the context of general disability there are hardly studies seeking lecturers’ views specifically about dyslexia. The aim of this research was, therefore, to find the extent to which lecturers conceptualised their own understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support in a university context.

To achieve the above aim, lecturers’ views were underpinned by Bricman et al. (1982) theoretical framework of help and coping. Based upon these authors’ ‘theory of attribution to responsibility of both the cause and solution of the problem’ the framework is organised under four distinct help/support modalities, known as Moral, Enlightenment, Medical and Compensatory.

Utilising a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach, the research was conducted in four stages. In the first stage, using in-depth interviews, data obtained were utilised to generate a research questionnaire for the main study. The interview findings revealed that lecturers were orientated predominantly towards two of Bricman et al. four help/support modalities, namely the Compensatory and Medical models. This is consistent with the Difference and the Deficits paradigms of dyslexia (West, 1997).

In the main phase of the study (stages 2 and 3), quantitative findings from a questionnaire revealed that lecturers associated almost equally with the Medical and Compensatory models in respect of their views of dyslexic students and approach to support. However, they did not associate quite so readily in their own role and that of

dyslexic students in the support strategy. Specifically, lecturers did not only prefer to take a 'subordinate' role but had an expectation that dyslexic students should take ownership of their own support responsibility. This finding is consistent with the Compensatory model. Additionally, results showed that lecturers were limited in their understanding of dyslexia and ability to support dyslexic students.

Since a quantitative study of this nature does not provide rich explanations of why lecturers held the views they did, the fourth phase of the research used a semi-structured interview designed to elaborate on some of the questionnaire findings. The data, not only added to the earlier findings but also identified some previously undiscovered factors that impinged on lecturers' support behaviour.

To conclude, lecturers' general lack of dyslexia awareness, coupled with the way that they conceptualised dyslexic students showed serious implications for their approach to students' support. Most importantly, the researcher argues that while lecturers' expectation of their own role and that of dyslexic students may be helpful in supporting the more capable and independent students they may not be quite so helpful in supporting those students requiring a more immediate and direct form of dyslexia support.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Dyslexia is now fully recognised as a specific learning difficulty both legally by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA, 1995) and Special Education Needs (SENDA Report, 2001-2) in the higher education institutions throughout the United Kingdom. Although much still remains to be done, policies and various support provisions are said to be fairly well in place to meet the needs of dyslexic students to enable them to cope and succeed in their learning (Tinklin et al., 2004). The area that has remained much in need for improvement in terms of continuing academic support of dyslexic students is from the lecturers' perspectives (Borland and James, 1999; Tinklin et al., 2004; Mortimore and Crozier, 2006; Goode, 2007). However, while much dyslexia related studies have been conducted as part of research into general disabilities in higher education there is, comparatively, a dearth of research on the issue of dyslexia itself from lecturers' perspectives. Moreover, while many of these studies have sought the views of disabled students about lecturers' understanding of dyslexia and support, there are hardly studies seeking lecturers' own views of dyslexia, dyslexic students and approach to support (Mortimore and Crozier, 2006).

Going back well over several years these studies seem to continue showing the same protracted problem, stating that lecturers lack awareness of dyslexia and students' support to the extent that they are, often, perceived as 'prehistoric' about their knowledge, understanding of dyslexia and student' support (Goode, 2007). Such a statement, however emotive may be, it raises several issues regarding lecturers' support of students' learning as their primary role. However, far from arguing whether learning support takes place a more immediate question to pose is: Do lecturers

support students specific to their needs? Such a question, however, seems to provoke a number of underlying assumptions about dyslexia in higher education. First, the statement seems to tentatively imply that, indeed, there are some among university students some who do, indeed, experience learning difficulties whereas others do not (Wilson, 2007). According to Wilson (2007) it further supports the assumption that these minority group of learners seem to be exposed to a type of learning environment which is far from ideal to their learning needs; hence, the need for extra-curricular learning support which is exclusive to the mainstream education. The statement also seems to imply that the current environment of higher education in the U.K. is hardly conducive to effective learning for students with specific learning difficulties.

Moreover, the lack of support on the part of the lecturers towards students with special learning difficulties seems to indicate that some lecturers are likely to be limited in the learning and teaching strategies in meeting the specific needs of these students. It also implies that there are, indeed, other strategies perhaps in existence that the lecturer is neither aware of nor has the personal or institutional resources to put them into practice (Goode, 2007).

One such example is strategies to students' support recommended by the dyslexia-friendly teaching and learning by the dyslexia organisation (Teachability, 2000).

These recommendations require lecturers to apply the strategy in an imaginative and creative way within their own subject areas and context to teaching and learning. It may, however, be asserted that little is known or explained as to how these strategies may be applied effectively within the context of a given course/subject expertise (Wilson, 2007). On the other hand, a question may also arise as to what an extent academic staff, as experts within their own academic fields, would be willing to

follow the recommendations over and above their existing commitments, especially in an environment where the lecture-form of teaching takes precedence over small-group tutorials or individual tutorials (Mortimore and Crozier, 2006). On the other hand, some of the recommendations stated by Teachability and other dyslexia-friendly teaching and learning recommendations already exist as part of lecturers' basic approaches to teaching and learning. Among the many such examples is the recommendation for a multi-sensory approach to teaching students with dyslexia, an approach said to be also beneficial to other learners (Johnson et al. 2001; McGloughlin et al., 2001; British Dyslexia Association, 2000). Arguably, it is unlikely that among the lecturers who do not or cannot apply multi-sensory approach strategy into their teaching and learning will be able to or willing to do so merely to meet the needs of a minority group of students with specific learning difficulties. On the other hand, it is also fair to argue that lecturers who do apply a multi-sensory approach to teaching and learning as a routine may already be supporting dyslexic students without having to be consciously aware of it in the classroom.

Examples such as these are numerous in the dyslexia literature that, perhaps, needs further examination. Other examples that, often, appear in the dyslexia literature is the lack of skill often required of the lecturers to mark the assignments of dyslexic students, such as:

- sensitivity and understanding of their writing difficulties (Tinklin et al., 2003; Fuller et al., 2004; Singleton et al. 1999)
- inappropriate written feedback given to the dyslexic students that may damage their self-confidence (Miles and Varma, 2000).
- lack of timing in lecture-delivery (McGloughlin et al. 1994)

- an unsympathetic lecturer unwilling to provide lecture notes or extra reading materials to students who are struggling to cope with their studies (Gilroy, 1995).

While highlighting these limitations in lecturers' approaches to teaching and learning are helpful towards raising awareness and improving strategies to dyslexia support in academic terms, perhaps, it is important to examine these concepts from lecturers' expectation of their pedagogic teaching and learning and what this may mean in terms of higher order learning in the university environment.

Within the same vein, what a 'lack of dyslexia related academic support' actually means in terms of adult learning is a challenge that members of the academic staff have to face. Indeed, individuals may interpret learning support differently, depending upon his/her philosophy of adult teaching and learning that, often, lecturers hold in higher education in terms of facilitation of learning as opposed to a directive approach to teaching (Norton et al. 2005). Such is the complexity of learning support since it is often highly subjective in the orientation of both the helper and the recipient of the learning support. This is a phenomenon that will be further discussed in the literature chapter. However, it is the helper or the practitioner of support who is perceived as having the ultimate responsibility of ensuring that the support is both fair and balanced, taking all the above arguments into account, especially in a professional setting such as higher order teaching and learning environment. Often, what may mean by the term 'empowering' a learner in taking personal responsibilities for learning can turn out to be an undesirable way of support those who may require an immediate or more direct form of support. This is, again, a concept that will be

discussed later. But such a process, of course, requires diplomacy, sensitivity and above all expertise on the part of the lecturer in the support strategy.

Taking these issues into account, answers to whether lecturers do or do not support dyslexic students effectively may well be something less urgent before trying to address other issues not, as yet, fully explored in the field. What is more pressing is, perhaps, the need to find the extent to which lecturers understand dyslexia and related support. Questions may also arise as to what an extent lecturers, as academics, with subject expertise within their own teaching fields would wish to or, indeed, need to know about dyslexia as a disability. Other questions that may also arise are: how and where lecturers should place emphasis on the cause of the learning problem as opposed to the nature of the learning problems? In other words, a question may be asked as to whether lecturers should be aware about dyslexia itself as a syndrome or should they need to know the 'nature of the reading or writing difficulty' arising as a result of it or both. If so, to what extent dyslexia awareness itself is important for lecturers in order to understand the learning difficulties of dyslexic students? 'Awareness' as a concept in the context of dyslexia and lecturers' role is explored later.

Moreover, studies show that there are many learning difficulties similar to dyslexia syndrome, experienced by individuals who may not be classified or recognised as suffering from dyslexia (Morgan and Klein, 2000). Indeed, there is often a very fine line drawn between dyslexia and poor literacy or learners with average intellectual ability/ poor coping strategies (Morgan and Klein, 2000). Such arguments, undoubtedly, would give rise to various concerns that merit further exploration, such

as: what are lecturers' views about dyslexic students as a group different from other students in terms of learning difficulties? Do they need to be aware of dyslexic students as a group different from other learners? From a different perspective, Pollack (2004) in his studies about the self-concept of dyslexic students and the adverse impact this may have on some of them, recommends a need for a review about the conceptualisations of dyslexic students and approach to support. These are, perhaps, some of the issues arising in the context of this study. It is inconceivable how one may be able to fully explore lecturers' support of dyslexic students before aiming to address some of these underlying concerns.

An equally important claim is the fact that the issue of especial needs/disability and the underlying problems are said to be located not only in the educational field in its entirety but are pervasive across all walks of life in society (Wilson, 2007). One may only have to look up the issues of general disabilities in society to find the enormity of the problem and the issue of stigmatisation of those categorised as disabled (Oliver, 1990; Hughes, 1997). Disability and societal attitude have been extensively addressed later in relation to dyslexia and students' support (see Chapter 2 for details). On balance, it seems that society itself, perhaps, needs re-visiting this position with respect to their perceptions and expectations about disability, including those with especial needs. Such is the enormity of the issue of dyslexia, which appears pervasive beyond the confine of the university environment. As such, the problem of dyslexia does seem to have infiltrated the higher education from beyond by both societal and professionals' attitude and expectation. While not undermining this complex issue at hand one central concern that seems to arise is the need to draw an appropriate balance between lecturers' role with subject expertise and their duty of support of

students requiring specific learning support. The other related issues are the extent to which lecturers need to have an understanding or awareness of dyslexia as one of many different types of students' disabilities encountered in higher education. In other words, it is hard to imagine how one can come to a reasonable explanation about lecturers' awareness of dyslexia and students' support without first seeking these assumptions from lecturers' own perspectives. Given the above argument, one single and obvious question seems reasonable to ask for the purpose of this research was: what lecturers themselves understood on the issue of dyslexia and how did they perceive their role towards the needs of this group of students, as subject experts within their own specific fields. To be precise, one single overarching question posed for the purpose of this research was: What are lecturers' views about their understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and approach to support? To the researcher's knowledge, there appears little information or research in answer to the above question. In an attempt to fully explore this broad and exploratory question more specific questions were followed, as the research progressed in stages (See Section 1.3, for details).

Like any other doctoral dissertation, however, it is absolutely necessary that any such broad and overarching question is reduced to a narrow focus where from may spring forth specific questions or aims in research terms. However, far from the problem solved, it gave rise to a series of other challenges that required addressing towards achieving the academic rigour of the research exercise. One such challenge was the need to underpin the question not only in terms of recent and current issues raised in the field as well providing a justification about the practical purpose of the research but also support the study by underpinning it to a theoretical framework. It is only

then that the research exercise could be credited as a viable piece of research with the possibility of repeating the findings in future. One such theoretical framework for the purpose of conducting this research was a help/support framework borrowed from the field of therapeutic medicine, known as Bricman and colleagues (1982) conceptual framework of help and coping strategies (see Chapter 2, for details). While help and support strategies as theories are enormous both in the field of education and social-psychology, given the issue of dyslexia as a disability, it seemed appropriate to utilise this particular conceptual framework in support of this research.

Briefly satting, this conceptual framework is based on the theory of attribution (Heider, 1958). The theory of attribution was further elaborated and incorporated by Bricman et al.'s (1982) into their conceptual framework of help and coping in therapeutic terms. As such, the framework seeks to answer as to what extent the helpee, in the help/support strategy, should be held responsible (or attributed) to the (a) 'cause' of the problem and (b) the 'solution' to solve the problem. This decision is the underlying framework on which Bricman et al.'s conceptual framework is build upon. It seems obvious, by now, that this assertion assumes that there is, indeed, a problem, in this case, the learning difficulty experienced by the dyslexic student.

Another valid reason to choose this particular approach of help strategy was due to the fact that currently dyslexia is perceived as a specific learning difficulty/deficit (i.e. '*problem*') in higher education, whereby the dyslexic individual is expected to either deal upon his/her own or request for support in the university over and above other normal teaching and learning support given to students without dyslexia.

On the other hand, given the nature of the approach to teaching and learning in higher education and lecturers' expectation of adult learners the emphasis seems to be more in the facilitation of learning than 'teaching' the learner to learn, at least in terms of belief of lecturers, if not in intention (Norton et al., 2005). Such a conceptualisation seems to embody either total or shared responsibility on the part of the learner to deal with the learning difficulty/problem or needs, regardless of where the problem is located or who is responsible for it. In other words, the students of higher education are 'contracted' to or have made a voluntary agreement with the institution to take responsibility for their own learning, as adults (Mazhindu, 2002). This is further supported in field work (Steel-Smith, 2001; Alsop, 2000; Whitcombe, 2001 and Walker, 1999). This is not to say that the lecturer does not have a significant role to play in supporting the learner to learn. Far from it, the aim is to support or 'empower' the learner to assume responsibility within an appropriate learning environment. In that regard, the lecturer is an equal partner in the learning venture of the learner or is equally responsible in fostering the acquisition of skills or enabling learning to take place (Sullivan, 2008) with as much sensitivity to the specific needs/problems of the individual as it may be possible within the given specificity of his/her academic role.

However, while this may not necessarily be an insurmountable problem of an experienced and astute lecturer, the real 'devil' seems to lie in-between the two, meaning where the right balance should be drawn between encouraging the learner to take responsibility of his or her problem and of the solution to that problem by way of coping with the learning; and where, when, how or to what extent the learner may require the 'nudge' of support, in the case of special need. As stated earlier, one such theoretical framework that appears most relevant in the context of this study is

Bricman, Rabinowitz, Karuzsa, Coats, Colin and Kidder (1982) four models of help and coping (see Chapter 2, for details). Meanwhile, it is worth noting that a theoretical framework does not, or cannot, stand on its own in research terms but, instead, it needs to be linked to relevant methodologies that would be most appropriate to answer the questions posed.

Given the vagueness of the research topic at this stage, coupled with a general lack of studies on dyslexia and related support in the context of the chosen research population, that is lecturers (Mortimore and Crozier, 2006), it seems reasonable to account for an exploratory approach to the research study to start with. As such, the inquiry was an evolving and unfolding one. As the study progressed it consisted of four distinct phases. In that, one phase was informed and guided by the preceding one in terms of identifying the aims and specific questions/statements posed and research methodologies used. For clarity, it is also worth emphasising at this stage that the current study, far from seeking whether lecturers do or do not support dyslexic students, the aim was to seek their awareness, views and understanding about dyslexia, dyslexic students and approach to support. In other words, what are their conceptions of these issues? As discussed earlier, this position is specially taken in the study due to the fact that previous studies (Goode, 2007;Holloway, 2001, Tinklin et al. 2004) show that lecturers lack awareness of dyslexia and students' support; hence, the need to explore the same from lecturers' own perspectives and how they themselves conceived these issues. The concept of dyslexia and awareness themselves are addressed in greater detail later (see Chapter 2).

Conducted in the North-West of England in three selected ‘non-traditional universities’, between 2003 –2004, the study was concentrated within a limited number of faculties, utilising a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach to research. The introductory chapter continues with an overview of the background of the study from various professional and legal perspectives as perceived in the current and evolving climate of change in higher education in the U.K. (Fuller et al. 2004). It is then followed by a brief overview of the purpose of the study, stating its main aims and objectives. The study was then supported through some relevant issues that are ongoing about dyslexia support in higher education, justifying the reasons this research was conducted. The chapter ends with an overview of the ontological and epistemological explanations in context of this research alongside a brief explanation of the principles underlying qualitative research, as the predominant approach to this research.

1.1 The Background of the Study:

The background in support of this study has taken consideration of a higher education system in the U.K that has undergone, in the recent past, a period of massive change, particularly during the last 20 years or so (Tinklin et al. 2004). While the sector underwent a great expansion in number of students, especially in the post-92 non-traditional universities it also faced many economical pressures in terms of funding with a general reduction in its units of resources, inter-institutional competitions in raising educational standard and an ever growing accountability and responsibility in the delivery of its practices. It was within the parameter of this change that also came a fundamental review and the need to improve the general learning conditions of disabled students, including dyslexia through various legislative changes, the Quality

Assurance Agency and other Governing bodies of the higher education system, - a change that, arguably, has hardly been encountered in this scale in the field of adult education before in the U.K. While there are many forms of disabilities both seen and unseen, the aim was to look upon one among the many types of disabilities of students, such as dyslexia. Dyslexia, as a relatively new disability, is now officially recognised by the higher education institutions in the U.K. (Disability Discrimination Act, 1995).

Dyslexia is said to be a highly complex subject both to understand and to explain (Singleton et al. 1999). As a specific learning difficulty, originating from childhood studies, attempts have been made to explain dyslexia from various theoretical perspectives, such as the biological, cognitive and social interactive (Fritz, 1997). However, there is no consensus on a clear-cut explanation of dyslexia nor is there a common agreement on its exact causations. Attempts have been made, however, to bring all the theoretical explanations together as an aid to a common approach to understanding the various complexities of dyslexia, known as the 'Causal Modelling Framework' (Frith, 1997). This framework, now widely recognised, suggests that the three levels of descriptions are useful for a better understanding of dyslexia: the biological (genetics and neurology), the cognitive (information processing) and behavioural (primary characteristics of dyslexia syndrome). It is at the behavioural level that the biological and cognitive factors are explained as the syndrome of dyslexia, such as difficulties in learning to read and write, phonological tasks, naming, speech development, balance, motion detection among many other features as unique to the individual. Hence, the focus in this study is the need for the academic staff to be

aware of these difficulties experienced by those students with dyslexia identification and to be aware of what can be done in terms of support.

However, as a highly controversial subject and while the debate continues dyslexia is currently regarded as a disability in higher education in the United Kingdom, perhaps more as a convenience to policy making and providing support to students to cope with their studies (DDA, 1995 and SENDA Report, 2001-2) than an actual disability, per se . As such, the prevalence of dyslexia in higher education is recorded under the aegis of other disabilities through the Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA). Records showed that the number of self-declared students with dyslexia entering higher education has dramatically increased since the recent past and the trend shows that it continues to do so since the early 90s. Today, dyslexia represents the highest self-declared disability in higher education. While in the academic year 1994/95 only (15%) 3,170 of disabled students represented dyslexia this figure has increased to (43%) 23, 655 in 2005/06 (HESA, 2005/06). This indicates that the number of students with dyslexia entering higher education has increased substantially over the last ten years or so. However, if taken account of those students who are either unaware of their specific learning difficulties either due to lack of information and diagnostic assessment opportunities or students simply wishing not to declare their dyslexia for one reason or another this figure could be much greater than that shown in the current statistical record, previously forecasted by Healey et.al.(2001). According to the record, this means that there is an ever-increasing need to assess dyslexic students and provide support in higher education (Fuller et al., 2004; Teachability, 2000).

The number of disabled students, in general, too, is increasing proportionately, indicative of a greater number of students with disability entering higher education as compared to the past, although much has remained to be achieved in the future, in terms of equality of opportunity and equal rights towards an integrative education. Evidence showed that while in 1994/95 (2.6%) students were represented as disabled this figure has increased to (6.1%) with an estimate of 54, 830 students with disability, out of a total of 895, 675 in 2005/06 academic year (HESA, 2005/06).

Higher education in the U.K has undergone a massive change since the mid-1990s. There has been a great expansion in student numbers, especially in the early 90s when centrally funded institutions, previously known as polytechnics, were granted university status with their own degree-awarding powers. Many of these universities had a long and established history of recruiting students from a variety of sources with a diversity of qualifications other than accustomed by the pre-92 traditional universities. These new universities, funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), underwent a massive change in the recruitment of an ever-greater number of students through the initiatives of the Wider Access Programme. As a result, this has encouraged the previously under-represented groups of individuals to go into further and higher education studies. While this new recruitment initiative was aimed primarily at mature students, those lacking in traditional academic qualifications, the socially and economically under-privileged and from an ethnic background it also identified students with disabilities and those with especial needs within the mainstream education. Access was increasingly defined and remained to be so in terms of proactive policies. Procedures were recommended to widen participation to all under-represented groups in society (Skilbeck and Connell,

2000). However, the wider access initiative also brought along with it many challenges towards meeting the needs of the students who were known to be disabled. This required extra support to disabled students to cope with their studies alongside their non-disabled peers (Tinklin et al., 2003).

Prior to the 1990s, higher education was largely inaccessible to students with disabilities (Barnes, 1991). Moreover, there was neither a general awareness of disability nor an initiative to provide support to students with especial needs at central or departmental level of the university (Leicester and Lovell (1994). It was a situation that existed almost as a form of oppression in the higher education environment for the disabled students in U.K (Goode, 2007). If there was any disability related support in existence, this was often provided in an ad hoc manner mostly in the form of personal favours or perhaps out of 'pity' by fellow students in a totally inaccessible environment both physical and cultural (Tinklin and Hall, (1999). A study conducted by (Tinklin and Hall (1999) showed, as lately as 1996/7 that there was continued lack of accessibility to students with disability in higher education, such as entrance to higher education, the physical access, access to information and a general lack of disability awareness among staff and management. If there was any good experience of disabled students this was based upon the positive attitude and personal experiences of only a handful of those staff sympathetic to disabled students' needs, perhaps through their personal contribution, experiences and good-will to support students with special needs (Holloway, 2001).

Since 1993 the Higher Education Funding Council for England began to provide special initiative funding towards improving the learning conditions of disabled

students in higher education in general, including dyslexic students. This took place in the form of three main initiatives both towards promoting disability awareness and improving support facilities. The 'Disabled Students Initiative', operational in 1993-94, resulted in an audit report about support provisions for disabled students in higher education. As a result, a guide entitled 'Access to Success' was produced for students with disability and especial needs in order to help gain entry to higher education. As a follow up of this initial initiative a 'Staff Initiative' between 1994-97 provided further funds to employ support coordinators for students with disability in higher education institutions on a temporary part-time basis. The funding also enabled the initiative to recruit a national coordinator to support institutional coordinators towards the creation of a networking system and coordination of related activities across the country. The 'Equipment Initiative' for support of students with disability, including the dyslexic students, encouraged the higher education institutions to bid for further funding through HEFCE towards the improvement of material support provisions, including modification of buildings for access, computer and software facilities and the like. But such a funding was only made available to those institutions that had already put in place a basic standard of support and statement of disability policies for students with disabilities. In 1999-2000, 'premium funding' through HEFCE was launched, allocating an additional sum of fund based upon the number of Disabled Students Allowances (DSA). It was launched mainly in recognition of additional costs incurred by higher education institutions in recruiting students with disability and, hence, measures to embed disability services into mainstream institutional support provision. Such a fund was targeted initially to those institutions in England that were already active in terms of disability support with statement of support policies within their institutions, as a form of further incentives to support disabled students.

Alongside special initiatives by HEFCE to support an ever-evolving higher education system also came the influence of various legislative changes, bearing upon the improved needs of disabled students, including the dyslexics in higher education. However, the movement to fight for the rights of individuals with disability both in the wider society and the educational system was not a new one. Ever since the publication of the Warnock Report (1978) great emphasis was placed in the need to include students with special needs in the mainstream education, as and when that was possible. Warnock Report was perceived as a landmark in promoting the rights of students with disability through the equality of opportunity. However, dyslexia as a subject in adult education, at that time, was hardly a subject of mention since it was mainly perceived as a childhood problem. Mainstream education began to be seen as one of the main features of compulsory education at both local and national levels. However, the focus of such an initiative could be said to have really begun in further and higher education sectors not until the late 90s. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) of 1995 made it unlawful for providers of services to discriminate against individuals with disabilities. However, this act did not apply to the educational sector, including the further and higher education. Part 4 of the Act, however, did place a duty on the higher education funding councils in the U.K. to impose on higher education institutions a need to produce and publish a statement of disabilities, their existing policies and provision of support to students with disabilities as well as their future plan and statement to this effect.

The legislative change, undoubtedly, provided the impetus to higher education institutions to review their policies and enhance their practices with regard to

provision of support for all students with especial needs, including dyslexics. The Special Education Needs and Disability Act of 2001 (SENDA) extended the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act to higher education and its provisions that came into effect in September, 2002. Section 28R stipulates that it is 'unlawful for the body responsible for the educational institution to discriminate against a disabled student in the student services that it provides, or offers to provide'; in that, student services have been described as 'services of any description which are provided wholly or mainly for students' (SENDA, 2001). This act encouraged the higher education institutions to take strategic approaches to identify reasonable adjustments in areas of teaching, learning and assessment policies and practices for students with disability. Moreover, the post-16 of Part 4 of the DDA was amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Amendment) –Further and Higher Education) Regulations 2006. Among several main duties indicated in the Act were: new specific provisions in relation to qualifications and the introduction of competence standards. Furthermore, the DDA Act 2005 amended the Act to insert the disability equality duty into the Act.

The above duty was aimed at tackling systematic discrimination and ensuring the public authorities, including the governing bodies of universities and schools in the U.K. build disability equality into everything that they do, among them are: to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to take steps to meet disabled peoples' needs, even if this was to require a favourable treatment. From September 2007 new legal provisions prohibiting disability discrimination by general qualifications bodies came into force. Under the new duties Chapter 2A (sections 31AA to 31AF) in part 4 of the DDA 1995, four forms of discrimination were made

unlawful: direct discrimination, failure to make reasonable adjustments, unjustifiable disability-related discrimination and victimisation and lastly, discrimination related to harassment. This means that the governing bodies of higher education needed to review their practices in every aspect of their delivery in order to meet the needs of the disabled students, including dyslexics.

As a result of a multitude of measures as indicated above, disabled students are now officially recognised in higher education with a need for special provisions to cope with their studies. Various measures are put in place to keep records of students both declaring their special needs and requiring support, such as the HESA. They are now also included in performance indicators, relating to wider participation and found in the standard policy of the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) code of practice – students with disabilities (QAA, 1999) in higher education. Evaluative studies conducted by Hall and Tinklin (1998); Brown et al.(1997) and HEFCE (1999) indicated that almost all the higher education institutions had produced a disability statement; various support provisions, a disability coordinator, and some having extra policies such as within the agenda of application and admission procedures. However, this was at a different level of progression during the course of the survey. Moreover, additional financial support in the form of Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) is now made available to all students with special needs who require them, without means testing.

The fact that the prevalence of students' disability of various types, including dyslexia is being monitored separately through the annual statistics via HESA and through the performance indicators relating widening access and participation in higher education

has demonstrated that these issues 'cannot remain closed within a student services arena but must become part of the mainstream learning and teaching debate' (Adam and Brown, 2002, p.8). Especial support issues also began to appear, related to teaching and learning in the relevant policies of the course curriculum of some higher education institutions (Fuller et al., 2004). However, according to an evaluative report produced by Tinklin et al. (2003), although a lot have been achieved to-date regarding general support of students with disabilities in higher education a lot has, nevertheless, remained to be done in many areas of education, especially in relation to teaching and learning which continues to be a cause of much concern.

Literacy difficulties related to dyslexia especially are a cause of much concern in terms of teaching, learning and assessments. Many students with dyslexia are said to embark on degree courses with severe problems both in acquiring and utilising skills that are regarded as essential at university level study (Mortimer and Crozier, 2006). While some students entering higher education have developed good coping strategies others are said to still experience difficulties to cope at higher-level studies, depending upon individual students' general ability, background experience in previous education and coping strategies. Several guidelines on study skills aimed at students at higher level studies indicate the kind of problems encountered by adult students: such as memorisation of names and facts, remembering sequences, rote memory tasks, problems with telling the time and time-keeping, concentration, writing, copying and word retrieval (putting ideas on paper, either as lecturer notes or in written assignments). (Klein, 1993); Often, students were reported experiencing difficulties with both verbal and written communication, reading, spelling, organisation of works and concentration in studies (McLoughlin et al., 1994). Gilroy

and Miles (1996) reported dyslexic students experiencing problems with time-management and organisation, reading, note-taking and writing assignments and coping with examinations. At other times, students were said to experience difficulties in comprehension of texts (Riddick et al., 1997). Dyslexic students are said to experience barriers in learning, especially in large classroom size and note taking at the same time, using learning resource centres effectively and efficiently and producing good course work/assignments (Fuller et al., 2004). Some students with dyslexia are said to experience motor related difficulties and co-ordination, such as hand written works and difficulties to use electronics devices, such as computers and keyboards, besides other equipments requiring acquisition of especial skills (Nicholson and Fawcett, 1990). Often, as a result of these skills related difficulties students with dyslexia experience general difficulties in coping with the course requirement as a whole with low academic achievements that often results into withdrawal from studies (Richardson and Wydell, 2003). Such a difficulty in general academic work may also result in loss of self-confidence with low self-esteem by students with dyslexia (McLoughlin et al., 1994).

While it cannot be denied that much have been achieved in terms of establishing disability policies and the availability of support provisions with an increasingly better learning environment for the disabled students in higher education, yet, much have still remained to be done. This is specifically in the area of teaching and learning at faculty level with the close collaboration of the management and the academic members of the staff, an area which has and continues to attract much criticism towards meeting the needs of disabled students, as indicated earlier. This calls for a change in culture in higher education, an area of concern that is said to take much

longer to change as compared to other disability issues, such as material and environment support. Dyslexia, specially, being traditionally a childhood problem was hardly known to exist as a specific learning difficulty in adult individuals even as lately as the mid 80s, let alone a problem comparatively unknown in higher education. Thus, this is hardly surprising if there remains elements of resistance of its acknowledgement as a real problem among the academic staff; hence the need for educating the educators themselves. Such an initiative, undoubtedly, requires the close working collaboration of the management both at central and departmental level in order to raise the general awareness of dyslexia and other disabilities as well as provision of general and academic support. But the many recent changes also brought along in higher education other pressures that management had to face, such as increasing institutional competitiveness, especially in the area of enhanced teaching and learning policies for all through the Quality Assurance Agency of the higher education institutions; calling for an ever better standard of teaching and learning environment. The Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) is another challenge that the higher education has to deal with in terms of promoting standard and inter-institutional competition in an ever-growing market style of educational management. Amidst these initiatives, coupled with the ongoing economical and technological challenges, the need of disabled students has had to be recognised and considered as their basic rights through the introduction of various legislations and equality of opportunity policies in higher education.

However, despite the growing recognition of the needs of the disabled individuals, including students with dyslexia and the call for an integrative approach to support, support of the disabled students remained largely centralised in the university.

Policies and support provisions seem to have remained segregated from the mainstream education, in the form of 'extras'; one example being extra time provided to dyslexic students in written examinations with the common belief that it should be adequate as a 'level playing field' with little discussion, if any, about creative and imaginative forms of assessments that may make a real difference to dyslexic students, given the nature of their literacy problems. To sum up, support provisions seem to remain largely dictated from a welfare or medical discourse, in the form of exclusion to mainstream support for disabled students in higher education (Goode, 2007).

On the other hand while there may well be an improvement in support provisions in higher education in terms of electronic and technological facilities that also benefit all students with or without specific learning difficulties there remained an educational discourse in the delivery of teaching in lecture form often in very large classroom sizes that dyslexic students, and other disabled students had to contend with without due regard to their specific needs. Studies show that these approaches to teaching often go against the disabled students' preferences for learning and learning styles and thus become more an obstacle than a support in the learning environment (McGloughlin et al, 2003). Added to this is often the lack of inclusiveness or consideration of disabled students' needs in the formulation and delivery of course curriculum, an area of responsibility that lies with the academics more than any other groups in terms of supporting disabled/dyslexic students and narrowing the gap of a segregated system of educational support towards a mainstream integrative approach to support.

Academic staff with little or no knowledge further aggravates the problems of dyslexic students (Mortimore and Crozier, 2006). Various studies conducted,

focussing on general disability in higher education showed very little understanding on the part of academic staff about the specific problems of disabled students (Shevlin et al., 2004; Tinklin and Hall, 1999; Fuller et al., 2004; Holloway, 2001; Tinklin et al., 2004; Mortimer and Crozier, 2006; Goode, 2007). General awareness and knowledge of the academic and administrative staff at departmental level about individual students with disability on their courses or, indeed, about the various different types of disabilities that students experience has remained largely ignored. To what an extent are lecturers aware of the specific problems of disabled students, about the support policies of their institutions, about the support facilities available and indeed about disabled students themselves through policies and procedures are all questions much in need for further exploration. Previous studies (Mortimore and Crozier, 2006; Tinklin and Hall (1999) have shown that some academic members of the staff have remained sceptical about supporting such students, especially in the area of academic writing and other forms of written expressions, and in the flexible marking of students' works for fear of lowering academic standards (Cottrell, 2003). Academia and writing ability, arguably, appear to have remained among the academics as signs of 'graduateness', a belief that calls for further challenge in today's economical competitiveness, market and work-related learning with an ever greater emphasis continued being placed on a lifelong learning concept of education.

The background of this study has explored in detailed the various factors that helped shape higher education, such as the legislative changes both in the field of general higher education and issues of disability, the influence of its governing bodies both internal and external such as the higher education funding councils and the Quality Assurance Agency and others. However, one of the most influencing factors that

appears to determine the conduct of this study was the need for a change in the culture of academic staff towards support of students with specific learning difficulties. While much has been achieved in the area of recognition of the needs of the students with disabilities, including dyslexia related teaching and learning support (Teachability, 2000), those directly responsible for the contribution of such a support, such as members of the academic staff, themselves remain much under-studied. This has been the main impetus to conduct this research with an aim to further perspective in the field of dyslexia support in higher education.

1.2 The Purpose of the Research:

There are many fundamental differences in the pedagogy of teaching and learning in higher education as compared to teaching in pre-16 compulsory education. While school children are often given the basics of knowledge and guided on the acquisition of skills, the adult learner in higher education is normally motivated to take responsibility of their own learning with support and guidance. In other words, the learner is encouraged and empowered to learn rather than taught, per se. The emphasis, here, is on facilitation of learning and empowerment with an increasing sense of autonomous learning. Hence, the main challenge underlies higher education is where the fine line should be drawn between the lecturer supporting a learner to learn and fostering autonomous learning. This is especially so when the student is said to experience specific learning difficulties, although intelligence may remain unaffected. Dyslexia, as a specific learning difficulty, is said to be 'unrelated' to intelligence (Siegal and Smyth, 2004, cited in Reid and Fawcett, 2004; McGloughlin et al., 2002; Gilroy and Miles, 1992) and, as such, it is one among many challenges that an adult learner often has to face in an environment that requires independent

learning. This is despite the individual possessing all the intellectual and previously successful coping strategies. Hence, the knowledge and general awareness of academic staff is needed to bear upon the support of the learner. However, expecting academic staff to go against their beliefs of teaching and learning in pursuit of supporting the individual who is experiencing 'specific' difficulty to learn, can often result in a conflict of interest or can, at worst, be misconceived that lecturers are being told how to do their job (McGloughlin et al., 2003). While it is understandable that the very role of the lecturer is to support the learner to learn the question remains: how lecturers should support students with specific learning difficulties and to what an extent are they equipped with the knowledge and strategy that can best foster independence in their learning?

Here, the researcher assumed that seeking the views of academic members of staff is the pre-requisite for identifying how they perceive what ought to be appropriate support of dyslexic students and how such a support can be delivered in the most suitable way possible. As such, the emphasis is on seeking lecturers' views about the nature of dyslexia related problems, their level of awareness and understanding, attitudes held towards them; their views about dyslexic students themselves as well as their support practices perceived within the belief pattern of their teaching and learning practices. Further areas were identified and explored as the study developed, such as any formative strategy to support that lecturers might be utilising or prefer to utilise as professionals in their daily practices to support students with specific learning needs. Hence, the above arguments aim to help formalise the central question posed for the purpose of conducting this research.

1.3 The Main Aims and Questions of the Research:

The central question posed for the purpose of conducting this research was: What are lecturers' views about their understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and approach to support? In order to fully explore this broad and exploratory question it was important for the researcher to set further questions and/or aims as the study progressed. Conducted in four main phases, utilising mixed qualitative and quantitative approaches to research methodology, the following specific aims were formulated:

Phase (1)

Research questions:

- (1) What were lecturers' views of dyslexia, dyslexic students and what were their strategies to support in their daily practices as academics?
- (2) To what extent did lecturers associate these views within a given framework of help and coping strategies?

Aim:

The aim was to also compile a survey questionnaire on the basis of the findings for the purpose of conducting the next phase of the research.

Phase (2)

Aim:

Based on Bricman et al.'s models (1982), two out of the four models of help and coping were identified in the initial phase: the medical and compensatory. The aim of this was then to compile a quantitative survey questionnaire for the purpose of conducting a large-scale survey across three universities using the two concepts of medical and compensatory.

Phase (3)

Aim:

- (1) To establish the extent to which lecturers associated with the medical and compensatory models of help and coping?

Research questions:

- (a) To what extent did lecturers attend dyslexia awareness training as part of their academic role?
- (b) To what extent did lecturers rate their own knowledge of dyslexia?
- (c) To what extent did lecturers rate their own ability to support students with dyslexia?

The above questions were further analysed through the use of sample variables, such as lecturers' occupational status and duration of service as academics (see Chapter 5, for detail).

Phase (4)

Aim:

Based on issues raised through the findings of the quantitative survey the aim was to further examine lecturers' understanding of dyslexia and support practices. A qualitative approach to research, utilising in-depth interviews was utilised in this part of the study.

1.4 The Professional Significance of the Study:

Dyslexia as a specific learning difficulty is as much, if not more, the concern of the academic staff as it is for other support personnel and student welfare departments of the higher education institutions (Singleton et al., 1998). However, studies on dyslexia in higher education have repeatedly showed concerns that continue to exist as cultural barriers in terms of both attitude as well as general awareness and understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and their specific needs by members of the academic staff as well as the management at the departmental level (Tinklin et al., 2004; Fuller et al., 2004; Shevlin et al., 2004; Mortimore and Crozier, 2006 and Goode, 2007). It is against the backdrop of this argument that the justification of this study is made.

To begin with, the dearth of dyslexia research conducted in higher education has often been studied as part of other disabilities, such as students who are physically incapacitated or who have mobility, hearing, visual and other seen and unseen problems (Mortimore and Crozier, 2006). Because disability is a relatively recent entity in higher education, these studies have emphasised mainly on the difficulties that these students experience as a result of their disabilities, too often from a generalised rather than specific disability. The fight for the rights of disabled learners has been mainly concerned about either lack of opportunity and inaccessibility to higher education or lack of physical or other support provisions in an environment that has mainly been suited to the so called 'normal' persons as stated by Borland and James (1999), Booth and Ainscough (2002) and Barnes (1991). However, while the arguments continue, the emphasis is now on equality of opportunity and the right of individuals to learn in an environment that should be free of discrimination and oppression (DDA, 2006). But the argument is that every disability is said to be

different and so are the needs of individuals with specific disability. Dyslexia, as a specific learning difficulty is said to be one among the many such disabilities students experience in higher education. (DDA, 2006). Even within the confine of dyslexia there are different types and severity of dyslexia that merit specific attention in their own right. Moreover, the specific learning difficulties of every dyslexic individual is said to be unique and as such cannot be compared with another person's needs (McLoughlin et al., 1994) and, hence, there is a difference in the level or nature of support required by dyslexic learners in higher education.

Dyslexia, according to the official figure, having made up the largest share of all disabled students (HESA, 2006) and given the nature of its problems, perhaps, deserves to be studied separately from other disabilities (Mortimore and Crozier, 2006). However, this is not to say that other forms of disability and students' needs are of any lesser importance. Here, the emphasis is not only to improve the general learning conditions of students with dyslexia but also to find whether such a support can meet the learning needs of the individual with relevance to his/her unique learning difficulty. Currently, there has been a heavy emphasis on the campaign for extra support for 'a level playing field' and the lack of support itself is often viewed as a form of discrimination and oppression of dyslexic individuals in the learning environment (Goode, 2007). Gill (2001) states that, too often, the struggle for the rights of dyslexic persons appears to be shrouded within the ideology of what she calls 'victimhood' In other words, it may mean that the individual is a victim of dyslexia as a fate born with. As such, the institution is often approached by advocates of dyslexia support and legislations to look on the needs of students, urging or requesting to provide the dyslexic learner with 'extra' support. This may be perceived

within the framework of victimhood as a form of charity without which dyslexic learners are misconceived as incapable to cope with their studies alongside their non-dyslexic peers. Moreover, the dyslexic student is required to declare their dyslexia and, as such, earn the status of 'disability' in higher education (DDA, 1995) alongside other students with physical and other impairments before they can claim for 'extra' support. This is regardless of whether they require material, financial or especial academic support. It is within the culture of 'disability' and extra support provisions that the attitude of academic members of the staff appears to have been evolved in both their perceptions of dyslexia and the dyslexic students. However, MacLean and Gannon (1997) stated that achieving positive support for disabled students requires more than legislative change. Several studies, conducted on the issue of general disability including dyslexia, claimed that academic staff felt limited in terms of training to support disabled students, in their knowledge, resources, the skills for making adjustments and a general unfamiliarity regarding laws and institutional policies on disabilities (Leyser et al., 2000). This was further supported by Beike and Yssel (1999), stating that the physical adjustments disabled students needed were easier to achieve than attitudinal change in staff.

A point of critical argument is that, while in pursuit of educating the lecturer about dyslexia and dyslexic students' needs, too often the role of the lecturer itself seems to be regarded a fixed entity, almost incapable of modification or to adapt to the needs of the dyslexic individual. Such a transformation in culture within the academic population is said to take time through a 'gradual' process of change since attitude which is culturally based is, perhaps, a phenomenon that takes time to change. The underlying message, therefore, appears to be that the need to educate the educator is

something that will require patience and perseverance on the part of both the campaigner and the dyslexic learner. On the other hand, lecturers seem to believe that dyslexia support is the responsibility of the support personnel at the central level of the institution (Riddle et al., 2005) and any concern raised by the dyslexic individual is a matter of referring the student to them. In such a model of support, academic staff appear to have very little role, if any, to play in supporting dyslexic students, despite dyslexia being a literacy related problem (Tinklin and Hall, 1999). The nature of support itself appears to do mainly with material and other support provisions and hardly, if any, about academic support from the point of view of both the academics and management at central and departmental level. While it is acknowledged that attitudes do, indeed, take a long time to change, time itself for the dyslexic learner appears to be at a premium, especially in the current climate of economical, technological, political and social change, calling for an urgent review of the lecturer's practices that may likely to hinder the learner towards self-development, academic success and future employability (Tinklin et al., 2003).

Considering the above arguments and taking the need to improve the current situation, this study attempts to create an opportunity for the academic staff to reflect on the self and one's own practices as a step towards the collective improvement of the learning environment of the disabled learner, including the dyslexics at the delivery point.

There is currently much evidence to indicate that academic members of the staff are poorly informed about the specific disability of the students in general, especially those disabilities that are 'unseen', such as dyslexia, diabetes or hard of hearing.

There is evidence of poor or even non-existent interdepartmental communication with a general lack of policy to both identify and support students with specific learning

difficulties (Tinklin et al., 2004). Disabled students' comments on lecturers' awareness of dyslexia and attitude towards support suggest that even those members of the academic staff who are aware about their students with dyslexia are often unsympathetic to their specific needs due to lack of dyslexia awareness or about the students themselves (Goode, 2007). On the other hand, it cannot be denied that there have always been a handful of academic staff, often guided by their own experiences of dyslexia or someone being dyslexic in the family, have been sympathetic to the students' cause and have tried to be supportive to them against all odds (Goode, 2007).

While some of the studies have looked at dyslexia in higher education these are often conducted either in small-scale studies in one studies (Baron et al., 1996; Hall and Tinklin, 1998; Borland and James, 1999 and Holloway, 2001; Goode, 2007) or in subject- specific areas such as Geography (Fuller et al., 2004), disabled doctorate students (Farrar, 2004) and Learning Disability (Boxall et al., 2004), utilising specific sample population or a small sample choice. In many instances, the sample choice seems to consist mainly of the disabled learners themselves, seeking their personal experiences as learners, their difficulties, the extent to which support provisions have been made available to them. Academic related support itself has been understudied (Mortimore and Crozier, 2006). Moreover, any information gained about lecturers' attitudes, their awareness and understanding of dyslexic students needs and support are mainly derived from disabled students' perspectives (Mortimore and Crozier, 2006; Goode, 2007) and hardly from the lecturers' own perspectives as academic staff. As such, this research, by utilising a large sample population in three higher education institutions, hopes to add to existing knowledge, directly seeking lecturers'

views of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support practices. Implicit within the study, lecturers' attitudes, values and beliefs held about dyslexia will also be explored. Moreover, this study is different in ways that it also attempts to seek lecturers' views of dyslexic students and their approach to dyslexia support. In addition to that, the study has intended to investigate whether lecturers had a strategy to support that was consistent with their views of dyslexia and of the dyslexic students as learners. Factors influencing lecturers' behaviour towards dyslexia related support of the students was another factor identified as the study progressed.

There are several other justifications to conduct this study from lecturers' perspectives, seeking their views about support of dyslexic students; among the many, being the issue of approach to support while retaining the issue of empowerment and autonomous learning (Hurst, 1996). What constitutes support within an ethos of retaining personal empowerment of the learner cannot be achieved without taking account of those directly involved in fulfilling such needs, such as the academics and management who are responsible for curricular planning, quality standard and other educational practices for an integrative education.

This study is based on the assumption that in order to provide effective support to dyslexic students in higher education it is important to explore the views of the academic staff about their perceptions of what constitutes academic related support to students with specific learning difficulty. As discussed earlier, students' learning in higher education is perceived by some academics (Norton et al. 2005) as facilitation of learning and the emphasis is on the subject matter of the course as opposed to literacy and basic study skills that assume to have already been mastered by the adult

learner before entering higher education. While the emphasis about dyslexia is on deficit-diagnostic- remediation model of support in childhood education the same is viewed as a 'self- empowerment' model in the higher education, (Fuller et al., 2004). It is an approach to support that seeks to find ways to support the dyslexic learners, taking account of their learning objectives and goals and at the same time retaining their autonomy as learners (Hunter-Garsch and Herrington, 2001; Fuller et al., 2004). The aim is to also identify those factors that are related to the empowerment model of support. Hence, it is important to seek the views of the lecturers as to how they, as academics, perceive dyslexia, their experiences and observations of students with dyslexia and related support. It is only through a process of engagement between the students' groups and the academic staff that various factors in the field of education can be successfully negotiated for effective learning (Mazhindu, 1996). As such, the dyslexic learner is expected to negotiate support with the lecturer. In that there is less of a teacher-student relationship and more of partnership into the support strategy and learning process.

1.5 The Rationale of the Research Principle:

This section presents the rationale of the research principles in support of this study. As a mixed qualitative and quantitative methodologies applied the research is conducted in various stages. The approach has adopted a pragmatic position, meaning that it is guided predominantly by the relevant question(s) posed in each phase of the research rather than supported by the philosophical debates about ontology and epistemology in their purist forms. This position is particularly held in the field of social studies, since the approach to the research is predominantly an 'interpretivist' as opposed to a 'positivist' one (discussed later). As such, the researcher endeavours

to present a broad overview in support of a 'pragmatic' stance that this research holds. However, any research is said to be essentially about seeking new knowledge and ways that such knowledge can be gained (Morse et al., 2001). It is, therefore, necessary to, first, start this section by a brief extrapolation of the principles underlying knowledge (known as 'ontology') and ways that it may be searched (epistemology). The significance of these philosophical assumptions is then briefly discussed, giving some justifications in support of the approach to research applied in this study.

Ontology:

As stated earlier, research is said to be essentially about seeking knowledge and the extent to which the findings are accepted. Hence, the debate is not only about knowledge but also about ways that this may be known. The above two philosophical assumptions are known as ontology and epistemology respectively. According to Richie and Lewis (2004) who discuss about ontology (beliefs about what there is to know about the world) in social research, in particular, it seeks to explore the following key questions: (a) whether or not social reality exists independently of human conceptions and interpretation, (b) whether there is a shared social reality or just multiple context-specific realities and (c) whether or not social behaviour is governed by 'law' that can be seen as immutable or generalised. In other words, the key ontological assumptions surround social reality is a 'captive' one and aims to question how it should be constructed. Broadly stated, ontology holds three distinct positions, known as:

- **Realism** - (there is an external reality which exists independently of people's beliefs or understanding about it). In other words, there is a distinction

between the way the world actually is and the meaning or interpretation of that world held by people.

- Materialism - (there is a real world but only material features of that world hold reality). In that, values, beliefs and experiences of people are said to be 'epiphenomena' (that is features that arise from, but do not shape the physical world).
- Idealism - (reality is only knowable through the human mind and socially constructed meanings and as such, there is no external reality that exists independent of people's beliefs and understanding).

However, due to the many complexities that underlie ontology the debate continues, giving rise to several variances regarding these philosophical positions. They are known as Subtle realism by Hammersley (1992) who stated that although social phenomena are believed to exist independently of people's representations of them, nevertheless, they can only be accessible through those representations. As such, they cannot be free from values. There is also Subtle Idealism stated by Hughes and Sharrock (1997) and Sloma (1976) who argue that meanings are shared and there is a collective and objective mind; or, indeed, Relativism – that is, there is no single shared social reality, only a series of alternative social constructions. While there has been ongoing debate about these ontological assumptions they have also been continually modified so that they are better understood and made easier and more flexible in terms of research application. On the other hand, according to Riche and Lewis (2004), Materialism, in ontology, is said to be the most difficult position to sustain within qualitative research since this approach focuses directly on people's meaning and interpretation. However, the position held in materialism is debatable by critics of social research who claim that a neo-materialism can be advocated in some

instances. In that, it is believed that certain aspects of life based on matters such as class, race or gender can be experienced as having an external reality that can be immutable. Can a neo-materialistic stance be relevant to the conception of disability as part of this study? This is a matter of much interest. Although some of the earlier commentators of ontology argue whether the social world can be viewed or studied in similar way as the natural world from a positivist stance in its purist form (causal laws), there are yet others who believe that the social world is very different because it is open to subjective interpretation of researchers and research participants. As such, the main strengths of social research appear to lie in researchers sharing experiences and understanding about the knowledge sought. This is particularly so in contemporary assumptions underlying ontology. The next question is, then: what is the ontological position that this research holds on the basis of the above arguments? Although part of this research is based on a quantitative approach to methodology it is, nevertheless, largely descriptive in its analytical application. As such, the researcher argues that the study is fundamentally a qualitative one. It, therefore, most closely adheres to what Hammersley (1992) describes as 'subtle realism'. In that, the researcher argues that the social world does not exist independently of individual subjective understanding, but that it is only accessible through the respondents' interpretation of it. These interpretations, in relation to this research, are then further interpreted by the researcher as objectively as can be possible. As a qualitative approach to methodologies, especially, in the earlier and latter part of this study, utilising an interview schedule, the researcher puts importance on respondents' own interpretations of the relevant issues explored and, as such, hoped that different view-points of respondents would yield different types of understanding in terms of knowledge. Moreover, the researcher's objective interpretation of these view-points

hoped to capture what is known as an 'external reality' in terms of ontology. As such, the diversity of respondents' views as the central theme of this research is viewed as adding richness to the understanding of the various ways that this reality can be experienced both from the point of view of our understanding of knowledge and understanding gained from the respondents and the researcher. The aim is to, ultimately, convey as full a picture of the knowledge gained as possible with reference to this study. This is also known as 'interpretivism' especially with reference to epistemology, as discussed next.

Epistemology:

The researcher asserts that ontology cannot be fully defined or explained without addressing the assumptions underlying epistemology. Epistemology is concerned with the ways of knowing and learning about the social world (Richie and Lewis, 2004). This leads us to focus on the question: what and how can we know about the reality and what is its basis in terms of knowledge?

The following positions are held around which there is debate in social research: first, it concerns the relationship between the researcher and the researched. While in natural science phenomena are seen as independent of, and unaffected by, the behaviour of the researcher and are, therefore, viewed as value-free and objective such an assumption is not possible in social sciences (Hughes and Sharrock, 1997). In that people or phenomena under study are affected by the research process used and also by the researcher himself/herself. In other words, the interaction between the researcher and the respondents are said to be interactive. Hence, findings are mediated through the researcher (value-mediated) or, they are negotiated and agreed

between the researcher and the participants (Richie and Lewis, 2004). Often, it is also proposed that what is known as 'empathic neutrality', a position that recognises that social research cannot be value-free but advocates that the researcher makes his/her assumptions transparent. As such, this research endeavours to address this principle as far as it is possible.

The second assumption of epistemology surrounds the issue of 'truth' about knowledge. While there is an independent reality in the study of the natural world in social sciences such a truth is known as 'inter-subjective or coherence theory' of truth (Ritchie and Lewis, 2004); that is, this truth can only be understood in a consensus way, perhaps with repeated studies confirming the findings. Hence, this study, far from claiming the generality of its findings aims to put some perspectives in the field with reference to specific areas of higher education where the research has taken place.

The third assumption underlying epistemology concerns the way knowledge is actually acquired. By this, a social researcher seeks to address what approach can be best undertaken to enable him/her to uncover new knowledge. In social sciences, there are basically two approaches, known as inductive and deductive (Glasser and Straus, 1967). An inductive approach is when the researcher aims to look for patterns and association through observations or inquiry in the social world. This may take a logically derived process or systematic inquiry by the researcher to reach informed conclusion to his/her findings. In other words, an inductive approach generates theory that can be further put to test. On the other hand, deductive processes aim to generate propositions and hypotheses; in that, deductive processes use evidence in support of a

conclusion. In other words, induction generates hypotheses and deduction tests the hypotheses for further evidence about the 'reality' of knowledge gained from the social world. As such, this study which is exploratory research, is predominantly qualitative in approach and primarily seeks to utilise an inductive approach to data collection. The researcher's aim was to set broad questions to begin with, in terms of his epistemological position. The researcher also aims to concentrate on understanding, rich descriptions and any emergent concepts or theories that may be evident. This was especially so in the initial and latter part of this study (qualitative studies).

While the subject of scientific inquiry is vast and complicated, what 'science' really constitutes is a matter of much debate in both the natural as well as the social worlds (Hughs and Sharrock, 1997; Sloman, 1976). However, regardless of the research approach one strives to utilise or emulate natural science in qualitative research with an aim to produce as rigorous a piece of research as possible. Briefly stated, in terms of epistemology, the social researcher strives to draw a 'parallel' alongside natural science in terms of its neutrality and objectivity, although the two cannot be equated since they are different regarding the nature of knowledge sought or proposed (Gleick, 1988; Lewin, , 1993; Williams, 2000). As such, the qualitative research in this study utilises an inductive approach to inquiry, utilising a systematic approach to data collection, supported with conceptual framework and understanding where possible. Reflexivity is another important factor to consider when striving for objectivity (Richie and Lewis, 2004), especially in qualitative research . With reference to this issue the researcher, in this study, aimed to make the processes of the research design and data analysis as transparent as possible through disclosure of

data to participants or , at least, through giving them the opportunity to access. On the other hand, reliability and validity are terms, said to be specifically belonging to quantitative research, especially when referring to natural science and quantitative approach to data collection and analysis.. However, this does not preclude the fact that such concepts cannot have a place in social sciences with the application of different concepts in terms of the generalisability of their research findings (Richie and Lewis, 2004). They are, in fact, an aspiration for qualitative researchers to strive for, especially where a wider inference to the research finding is aimed for. This research, far from seeking a wider inference, aims to make the interpretation of both the respondents and the researcher as transparent and objective as possible in the context of where this study had taken place and how data were gathered and analysed. This study has strived to produce abstract interpretations from data derived from the participants, especially in the initial and latter part of the study; where possible, underpinning the findings to relevant theoretical understanding fetched both from social and psychological fields. As such, it is essentially underpinned by a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis.

Lastly, epistemology can also be explained from two main positions held in research. These are known as: Positivism and Interpretivism. Although attempts have been made to interpret positivism in different ways, according to Bryman (1988) the following are the main tenets that underlie positivism: briefly stated, these are:

- methods of the natural science are also appropriate for the study of social science; only observable phenomena through the senses can be counted as knowledge.

- facts and values are distinct entities and, therefore, it is possible to separate the two in order to seek knowledge from the social world in an objective way.

To sum up, positivism is based upon the assumptions that, to a large extent, knowledge is objective or there is a 'truth' or a reality that can be uncovered through the use of inductive logic (Rocco, Bliss, Gallagher and Perez-Prado, 2003).

However, positivism from a 'purist' stance in search for knowledge attracted many criticisms, particularly in social sciences. See for example, the contemporary positions about ontology and epistemology argued earlier by Hughs and Sharrock, (1997) and Sloman (1976). The essential question raised is: can social research be value-free from the perspectives of both the researcher and the researched? This gives rise to another school of thought known as Interpretivism.

Interpretivism takes an opposite stance to positivism. As stated earlier, the assumptions are basically: 'the researcher and the social world impact on each other; facts and values are not distinct and findings are inevitably influenced by the researcher's perspectives and own values. Thus it is impossible to conduct objective, value-free social research, although the researcher can declare and be transparent about his or her assumptions' (Ritchie and Lewis, 2004, p. 17). While the above two paradigms of epistemology take a purist stance, ongoing criticisms and debate about their philosophical assumptions gave rise to a 'pragmatic approach' to research, looking up both ontology and epistemology as an effort to make the underlying assumptions more practical in terms of the research application. As such, this study argues from a middle ground, known as 'pragmatism' where each stage of the study

is guided primarily by the question(s) posed as opposed to adhering strictly to the assumptions underlying ontology and epistemology in its purist form.

Adopting a pragmatic approach to the research:

While this research draws from the philosophical assumptions of ontology and epistemology, especially from the 'contemporary' arguments as opposed to their purist positions held, the approach to this research is mainly pragmatic. By this, it means that the researcher favours a trans-disciplinary or multi-methods approach to methodology while, at the same time, he acknowledges that the research draws heavily from a qualitative approach. This position gives flexibility to the researcher to draw his research design from the perspective of the question(s) posed as opposed to allowing the philosophical assumptions of ontology and epistemology to entirely influence the research approach. Indeed, Bryman (1988) and Silverman, 1993) support this position and, as such, state that philosophical positions have often been allowed to undermine pragmatic considerations and that a more helpful balance might be struck between philosophy and pragmatism. This assumption is further supported by Richardson (1996), although one may argue that this area is an ongoing controversy. As such, while different research methods applied while at the same time due care is taken not to allow one approach to interfere with another. Instead, the underlying aim is the two research approaches complement each other for a deeper understanding of knowledge sought. As such, while the research began with a qualitative approach it was followed by a quantitative methodology to data collection which was then further pursued by a qualitative approach to complement the earlier findings.

As indicated earlier, the aim of this study was primarily to seek lecturers' views about their understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and approach to support in higher education. Therefore, by seemingly seeking the 'what' aspects of the questions posed about lecturers' views, this study is said to be contextual in nature. In that, it is concerned in describing the form or nature of '*what*' exists in the social worlds and the way it manifests itself (Ritchie and Lewis, 2004). Guided by broad questions posed in this research, a qualitative approach was therefore found to be the most suitable, especially at the initial stage of the research, where little is known about dyslexia as a relatively new concept in higher education. This is especially the case from lecturers' perspectives. The concept is further supported by Ritchie and Lewis, stating that a 'Qualitative approach to research is sometimes used as a prelude to statistical enquiry (the second phase of this study) when the subject matter needs to be more clearly understood or defined before it can be measured in any meaningful way' (Ritchie and Lewis, 2004, p. 32). Moreover, lecturers' awareness or understanding of dyslexia and, hence, the specificity of dyslexia support also accounts for the 'specialist' nature of the phenomena, at least from lecturers' viewpoints as academics, as opposed to expecting them to develop expertise or deep understanding in the field. In addition, dyslexia as an unseen disability further adds to the intangible nature of the subject of dyslexia under study. As such, it is viewed as ethereal or 'unseeable' – that is a type of disability not visually apparent; thus, bringing forth further elusiveness from the point of view of this population group and feelings provoked on the issue of dyslexia. It is, therefore, necessary that this study calls for a careful framing of the inquiry about dyslexia through the use of a qualitative approach to data collection, especially during the initial phase of the study. On the other hand, the most single important factor that dictates the format of a research approach ought to be the actual

object of the inquiry or the research aims/question(s) asked (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Marshall and Rossman (1999), Patton 2002; Walker, 1985 and Lincoln and Guba, 1985). This has, no doubt, been taken as the primary influencing factor while considering the conduct of this research as a mixed approach. At the same time, the researcher strives to consider, to some degree, the ontological and epistemological positions held through these approaches. As it is indicated earlier, the research has been conducted through different phases and the research approach undertaken in each phase was closely influenced by the aim or question(s) posed at that particular phase in terms of the research designs and data analysis.

It is important to emphasise that although the second phase of the study was basically a quantitative one in terms of data collection, it is argued that it is essentially 'descriptive' in approach to data analysis and the findings. Thus, strictly speaking, it cannot be classed purely as a quantitative approach especially when respondents have been given the opportunity to add personal views about their understanding of their experiences of dyslexia and support, in addition to the quantitative elements of the approach. Indeed, according to Richie and Lewis (2004) 'the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research approaches is not always clear-cut. They argue that some qualitative approaches have sought to emulate natural science models, and not all quantitative studies are based on hypothesis testing but can produce purely descriptive and inductive statistics' (p 14). However, both approaches have unique and equally valuable contributions to make to social research and, they have been utilised as such in this study in complementing each other.

Moreover, it is asserted that a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach to research, especially in the field of education is a favoured approach much in current discussion as an effort to avoid the polarisation of the two methodologies. For example, Ercikan and Roth (2006) advocate the integration of the two approaches in the field of educational research through the adoption of a continuum instead of viewing it as a dichotomy. This approach, as stated earlier, relates to the types of questions asked and how these questions should determine the modes of inquiry rather than delving into the subjectivity and objectivity debate of ontology and epistemology in research.

In this section attempts have been made to give an overview of our understanding of ontology and epistemology, specifically with reference to social research. While claim has been made to the relevance of many assumptions underlying these concepts this research particularly emphasises an approach that is particularly driven by relevant questions posed at each phase of the study. The above discussion on ontology and epistemology and their various underlying assumptions, specifically ways that knowledge is sought put further light into our understanding of what constitutes a qualitative approach to research in light of this study.

1.6 Principles underlying Qualitative Research:

In addition to the above principles underlying qualitative research this section gives an overview of qualitative research. It starts with a brief explanation of the main functions underlying qualitative research, particularly with reference to approach undertaken in this research. It is then followed by a broad overview of the main

approaches to data collection in qualitative studies, discussed with particular reference to this study.

It is said that the many functions of qualitative research, in social studies, can be explained from two main positions, known as 'theoretical' and 'applied research' (Hakim, 2000; May 2001; Rossi and Lyall, 1978). In 'theoretical' research, also known as pure or basic research, researchers aim to either test or generate knowledge (Patton, 2002). This is either in the form of induction or deduction (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). On the other hand, 'applied' research, in social sciences, is concerned with understanding or dealing with a social issue in practical sense, for example study of social policy or practices (Patton, 2002; Walker, 1985). As an exploratory study, seeking participants' views about their understanding of the phenomena of dyslexia this research is essentially a theoretical research study which is inductive in approach to data collection. Inductive approach means here that the researcher aims to generate raw data to reach to some theoretical explanation or hypothesis; whereas deductive is an existing hypothesis or theory which is tested through data collection either to further validate or refute the same (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). But 'theoretical' and 'applied' studies, far from being two distinct concepts, appear to overlap in qualitative research and often cannot be clearly separated (Silverman, 2000). In other words, it is asserted that all qualitative research is based on certain theoretical assumptions, even if they are implicit or unacknowledged by the researcher. Similarly, applied research can contribute to theory by providing greater understanding about knowledge. Nevertheless, the researcher should strive to support his/her research by theory for a better validation of his/her findings (Bulmer, 1982). But the functions of qualitative research are numerous in social sciences. For ease of classification they are named as:

contextual, - concerned in identifying 'what' exists in a social setting and the way it manifests itself; exploratory, - is concerned with 'why' phenomena occur and the forces or influences that drive their occurrences; evaluative, - addresses issues surrounding 'how' well something works in a social setting. As such it aims to appraise the effectiveness of the phenomena and lastly, generative, - concerned with helping the development of theories or actions, or producing new ideas particularly in social research. It is apparent that according to the above classifications this research is clearly 'contextual' in its underlying function, seeking the nature of 'what' seems to exist from participants' perspectives about their understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and their approaches to support. As such, it provides an opportunity to uncover dyslexia related issues and how it manifests itself in the daily practices of lecturers in relation to supporting dyslexic students. Contextual research is also known as descriptive or exploratory (Marshall and Rossman, 1999; Robson, 2002). As such, the broad question underpinning this research is heavily exploratory in nature, although specific and analytical questions are generated as the study progressed.

In addition to the basic functions underlying qualitative research the type of approaches and methods for collecting qualitative data is also a concern. This is again divided into two very broad groups: naturally occurring data and generative data. Naturally occurring data is concerned with the collection of data as the word 'natural' states, that is collecting data in its natural setting, as and where, it occurs. This is of particular value where commonly occurring complex or sensitive behaviours, actions or attitudes of people are displayed in a particular setting or situation. The process may take the form of observation of the naturally occurring events without deliberate

external influence of the researcher or his/her actions. There are many forms or approaches that are classified to study such social phenomena, commonly known as: observation, participant observation, documentary analysis, discourse analysis and conversation analysis. These are dependent on the nature of knowledge sought and the aims or objectives of the researcher. On the other hand, a generative approach to data collection involves, according to Bryman (2001), a reprocessing or re-explaining of behaviour, attitude, beliefs or other phenomena of people in relation to certain events, experience or thought. These phenomena are said to be mentally re-processed or verbally recounted by the participant(s) and deliberately initiated by the researcher who encourages the participant to reflect upon personal experiences, feelings or beliefs as part of generating research data. As such, the participant is fully aware of the aim and agrees to enter a contract with the researcher to participate in the research. The most common approach in generative data collection is individual or group (focus) interviews. The other methods applied are known as biographical methods, such as life stories or narratives. Again, the underlying approaches or methodologies applied are dependent on the aim of the research and knowledge sought in social sciences. Considering the above, this exploratory research in the main, though not exclusive, utilises a generative approach to data collection through the use of interviews concerning lecturers' views about their understanding of the phenomena of dyslexia in academic terms, as well as their role in supporting students with dyslexia. The principles underlying individual and focus group interviews are discussed in detail (see Chapter 2) in support of this research. The underlying aim of this research utilising a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach to data collection is further explained in at the outset of each phase of this study as found relevant.

Chapter 2

Literature review

2.1 Introduction:

Dyslexia as a specific learning difficulty, the dyslexic individual and related needs and support though integral as concepts are, often, studied separately for the advancement of knowledge in the field of education. The literature review aims to discuss these concepts with particular reference to those factors that continue influencing their development since the recent past in the United Kingdom. Here, the arguments about dyslexia, dyslexic students and related support are discussed in the higher education context. They are discussed from the following perspectives: the professional bodies, the educational institutional role (including legislations, policies, procedures and practices), the dyslexic learner, the academics and society at large. Although these concepts are, often, discussed separately every attempt is made to bring the underlying points of argument together in the light of this study. The approach to the discussion is based upon the model paradigm of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support as argued from the above-mentioned perspectives, with their potential impact upon lecturers' support of dyslexic students in higher education.

For the purpose of this study, the literature chapter is divided into three distinct parts. First, a theoretical review about the conceptualisations of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support is addressed followed by an empirical review of the relevant literature pertinent to the concepts of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support. Finally, a conceptual framework of help and coping strategies with reference to lecturers' conceptualisation of dyslexia and support is discussed.

2.2 A Theoretical Review of Lecturers' Views of Dyslexia, Dyslexic

Students and Support:

Dyslexia is regarded as a specific learning difficulty in terms of normal acquisition of literacy or calculations in children (Snowling, 2000; Goulandris and Snowling, 2001). Despite intellectual ability (Turner, 1997) the same concept is, however, discussed more in terms of difficulties in higher-level studies such as organisational and self-articulation both verbally and in written language with spontaneity in adulthood (McGloughlin, 1997; Morgan, 2001), rather than 'a disability' as normally understood in society (Blankfield, 2001). Often, it is even regarded as a 'different way of learning' (West, 1997), now popularly known as a 'Design' model as opposed to the 'Deficit' model of dyslexia with negative connotations. As such, dyslexia is, often, termed as a 'learning disability', 'learning difficulty' or students with 'special needs'. On the other hand, it is, often, viewed as a 'different way of learning', 'specific learning ability' or even 'specific strengths' along with specific difficulties, perhaps, as a means to demonstrate the extent to which this phenomenon impact differently both in a negative and positive way upon the individual learners. While a dyslexic student with a mild form of dyslexia may hardly require support other than the need to come to terms with his/her condition and help develop meta-cognition and healthy coping strategies, others with severe dyslexia may, on the other hand, require substantial support and guidance, depending upon their general abilities and coping strategies (McGloughlin, 1997). For the obvious reason of providing support provisions, however, dyslexia is recognised through legislation as a disability in higher education in the United Kingdom (DDA, 1995 and SENDA Report, 2001-2). However, it is not so without a severe repercussion upon those bearing or made to

bear the stigma of 'disability' as perceived and treated in organisations or society at large, once such a label is cast upon the individual (Wilson, 2000). As such, those dyslexic students who declare their dyslexia to the university are entitled to claim 'extra' support provisions through the disability policies and procedures of the higher education institutions. On the other hand, other students, regardless of their severity of dyslexia, may choose not to declare their dyslexia and, as such, are neither recognised as disabled nor entitled for extra support but have to cope upon their own (Blankfield, 2001). In this study, dyslexia is referred to as a disability mainly as an attempt to place the issue into a theoretical context as well as a means to discuss ways dyslexia is conceptualised by researchers, professionals, lecturers, students, media and often by dyslexic individuals themselves. As such, the framework for the explanation of dyslexia as a concept, dyslexic students and support strategies is instituted through various disability modalities currently discussed in the general field of disability. Explanations are given upon the way these concepts are both perceived and treated through these modalities. But, first a brief description and historical background of dyslexia may help put the theoretical discussion in perspective.

Dyslexia as a concept is highly diverse and rich in historical background, going back over a hundred years. Like one of the many medical terms 'dyslexia' is derived from the Greek word: 'dys' meaning *difficulty* or *malfunction* and 'lexis' - *language*. Hence, from the very start, in literal terms, dyslexia is translated as 'difficulty with words'. The word 'dyslexia' itself was used for the first time by an ophthalmologist, Rudolph Berlin in 1887 (cited in Ott, 1997). The symptom(s) was, initially, described as '*word blindness*: inability to recognise written words despite good eyesight'. Dyslexia is either 'acquired' as a result of brain injury (first discovered by Adolph Kussmaul

in 1887) or it is 'congenital', that is the person is born with it (first described by Pringle Morgan in 1896, cited in Critchley, 1970). Today, developmental dyslexia is also explained as a genetically determined phenomenon, which is inherited from parents, according to genetic studies into the field (Pennington, 1990; De Fries, 1991; De Fries et al., 1997 and Fisher et al., 1999).

Dyslexia, having its root in medicine, has its concern, however, in the educational field. As such, there has been much debate ever since its discovery as to whether dyslexia should be a medical or educational concern (Ott, 1997). As a result of these discrepancies, there are many definitions of dyslexia, influenced by the professionals' own background and interest in their specific fields. To date, there is no universally accepted definition of dyslexia although it is widely recognised officially as 'a specific learning difficulty' across many developed countries. This is, however, not without scepticism and myths surrounding dyslexia as a genuine learning difficulty among both the professionals and the public at large, often highly politicised in the field of education which is consequently linked with social class. To day, while much research continues, utilising various modern technologies in search for the true nature of dyslexia and strategies to overcome the difficulties, the political debate goes on. For now, as complex as they may be, there are many definitions of dyslexia, depending who defines it and what are the purposes of the definitions.

According to the British Dyslexia Association, dyslexia is defined as '... a complex neurological condition which is constitutional in origin. The symptoms may affect many areas of learning and function, and may be described as a specific difficulty in reading, spelling and written language. One or more of these areas may be affected. Numeracy, notational skills (music), motor function and organisational skills may also be involved. However, it is particularly related to mastering written language, although oral language may be affected to some degree.'

Source: Crisfield, J. (ed) (1996) *The Dyslexia Handbook*. BDA, Reading

In the USA, dyslexia is described as *'...one of several distinct learning disabilities. It is a specific language-based disorder of constitutional origin characterised by difficulties in single word decoding, usually reflecting insufficient phonological processing. These difficulties in single word decoding are often unexpected in relation to age and other cognitive and academic abilities; they are not the result of generalised developmental disability or sensory impairment. Dyslexia is manifest by variable difficulty with different forms of language, often including, in addition to problems with reading, a conspicuous problem with acquiring proficiency in writing and spelling.'* (The Orton Dyslexia Society Research Committee April, 2004)

Source: Reid Lyon G. (1995) 'Towards a definition of dyslexia' *Annals of Dyslexia*, 45:9

Considering that dyslexia is recognised as both a 'Deficit' and 'Difference in learning' or 'Design', it is, therefore, said to be a heterogeneous condition and, as such, it manifests differently with different degree of severity on individuals (Miles, 1993a). As a result, a dyslexic person is said to process information that is unique to his/her underlying cognitive functioning (Thompson, 2001). However, there are also similarities in the pattern of the dyslexia syndrome (Newton, 1970) that are evident only in dyslexic individuals (see also Rutter et al., 1970 and Yule et al., 1974). These are described as the 'pattern of difficulties' (Miles, 1993) and also as the 'clinical feel' of dyslexia as suggested by Beaton et al., 1997) This means to say that dyslexic learners do not normally develop learning styles or process information that are different only among themselves through individual styles but they are also significantly different as compared to their non-dyslexic counterparts. Although there is ample evidence supporting these similarities in adult individuals with dyslexia (Reiff et al., 1997), most studies appear to be exclusively conducted on dyslexic individuals without comparing their learning styles and information-processing with non-dyslexic individuals. The existence of dyslexia in childhood in the UK is a recent concept that goes back to the 70s (Thompson, 2001) and the realisation of its existence in higher education as recently as the mid 90s (Singleton et al., 1999). This

indicates that studies in the specific learning difficulties of dyslexic adults in further and higher education are largely diagnostic mainly for the purposes of assessment and provisions of extra support (Morgan and Klein, 2001).

As the above explanations and definitions indicate, dyslexia undeniably has its root in the medical field. Although there is no concrete evidence about the causation(s) of dyslexia, as yet, there are several explanations given as an attempt to explain dyslexia from a neurological deficit perspective, commonly known as 'deficit hypotheses'; among them are: Magnocellular deficit hypothesis (Stein & Talcott, 1999), Cerebellar deficit hypothesis (Nicholson and Fawcett, 1990), double-deficit hypothesis, to name a few. The set of information processing deficits, commonly known as syndrome, is said to be located in the brain, whereby the individual 'suffers' from a host of information processing difficulties, such as memory deficits, forgetfulness, lacking in concentration, inability to follow sequence, inability to spell correctly, read, write or comprehend text or do multitasks at the same time and the like (Snowling, 2001).

However, such difficulties range from mild to severe and the syndrome, is said, to manifest differently in every individual in a unique way (Miles and Miles, 1999). As a childhood problem it is said to be incurable and thus continues into adulthood and manifests differently. The adult individual, often, develops either healthy or unhealthy coping strategies (McGloughlin et al. 1994). Briefly stated, while it may be described as a set of deficits or syndrome the dyslexic individual is also said to, often, possess specific strengths as a compensatory strategy (West, 1997), which is, however, largely supported with anecdotal accounts as opposed to empirical evidence. Dyslexia is said to be a universal problem that exists across the world. However, the fact that it has been politicised and studied mainly in the developed nations, predominantly in the

white population (Morgan & Klein, 2000; Klein, 1993) means that the claim of its universality as a genuine learning difficulty is, arguably, fragile until credible and extensive studies are conducted of its existence as a neurologically determined condition in a wider scale across other nations. As such, it would seem that dyslexia, for now, is narrowly explained as a neurological impairment, located in the brain. By definition, therefore, dyslexia is firmly established as a disability. As such, dyslexia, dyslexic students and support are, often, referred or explained in the literature by the use of medical terms, such as 'pathology', 'biological', 'diagnosis', 'syndrome', 'symptoms', 'the disabled learner', 'remediation', 'support intervention', 'treatment', and something either 'untreatable or incurable'.

Arguing dyslexia from a medical perspective of disability would, therefore, mean that the syndrome of dyslexia is recognised as a deficit or impairment firmly ingrained within the individual, what Oliver (1990) would call the 'medicalisation' of the disability. Locating the impairment within the individual together with the causes of the problems stemming from the functional limitations which are assumed to arise from the disability. According to Oliver, this constitutes the Personal Tragedy Theory of disability. In terms of dyslexia, this would mean that the learning difficulties of the dyslexic individual are predominantly perceived as a phenomenon located within the learner and the causes of these difficulties appear to have taken place as a result of the neurological deficits/impairment, constituting the disability as an unfortunate chance occurrence which happened to be that the individual has either acquired or is born with; hence the personal tragedy. According to the individual or medical model of disability the focus is on the 'treatment' of the learning problems of the dyslexic individual in the form of remediation or intervention. Such interventions are various,

especially in the studies of dyslexia in children. This continuing deficit paradigm of dyslexia, generated by the very proponents of dyslexia researchers and professionals into the field, formalised by legislations, is firmly entrenched as impairment described and located in the individual. As indicated above, dyslexia is, therefore, 'pathologised' as a neurological deficit and, as such, various recommendations are put forward to subject the learner to various forms of screening and educational tests by the dyslexia experts as well as the educational psychologists in order to 'diagnose' dyslexia before it could be recognised as a specific learning difficulty in higher education. This is, perhaps, more so, as a proof that it is something genuinely related to neurological deficits and not as a result of some environmental or other intellectual limitations, so that the student, under the aegis of disability, is entitled for extra support as a level playing field alongside their non-dyslexic counterparts. As such, the focus is on a deficit paradigm that is claimed to manifest in the adult learner in the form of difficulties in memorisation of multitasks (Nicholson & Fawcett, (1999), lacking in concentration, unable to follow sequence, experiencing difficulties to read, write, comprehend written text, difficulty to follow lectures and take notes at the same time, besides a whole range of other information processing difficulties, both verbal and non-verbal (Gilroy, 1995; Morgan and Klein; 2000; McGloughlin et al. 2003). As a result, dyslexic learners, depending upon the severity of their dyslexia, are often perceived as incapable to learn without specific support in higher education. Here, in the medical model of dyslexia, the focus is upon the individual and his/her deficits. The aim is to relieve the person from the learning difficulties through psychological assessments and recommendations by the educational psychologists and experts, for extra study skills, provision of specialised support in the form of extra time allowance in examinations, besides other kinds of learning support. For example, examinations

are, often, held in a separate room under special invigilation; also, the issue of extra handouts, lecture notes, free photocopies, special and individualised support in the resource centre, amanuenses and other personalised facilities are recommended by the Dyslexia Working Party (Singleton et al., 1998). In addition, the dyslexic learner is perceived as unable to cope with the studies effectively at the right pace as compared to other students and hence the need for financial support through the Disabled Students Allowance or university Hardship Funds in order to acquire personalised computers and electronic software to enable the dyslexic learner to work on his/her own pace and time, as they are said to get easily distracted or unable to work in stressful environment as other students.

Such strategies to personal and financial support, based upon a medical model, may equate to the charity model of disability or dyslexia support, further reinforced by HEFCE's funding and establishment of disability support coordinators and 'premium funding'. Lecturers are often urged to develop an understanding of dyslexic students' inability to learn as other students, be sympathetic and sensitive to their needs while marking their scripts, by being flexible and taking account of their spelling and grammatical mistakes, comprehension and lacking in ability to express themselves in writing that cannot be avoided as a result of their deficits. Also, they are reminded of the need to pay special attention during teaching and teach according to the individual learning preferences of dyslexic students since they are, often, not able to learn or may experience difficulties if taught through their non-preferred learning modalities. Moreover, policies and procedures are requested and put in place in the form of extra-curricular special study skills since the dyslexic student is perceived as often unable to self-organise, manage time or read/comprehend text or write essays as effectively as

their non-dyslexic counterparts. There is also the request for disability support coordinators, study skills support staff and counsellors or psychologists in the university premises to counsel dyslexic students who often suffer from stress factors, anger, fear, anxieties and depression with occasional suicidal tendencies as a result of their dyslexia which further exacerbates their dyslexia syndrome and learning performances (Gilroy and Miles, 1996).

Such establishment of specialised support structures may result, according to Oliver (1990), in the spawning of a whole range of pseudo-professions, as mentioned above, in the image of 'medicalisation' and the individualisation of disability in the higher education institutions. In such a structure, the dyslexic learner has no autonomy, control or power over the support strategies provided to them or decisions made on their behalf in higher education. Any dyslexic student, declaring their dyslexia, is entitled to the same standardised support provisions regardless of whether or not such a support is beneficial or significant in alleviating his or her individual problems, as a form of medicalised prescription for treatment in the higher education environment. This means, the dyslexic student is expected either to refuse or passively accept the support made available in the standard form with no consideration of the individual's need based on an educational psychologist's recommendations following diagnostic assessment. Often, the psychologist's recommendations for support itself is standardised to suit what seems to have been available normally in the higher education institutions rather than individualised to meet the specific needs of the learner. Such an approach to segregated support through specialised services indicate a 'medicalised' approach to dyslexia support for dyslexic students in the higher education, where the dyslexic individuals are both perceived and treated as 'others'

from the mainstream education and comparatively seen as lesser able, which may have serious impact upon both their identity and psychological well-being (Morgan and Klein, 2000). As a result, the dyslexic learner is also perceived as, often, academically weak and dependent upon support to cope with studies and characterised as already lacking in confidence, self-esteem and self-doubt about success in their educational venture or future career prior to entering higher education itself (Madriaga, 2007). This is often exacerbated by past treatment and educational experience, resulting in poor academic performances and achievement of lower grade as compared to their non-dyslexic counterparts (Morgan and Klein, 2000).

On the other hand, dyslexic students themselves often have a low self-concept, with loss of self-esteem and confidence, regarding themselves as students with disability with a sense of helplessness (Morgan and Klein, 2000). Often adult dyslexics have perceived dyslexia clearly as a disability that they suffer from and that it is something different from general literacy difficulties (Herrington, M. 2003). Often, these adults preferred the term dyslexia and put a name to the difficulty rather than being perceived intellectually weak or lacking in motivation. Some individuals, following diagnosis of their dyslexia, find some reassurances about the causes of their weakness, nevertheless, they still seem to view dyslexia as a 'disease' (Farmer et al., 2002). In a study with a small group of dyslexic students in higher education Pollack (2004) found that some dyslexic students perceived themselves as taking the Patient role, alongside other roles by others, such as the Campaigner or the Hemispherists or Syndromists as a result of their perception of dyslexia and the way it is perceived generally by both the profession and the society at large.

However, going back to the earlier conceptualisation of disability Oliver (1990), in the context of general disability, argues that there is a distinct difference between the 'impairment' of an individual and the problems related to that impairment. According to Oliver, while impairment is a reality that can hardly be denied as existing in the individual, the cause and solution of the impairment itself are located within the society and not in the individual. By definition, it is not the person's impairment that is necessarily the cause of the problem, according to Oliver, but society's failings to provide appropriate support for the needs of the disabled person in the social context. He also differentiates between impairment and disability as two distinct entities; in that, while impairment is a real experience of the individual the ontology of disability as a concept is created and recreated in the form of 'disablement' or 'disablism', meaning the marginalisation, oppression and discrimination of the impaired individual by a society who appears to be constantly guided and obsessed by the ideology of 'normality'. In such a society, the impairment of the individual is considered something out of the ordinary or the norm about which something has to be done to fix the body back to normal or at least attempt one's best to do so in the so-called personal interest of the individual. This, according to Oliver (1990), is known as the 'medicalisation' of the disability. In that, the 'medical' expert claims knowledge, expertise and holds control and power over the impaired individual who is expected to act as the passive recipient of treatment and support. The imbalance of power results into decisions made by 'the expert' as to what is perceived to be in the best interest of the disabled person. Hence, in the social model of disability, the need, according to Oliver, is to redress such an imbalance through partial relinquishment of power back to the disabled person by the experts and the establishment of mutual respect for one another and their unique position towards the welfare of the disable individual.

Distinct differences are also made between 'illness' and 'impairment', whereby, an illness can have disabling consequences and many disabled people do also become ill. According to Oliver, while illness itself is the medical concern disability is, essentially, the concern of the society and, hence, explained from a social context. Explaining impairment and illness in this context, according to Oliver, constitute that illness as a consequence of impairment, therefore it is understood to be a medical concern. This, in a way, then constitutes the 'medicalisation' of impairment at least in part. In the context of dyslexia as a disability, this would mean that the dyslexic student who experiences stress, depression or anxiety as a result of learning difficulties would be the concern of the university counsellor as a form of remediation of his or her problem in the social context of disability. This is an issue hard to grasp and often complex, self-contradictory with much internal criticisms (Hughes, 2007) in differentiating between what constitutes medical from the social model of disability. The conceptualisation of illness as the result of disability perceived as the medical concern will be further discussed in the context of dyslexia later. But what do dyslexia, dyslexic students and support mean in the social context of disability?

Based upon Oliver's conceptualisation of disability, in general, the explanation of dyslexia as a disability, dyslexic students and support is explained from a sociological ontology. But first, dyslexia itself is described differently. While the causations of dyslexia are explained, earlier, from a neurological deficit perspective dyslexia itself is said to be a different way of learning, known as the 'Design' model of dyslexia as opposed to a deficit model (West, 1997). Such a conceptualisation indicates that there is nothing pathologically wrong with the individual but just that the brain is 'wired

differently'. As with any other individuals, the dyslexic learner, therefore, possesses both strengths and weaknesses and can be academically as successful as any other students, given the right learning environment and opportunities. It has been argued that the way the dyslexic brain is organised neurologically may lead the individual to, often, possess special strengths as a result of a compensatory strategy; in that one hemisphere of the brain compensates the deficits located in the opposite hemisphere (Davis, 1997; West, 1997; Hetherington, 1996; Steffert, 1996 and Stein, 2001).

Moreover, the dyslexic individual may have a different 'cognitive style' (Morgan and Klein, 2000; Snowling et al., 1997; West, 1992; Mc Gloughlin et al. 1994). As a result, dyslexic individuals may possess good visual abilities, be competent in skills with artistic talents, problem-solving qualities, creative and holistic way of thinking, often good communication skills and have an intuitive empathy with others. However, these qualities are mostly based and supported with anecdotal evidences and mere speculations, often relating the observations with famous and publicly known figures without empirical evidence. These qualities, moreover, are not proven as related to hemispheric differences (Everatt et al., 1999).

To conclude, dyslexia and the dyslexic individuals are, therefore, said to be essentially just the same as any other individuals in terms of possessing both strengths and weaknesses (McGloughlin et al., 2003; West, 1992; Miles, 1993; Gilroy, 1995).

This is, however, apart from the differences or difficulties that dyslexic individuals may experience as a result of their dyslexia syndrome which manifests differently with different degrees of severity in each individual. Depending upon their general intellectual ability, past educational experiences and opportunities, dyslexic individuals, however, are said to possess secondary characteristics that may be

described as both positive and negative (Gilroy, 1996; Miles and Miles, 1992; Herrington, 2003). While the negative side of dyslexia related characteristics have already been discussed earlier, the positive side are often characterised as persistent, determined, hardworking and resilient individuals who have a strong desire or need to be successful both educationally and life in general (Gerber et al., 1992; Spekman et al. 1992).

There are ongoing discussions today that the discrepancy approach to dyslexia and its diagnosis is unsustainable, especially in adults who have developed good coping strategies in terms of reading and writing, commonly referred to as 'literate dyslexics'. For example, while they may have a whole range of dyslexia related problems some adult students overcome their reading and writing difficulties substantially with no obvious difficulties shown. McGloughlin et al.(2003), quoted in Miles and Miles (1990) who stated that '...there is no contradiction in saying that a person is dyslexic while, nevertheless, being a competent reader; and indeed many dyslexic adults come into this category' (Miles and Miles, 1990: ix). This indicates that there are dyslexia related problems that go beyond literacy (Beaton et al., 1997 and Cooke, 2001).

In the social model of dyslexia as a disability, dyslexic students are considered, despite their neurological deficits, as potentially able individuals and able to succeed as any other students, provided that appropriate support is put in place, as a level playing field. In that the deficits of the learner, according to the social model of disability, lies not into the individual learner but of a higher education system depriving the individual to develop his or full learning potential by providing a learning environment that is not conducive to his/her specific needs. Failing to meet

specific and individualised learning needs may constitute oppression and discrimination of the dyslexic person learning in an environment devised for the so called ‘normal’ students, representing the non-disabled wider society which, it could be claimed, holds a ‘disabling’ attitude.

Explaining dyslexia as a disability from a social perspective, therefore, focuses on a type of educational environment in which dyslexic individuals are the victims of ‘disablism’ (oppression and discrimination). While dyslexic persons do undeniably have certain specific learning difficulties as a result of their neurological deficits the learning difficulty itself and its causation, in the social context, is said to be as a result of an educational system that is oppressive and discriminatory in its practices. As such, the social model, in the explanation of dyslexia support, is based on a model in which the dyslexic learner is the ‘victim’ of discrimination and oppression by a non-disabled society, of which higher education forms an integral part of it, as Madriaga (2007) states that just as the wider society, higher education practices an educational system that discriminates the disabled learner.

Based upon the social model of dyslexia, there are claims for many overt as well as subtle forms of discriminatory and oppressive practices towards the disabled, including dyslexic students, not only by higher education organisations but by academic and administrative staff and other students too, such as:

‘...everyday practices of society members, including those in education (i.e. both staff and learners) perhaps unbeknown to them, may perpetuate oppressive structures upon those who identify or are categorised as being disabled.’ (Madriaga, 2007, p. 400). Such a statement is further reinforced by the claim that full equality of

opportunity is difficult to achieve while pursuing higher education in the U.K. (Borland & James, 1999; Holloway, 2001; Fuller et al., 2004; National Disability Team & Skill, 2004 and Riddell et al., 2005).

There are many examples to show discriminatory and oppressive practices by higher education institutions; in that, 'disabled students have to confront with issues that non-disabled students may not experience' (Madriaga, 2007, p.401). One such evidences of discriminatory practices in higher education is what (Oliver, 1996; Wareing and Newell, 2002; Newell & Wilkinson, 2003) call a disproportionate number of disabled students, including individuals with dyslexia, entering or given the opportunity to enter higher education. Prior to 1992, disabled students in traditional universities were virtually unknown. However, wider access, following the starts of the post-92 universities, while designed to recruit students from diverse social classes and minority groups into the U.K universities, the system failed to take adequate account of disabled individuals as compared to other disadvantaged individuals in society, based on race, gender and social class (Fuller et al., 2004). Another issue of discrimination and oppression in higher education towards students with dyslexia and other disabilities, from the perspective of a social model of disability, was a lack of accessibility to information. Despite dyslexic students declaring their dyslexia during application such information largely fails to reach the academic staff due to a lack or absence of interdepartmental communication and support policy by a higher management least sensitive to the needs of disabled students who, overall, form a minority group. As a result, dyslexic students are required to re-disclose their learning difficulties, often, repeatedly to individual members of the academic staff during their course of studies in order to receive help

and support. Such a lack of coordination of information from central to departmental level undoubtedly puts a student with special needs under undue stress, besides their problems remaining invisible to both administrative and academic members of the staff (Freewood & Spriggs, 2003).

In the social context of disability, to provide additional support to dyslexic students may be considered as exclusiveness to mainstream educational support. From this point of view, provision of extra support may be seen as a form of discrimination and oppression of the dyslexic person who is excluded from the mainstream education (Goode, 2007). Here, truly non-disabling higher education practices are said to constitute a type of support that should be 'inclusive' within the mainstream education, within a system that all students with and without specific learning difficulties may equally benefit from without the need for the dyslexic students to declare their dyslexia repeatedly to the academic staff. In such an integrative educational system, dyslexia should ideally be rendered almost obsolete as a specific learning difficulty since, looking from a social context of disability, it is not the learning difficulties of dyslexic students that are the barriers to learning but a lack of accessibility to education formalised to meet the needs of the so called 'normal' students. On the other hand, however, while such an integrative support strategy is highly desirable dyslexic learners may, nevertheless, as a result of their unique difficulties, require additional and specialised support as and when the needs arise. This, in a sense, may constitute an exclusive support within an integrative education (McGloughlin et al. 2003), as much as it can be possible by a non-oppressive higher education.

As the above explanations indicate, dyslexia from a social context of disability is not restricted at the higher or organisational level of the higher education alone, representing a disabling society at large but is also widespread in either very obvious or subtle forms across all level of the educational practices, such as in the teaching and learning at the point of delivery. Dyslexic learners often experience stress, anxiety, frustration and anger as a result of lecturers' ignorance of their specific learning difficulties and needs (Miles and Varma, 1993; Morgan and Klein, 2000; McGloughlin et al. 1994). Studies indicate a general lack of awareness among academic staff not only about knowledge of dyslexia but also about dyslexic students themselves and their presence in the classroom. Dyslexia awareness training or other disability awareness is scant in a higher education system whereby most of the resources and energy are invested towards meeting the needs of the majority of students; in a system where the minority groups such as the disabled or the dyslexics feel left out with a minimum of support, if any. Often such support has to be pushed and enforced through legislation for students with special needs to be entitled to, indicating a support strategy externally motivated by law than initiated internally by the very professionals in the educational field as one of their primary roles. In the teaching and learning environment, academic members of staff are often unaware if they have students with dyslexia during teaching due to a lack or absence of support policies and coordination of information at departmental level. Even, if staff are aware about dyslexic students they are either ignorant or unsympathetic to their specific needs (Goode, 2007; Gilroy, 1995). Staff are said to be often feel stressed and overworked and perceive other academic duties as priorities compared to spending time and energy on minority groups of students with special needs. Such needs are often perceived to be the role and responsibility of the support staff at central level

than the role of academic staff. Studies show that while most members of the academic staff are subject orientated and focussed towards the needs of the majority of students, there is a dearth of staff who are sympathetic and sensitive to the needs of the students with special needs as a matter of goodwill with a positive attitude rather than encouraged by a proactive institution.

Furthermore, there are many factors that influence academic staff in their perceptions of dyslexia, dyslexic students and approach to support. Among them are the vagueness and fine line drawn between dyslexia and literacy difficulties in the intellectually average individuals in particular, which make it ever more difficult for academic staff to differentiate between the two. Dyslexia is a relatively new concept in higher education. As an unseen disability which ranges from very mild to very severe, the nature of the problem may even fluctuate from time to time in the same individual due to stress, anxiety or illness and this may make it even more challenging to academic staff to be convinced of its genuineness as a specific learning difficulty. They may wrongly conclude this phenomenon to be signs of laziness or carelessness on the part of the learner rather than it being a genuine learning difficulty. On the other hand, a general lack of awareness on the part of academic staff can be perceived as signs of oppression and discrimination against the dyslexic individual by those who are frustrated through reiteration of the problem and call for strategic change. Overworked staff with an ever-stretched responsibility against time constraints is another factor that may lead to the same conclusion. Hence, the argument calls for a careful balance of argument between what constitutes oppression and discrimination and a higher education organisation working under the current climate of economical

constraints and ever changing social and educational structure that calls for allocation of resources more imaginatively than ever before.

It is asserted that, in today's higher education academic members of the staff generally deliver teaching through a curricular structure designed for majority of students into a course. However, there appears to be a great difference in supporting the students as an individual as opposed to meeting the needs of a larger group. Also, some courses are generally designed to deliver a system of education in the form of lectures in large classroom size due to economical reason as a form of guide and empowerment of the learner to learn as opposed to teach the learner in a didactic form. While it is possible to teach in a multi-sensory way for the benefit of the majority of students, including dyslexics, this may not be constituted as discriminatory towards those who have difficulty learning through their non-preferred modality. However, lack of imaginative approach to teaching in diverse forms may well disadvantage those students who struggle to learn through their non-preferred modalities as a result of dyslexia or other disabilities. The dyslexic learner is said to often require information either in the form of lecture notes prior to the delivery of a lecture to enable him or her to follow the lecturer without much difficulties or will have to take notes and follow the lecturer at the same, known as 'multi-tasking' (a dyslexia related problem). Depriving such facilities by academic staff either ignorant about the learning difficulties or the presence of the dyslexic learner may well constitute a strategy or system lacking in meeting individual needs of students or the needs of minority groups of learners, resulting in subtle forms of conscious or unconscious discrimination, from a social context of disability. Such examples are numerous and go beyond the teaching and learning environment where the lecturer is said to be often

insensitive in marking a dyslexic student's work with unavoidable grammatical mistakes and lacking in expression or organisational skills in written works. Often, the lecturer is said being largely guided by measuring learning ability through written expression as a sign of 'graduateness' and, as such, academic standard cannot be compromised through low expectation in writing ability in higher education. Dyslexia and related difficulties seem to indicate the need to look at the individual student's strengths and weaknesses as a basis for both teaching and assessing the learner in higher education. As such, there are suggestions to devise a programme or curriculum that takes account of the uniqueness of the learner through imaginative teaching and learning and assessment strategies.

While the above examples of practices are explained through the social model of disability these are by no means exhaustive, as there are numerous other examples in the literature which perceive practices in higher education as discriminatory towards the dyslexic learner. However, explaining dyslexia as a disability with reference to social model is by no means immune to criticisms. First, as indicated earlier, separating impairment from disability as two separate and distinct entities, advocated earlier by Oliver (1990), means that the difficulties related to dyslexia and deficits are separated from the dyslexic individual, as though a fair and non-discriminatory system of education would ideally render dyslexia obsolete, as often claimed by some studies on dyslexia. According to Hughes (2007), separating the impairment of the individual from the individual and the disability is a denial that impairment is a fact in the individual. As such, in terms of dyslexia, this may constitute a disembodiment of the dyslexia syndrome by an educational system that is ideally immune from oppression and discrimination against the dyslexic learner. While social disability is

justified more from a political concept to redress the imbalance in an effort to reduce discrimination against the disadvantaged the fact remains that the dyslexic individual will continue experiencing difficulties even in an ideal learning environment and, as such, higher education needs to recognise the uniqueness of the individual and learning capacity within its system of integrative support and inclusiveness to educational practices. Disembodying the dyslexic's impairment is unlikely to render the dyslexia related difficulties or syndrome obsolete from the individual. As such, the social model of dyslexia, by Oliver's definition, remains medicalised at least partially in its theoretical construct.

The resulting argument appears to suggest that explaining dyslexia from a disability construct, in general, has also much to lose in terms of the dyslexic's self-identity and in terms of 'partisanship' of the problem as put forward, in general term, by Wilson (2000) upon his criticism on labelling the students as someone with 'learning difficulty', 'learning disability' or 'students with especial needs' and so on. The concept of dyslexia as a disability appears to bring both advantages and disadvantages to the learner in terms of self-identity and self-esteem. Identification of dyslexia as a disability evokes a variety of reactions, both positive and negative, into the individual on whom the label is cast. As such, the perception about dyslexia and attitudes held towards it, too, is firmly entrenched into the psyche of some dyslexic adults, often obtaining consolation and preferring to accept it as an impairment within the self following 'diagnosis' than wishing to be seen as educationally 'clumsy' or 'stupid' (Herrington, 2003). This is not, however, to say that the individual experiences solace and consolation by being labelled as 'dyslexic' or even worse, as 'disabled' as many studies seem to suggest. Far from it, some students feel at a loss and demeaned with

fear and uncertainty by just being different or labelled as dyslexics, let alone being considered as 'disabled' for the mere reason of obtaining academic support in higher education alongside other students either hard in hearing, vision impairment or wheelchair bound. Hence, the disability concept of dyslexia as currently known in higher education is a concept that the dyslexic learner has no choice but to carry as a label if they require additional support in higher education. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that some dyslexic students prefer not to declare their dyslexia even when support strategies are made available to them in the higher education institutions. There is moreover a fear of repercussions of such an approach to self-declare as disabled for future career prospects and earning capacity in employment, in addition to lecturers' reactions and the possible consequences of end academic results.

Based on Wilson's (1990) criticism on general disability, a concept that can be clearly defined and objectified may be well accepted without bias, doubt or criticism. One example is a medical condition such as 'malignant growth' which is objective, clear and definable as an entity out of the norm. Such a concept is said to be free from bias, value judgement and, as such, is a universally accepted phenomenon without elements of partisanship or question about its integrity. However, a concept such as 'learning difficulty' or 'learning disability' is a phenomenon measured against something in educational terms; meaning that the learner somehow experiences difficulties in learning due to the fact the system of education that is made available to all does not meet his or her particular requirement. This view also seems to suggest that an educator who is ignorant or, at least, less informed than the experts about these concepts will continue to be part of an oppressive and discriminatory system of education.

An alternative model that appears to somewhat move away from the hard concepts of disability while embracing and recognising the impairment and difficulties or disability related experiences of individuals are what Zola (1989) proposed as the 'Universality theory of Disability' or the universalistic approach to disability. In that Zola basically explains that in the ever changing world influenced by economical constraints with limitation of resources with an ever-growing number of individuals living longer with different forms of impairments or physically and mentally restricted lives, every individual's needs should be taken into account for a fairer society. In such a society there is, according to Zola, a need to redefine our understanding of disability in a much broader sense than actually seems to be endlessly debated by medical or social model with a culture of 'blame' or 'victimhood'. Such a society while it may embrace the needs of the disabled person also considers those who are restricted in ways of normal living as a result of some forms of limited ability or illnesses that require care and attention. In such a society, disability is not viewed in a narrow sense of the current definition of disability. Moreover such a society also sees everyone as dependent on each other for their livelihood and living, including those who are considered as disabled by present definition, based upon their level of ability. This is akin to current social and political debates about disabled individuals should be given autonomy and identity through encouraging them to go back to suitable occupations and contribute to society, and so be less dependent and stigmatised through social benefits. This means to say that the disabled person has a lot to contribute to society. Such a definition of disability may perhaps remove or reduce the stigma of disability and brings forth self-identity and self-esteem in which the disabled individuals have an important role to play and

contribution to make in society. As such, the disabled persons will not be stigmatised as there will be a spectrum of disability or individuals with specific or unique needs in diluted forms across the whole society, whose individual needs may be considered equally without elements of partisanship and social segregation. Zola's conceptualisation is further backed by several other advocates, scholars and disability activists such as Bichenbach et al. (1999); Turner (2001 & 2003); Shakespeare (1994); Shakespeare & Watson (2002) who state that the social model of disability has, perhaps, run its span of life and there is a need to re-think disability in a much broader sense. However, this is not without much criticisms and repercussions by those strongly in favour of a social model of disability (see Hughes, 2007) that is often based on oppression, discrimination of the disabled people by a disabling society and the role undertaken by the disabled person in terms of 'victimhood' with a continued fight for rights of equality of opportunity in a changing world with a shrinking economy. But what does the 'universality theory of disability' mean in terms of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support in higher education?

It would appear that while dyslexia is a well recognised learning difficulty many students in higher education wish neither to describe themselves as such nor declare their dyslexia for fear of reprisal or stigmatisation. Many dyslexic students are in a spectrum within the dimension of dyslexia from very mild to very severe but nevertheless would be considered the same in terms of recognition as 'disabled' in academic terms and in relation to university support provisions. Dyslexia is said to be often confused with students with average intellect or academically unmotivated students and, thus, it is difficult to clearly differentiate between the two. This is, often, further complicated by the fact that some dyslexic individuals are said to possess

special qualities and strengths that other non-dyslexic students may not possess, such as problem-solving skills and verbal abilities, to name but a few. While dyslexia fluctuates this is often further complicated as a convincing sign of dyslexia in the same individual, often creating doubt as to whether it is a genuine learning difficulty. While this is not to say that dyslexia is not a true fact there are others in higher education who show signs of dyslexia but may not be dyslexic. This means to say that there are students across the spectrum with severe difficulty in coping with their studies not as a result of dyslexia but due to factors such as average intellectual ability, social background, past experiences, social or educational deprivation, physical illness and other seen and unseen disabilities, to name a few. Others include students who are lacking in motivation to learn or who are disruptive, temporarily unable to cope educationally, undergoing stress, loss and the like. This means that every student regardless of their strengths and weaknesses, arguably, needs to be treated according to their individual needs (Wilson, 2000) and not only the dyslexics or those being labelled as 'learning difficulty' or 'learning disabled'. In such a system of education the dyslexic learner will receive support based upon his or her individual ability and strengths and not based upon the label of disability or dyslexia as a form of integrated support within an inclusive education. Likewise a non-dyslexic learner will require the same attention based upon his or her individual circumstances without prejudicing the learner as non-disabled in terms of support. Such a system will also bring forth an inclusive approach to education without the need to treat the dyslexic learner or other disabled students as 'others' within the system. Basically, it would appear that the universality concept of dyslexia will require no need to label the dyslexic as disabled but just the identification of specific needs as it would also be for all other students.

This was proposed by Pollack in his study of dyslexia (2004), stating that there is a need to redefine dyslexia and students' support in higher education.

To conclude, dyslexia as a specific learning difficulty, although comparatively a new concept in higher education, is extensively studied in children. As an unseen disability related to literacy dyslexia it has its own challenges; hence, the difficulties in defining and describing it as a universally agreed phenomenon. As a learning disability the focus, here, is on dyslexia explained from a disability perspective in higher education. The aim throughout has been to give a theoretical basis to its explanation from various modalities currently understood in the field of disability in general. The case is argued from the point of view of both the advantages and disadvantages such conceptualisations may have upon both the learner and their many implications in an ever-changing field of education and the concept of disability itself in general.

2.3 An Empirical Review of Lecturers' Awareness and Understanding of

Dyslexia, Dyslexic Students and Support:

While some relevant issues pertaining to the above topic have already been discussed in detail in the first chapter, here the conceptions of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support are explored specifically from the lecturers' perspectives as part of their academic role. But to what an extent are lecturers aware of dyslexia and of meeting the specific needs of dyslexic students in higher education? Numerous studies in the field of dyslexia research make reference to the fact that lecturers should raise or develop their awareness of dyslexia in order to provide support to dyslexic students. However, hardly any of these studies adequately define or explain what dyslexia

awareness means in practical terms. Upon closer analysis, it would seem that the term 'awareness' in itself is simply a concept, denoting a person's perception or cognitive reaction to a condition or event. As such, 'awareness' does not necessarily imply understanding but just an ability to be conscious of, feel or perceive. A person is said to be partially aware, may be subconsciously aware, or may be acutely aware with different level of perception or cognition of an issue. Moreover, the interpretation of such awareness or knowledge may be highly subjective or personal. What awareness of an issue means to one person may be quite different to another. From this viewpoint, therefore, it would seem fair to argue that, in the context of dyslexia, a lecturer may find the need to know no more than having a bare notion of dyslexia as a phenomenon for which the dyslexic student may be offered special support provisions according to the university support policy. To what an extent such an interpretation is helpful in terms of students' support by lecturers is highly contentious. As such, it may be argued that lecturers may perceive or interpret only certain aspects of dyslexia support within their personal remit as academics whereas the rest may be regarded to be the responsibility of the experts in the field or the support personnel of the university. However, such a level of dyslexia awareness may neither adequately demonstrate the lecturer's knowledge about the nature of the student's difficulties nor the impact of the difficulties upon the students' learning. Similarly, a lecturer may well be 'aware' of the support provisions that are normally made available to dyslexic students according to the university support policy and may, indeed, endeavour to arrange such a support for the learner but would hardly be equipped with the knowledge-base and insight as to how the support helps the learner with relevance to the nature of the difficulties experienced. Such an approach to support, guided mainly by the university support policy, is externally motivated through legislations as a

minimal requirement and on failing to do so may well constitute breach of the student's right in terms of equality of opportunity and discrimination act (DDA, 1995). One common example is the provision of extra time with especial facilities to a dyslexic learner during a written examination. While the lecturer may well be confident in arranging such a support he/she may not necessarily have proper insight or understanding as to how such a support helps or hinders the dyslexic learner, given the nature or the uniqueness of the learning difficulties experienced by individual students. On the other hand, 'awareness' as a concept may also be referred in general terms as common knowledge or understanding about an issue whereas in other instances it may denote a social movement such as 'smoking' awareness or 'weight watching' awareness. As such, lecturers' awareness or understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support as terms used in higher education, in the least, can be either vague or misleading if used without relating the concept to a clearly defined term in practice. Hence, awareness of dyslexia and related support may be interpreted differently by individual lecturers from those perceived or understood by professionals in the field or, indeed, by the dyslexic students themselves and their expectations of the lecturers' role and responsibilities towards them.

But first, what do dyslexia professionals themselves mean by the term 'dyslexia awareness' in relation to lecturers' role? A Dyslexia Working Party in Higher Education in a 208 pages report (Singleton et al., 1998) recommends that as part of awareness raising about dyslexia and students' support members of the academic staff should first and foremost develop an awareness or basic understanding of dyslexia as a specific learning difficulty. In order to provide effective support they should not only be aware of the disability support policies of their institutions but should also

familiarise themselves with specific information about the various types of specialised support provisions that are made available to dyslexic students in addition to developing good teaching and learning practices that are most suited to dyslexic students' learning needs. However, with reference to the above understanding about dyslexia awareness, the specific knowledge about dyslexia alone may entail a variety of issues that the lecturer is expected to know as part of developing his or her dyslexia awareness. This may entail an understanding of what 'dyslexia' means in terms of learning difficulties in adult students and how it manifests differently in individuals with different levels of severity; the distinctive pattern of difficulties the dyslexic students may experience, discrepancy in information processing, the specific strengths or the different ways that dyslexic students learn or cope with their learning difficulties or differences (Reid and Kirk, 2001). Unless such pre-requisites about dyslexia are clearly understood or acquired at a basic level it is hard to see how a lecturer can effectively meet the specific needs of dyslexic students in higher education. Moreover, lecturers' awareness of dyslexia, in addition to their basic understanding of dyslexia and the students' problems, also constitutes the acquisition of basic knowledge of support strategies, according to institutional policies. Such a level of specialised knowledge about the learning difficulties of a student with complex neurological deficits, far from mere awareness, requires time, effort commitment and prioritisation of role and attention of the lecturer, in addition to developing awareness of other innumerable seen and unseen students' disabilities. To what an extent such a level of knowledge acquisition about students' disabilities is possible by members of the academic staff in an ever increasing and complex role is a matter of debate. Indeed, the Dyslexia Working Party states that 'Dyslexia is sufficiently complex to evade a *quick* understanding of the issues that face a

student...' and, furthermore, 'pressures and time constraints' are one of the many challenges members of the academic staff need to contend with' (Singleton et al., 1998, p69).

But to what an extent are lecturers aware about dyslexia and students' needs and support based upon the above understanding and expectations? Various studies in the field of both dyslexia and general disability in higher education indicate that lecturers generally show little 'awareness' (Holoway, 2001; Good, 2007; Fuller et al., 2004; Shevlin et al., 2004; Hall & Tinklin, 1998; Mortimore and Crozier, 2006) or understanding of the specific learning difficulties and needs of students with dyslexia and related support. However, many of these studies are conducted, mainly seeking the views of the disabled students, often with dyslexia, with small sample populations almost as anecdotal evidences. But first, as a relatively new concept in higher education dyslexia is little known as compared to other seen or unseen disabilities among the members of the academic staff. Far from a basic awareness of dyslexia and students' needs, the interpretation of disability itself seems to be rather limited among the academic staff. For example, a study conducted by Chard and Couch (1998) indicated that in most instances disability was equated with wheelchair users by the academic members of the staff in higher education, indicating a general lack of disability awareness and, hence, a general lack of awareness and understanding about support of students with specific disability, such as dyslexia. Furthermore, Collins (2000) in a study reported that while disabled students identified 'attitude' as the most significant barrier to students' progress, academic staff identified lack of physical barriers and assistive technology, indicating the extent to which discrepancy continues to exist in both expectation and perception about students' problems with specific

learning difficulties in higher education. Moreover, dyslexia, as an 'invisible' or 'unseen' disability which is specifically related to problems of literacy, is said to have often been misconceived by the academic staff as an intellectual deficit, often equated with lack of will on the part of the learner to learn. As such, the dyslexic student is, often, labelled as intellectually average (Shevlin et al., 2004). Often, the discrepancy aspects of dyslexia syndrome both as strengths and weaknesses further adds to the elusiveness of dyslexia as a specific learning difficulty that makes it even harder for the academic staff to be convinced about dyslexia as a genuine learning difficulty. One may well argue, for example, how a deficit may also have underlying strengths as a result of a disability. Academic members of staff often perceive dyslexia with doubt and cynicism. In a short qualitative study, seeking the views of 16 disabled students, including 7 dyslexics (43%) in a single higher education institution in Ireland Shevlin et al., (2004) reported among the many findings that academic staff's attitudes towards disabled students, including the dyslexics, were one among the many obstacles for learners accessing courses effectively. Dyslexic students, in particular, faced problems in having their difficulties recognised. A significant difference could be noted between seen and unseen disability whereby dyslexic students were the most disadvantaged, according to this study. While physical disability was recognised to a certain extent, the concept of dyslexia itself remained a contentious issue with suspicion and ambivalence as to its existence as a genuine learning difficulty among the academic staff. This often results in staff's reluctance in providing dyslexic students with lecture notes, though such a practice varied both among the lecturers themselves as well as interdepartmentally within the same institution. Such a practice demonstrated a lack of consistency in practice towards meeting the needs of the disabled learners. Where such a facility was not widely available to all, disabled

students had to approach lecturers themselves for support. Indeed, dyslexia has often been misconceived as an intellectual deficit, often equated with lack of learning motivation with average intellectual ability or even viewed with suspicion and doubts by the academic members of the staff. Such attitudinal problems among the academic staff towards disabled learners, including the dyslexics, were perceived as a result of lack of disability training and awareness.

Moreover, as indicated earlier, there appears to be neither a clear and commonly agreed definition of the problem of dyslexia nor to the fact that it constitutes a real disability which makes it ever more difficult to justify as something unrelated to learners general intellectual ability or motivation to learn (Shevlin et al., 2004). As a result dyslexic individuals have to put more effort to convince the academic staff of their specific problems as compared to other seen disabilities. Often, the general lack of understanding of dyslexia and its manifestations as both strengths and weaknesses in the same individual make dyslexia even less convincing as a genuine learning difficulty and lecturers are more inclined into believing it as a lack of motivation or carelessness on the part of the learner. Moreover, dyslexia as a syndrome also fluctuates from time to time in the same individual due to stress (Gilroy and Miles, 1996). Such general lack of understanding about dyslexia on the part of the academic staff may easily result in the dyslexic students perceiving academic staff as being insensitive to their needs or lacking in support in academic terms. Lack of sensitivity and lecturers' understanding of dyslexic students needs are numerous in the study of general disability in higher education. For example, in a small-scale qualitative survey, utilising semi-structured interviews, Holoway (2001) sought the views of 6 students with various disabilities, including dyslexia, about their positive and negative

experiences as learners in Higher Education within the university 'equal opportunity' framework. Among the many interesting findings the report again showed a general lack of awareness by academic members of the staff about students with disability, support provisions and policy of the institution. However, the reactions towards support varied greatly among the staff. Where academic members of staff themselves were well briefed and supported, the students experienced positive outcomes. However, where those staff lacked awareness or specific knowledge of the disability students felt a general lack of support and understanding of their specific needs. On balance, academic staff were sympathetic and supportive to the general needs of disabled students. However, the report showed a wide-ranging response, from academic staff being highly supportive and aware of the nature of their disability to staff being 'cynical, unhelpful and non-consultative in decision making which directly affected them' (Holoway, 2001, p. 605). Although the study was conducted within a single university with a small sample population it, nevertheless, has the benefit of lesson learned or implications towards recognition of dyslexic students and their problems and needs in higher education. Furthermore, a study by Fuller et al (2004), utilising qualitative data based on small group interviews of a total of 35 disabled students, including dyslexia, in a single British university in 2002, explored disabled students' perceptions and experiences about teaching and learning as well as issues of access and information regarding disabilities in Higher Education. The findings showed that academic staff had limited knowledge of the needs of students with various disabilities, including dyslexia (representing 30% of the sample population). This was particularly in relation to lecturers' lack of inclusive approach to teaching, such as poor communication skills with adverse effect upon disabled students' learning during class delivery. On the other hand, there was a lack of appreciation

about problems disabled students experienced while taking notes and listening to lectures at the same time (a situation specially challenging to dyslexic student and difficulties in keeping with the quick pace of discussion by other students in the class). Comments were also raised about the format of assessment strategies, particularly written forms of assessments, including examinations that often proved particularly challenging to disabled students. The format of assessments left no choice to some disabled students but to consider those courses or modules that consisted of alternative assessments other than written forms. In the area of dissemination of information respondents were particularly concerned about an absence of appropriate mechanisms to relay information routinely to their tutors about their special needs following a declaration of their disabilities to the university. Moreover, lecturers were limited in their understanding of the needs of the disabled students as a result of being either unaware or ignorant of their disability following a declaration. Occasionally, there was evidence suggesting academic staff's unwillingness to demonstrate flexibility or understanding even when some disabled students had made their disabilities known to them. In general, the disabled students' experiences showed a difference in level of academic support in terms of both an inclusive teaching and dissemination of disability information to students. This short study conducted in one university with a small sample of 47, though significant and informative for the needs of students with specific learning difficulties, is limited in many ways in terms of generalising across all the HEIs. Furthermore, the study was limited in the sense that it treated students' disability in a generic as opposed to specific disabilities. Based upon its findings the study concluded the need for a larger scale study that may go beyond the parameter of a single university as well as the need to consider problems and needs of students with specific rather than disabilities in general.

Alongside a lack of awareness and understanding about dyslexia, some members of the academic staff were often negative in attitude towards students with dyslexia, which was seen as a form of barrier to academic support. A study, by Mortimore & Crozier (2006), was conducted in 17 universities (4 traditional and 13 new institutions) with a total sample of 136 male students only (62 dyslexics and a controlled group of 74) in the South-West of England. The method utilised was a quantitative survey utilising a questionnaire instrument with space for comments, seeking their views in relation to study skills difficulties these students had experienced both prior to and following entry to university and the extent to which support provisions/facilities were utilised. While there was some significant difference both in the experience of difficulties and uptake of support the findings, in particular, support the case of an academic related support for the dyslexic students by academic staff, in addition to the availability of the institutional standardised support provisions, - extra time for examinations, dyslexia tutors, technologies and the like. The study showed that dyslexic students experienced considerable difficulties in areas of learning and study skills, the most common being, reading, attending lectures, note-taking, organising essays and expressing ideas in writing. It meant that in addition to the individualised nature of support that would suit personal needs these difficulties were specifically related to academic work, lectures and subject specific support that required the direct involvement of academic staff. Furthermore, as a result of a lack of communication interdepartmentally, academic staff had little or no knowledge of the students with dyslexia or of their needs. As such, Mortimer & Crozier (2006) stated that 'Lecturers need more workshops/training on how to deal with people with dyslexia'.(p. 248). The findings further indicated undue stress and anxieties among the students who were

conscious that their dyslexia might be misconstrued as lacking in general ability or intelligence with adverse consequences later on for job opportunities. They expressed concerns about misconceptions of dyslexia by others and the judgements that are made about their work characterised by poor presentation, organisation and likely to be fraught with grammar and spelling problems. Such a feeling also created further anxieties among some dyslexic students, preventing them from approaching academic members of the staff who were often ignorant of the students' status as dyslexics. The researchers recommended a better-informed lecturer who could recognise the dyslexic students and their specific needs.

In addition to a lack of general awareness, many studies also showed both positive and negative attitudes on the part of the academic staff towards students with dyslexia. While some staff showed total ignorance and lack of sensitivity towards the dyslexic learner others showed understanding and sensitivity to their specific needs. There has often been a general lack of support for the academic staff themselves by the higher management working under tight budget and prioritisation in the allocation of resources in the most economical way for majority of the students. In a small-scale qualitative survey, Goode (2007) sought the views of a group of 20 disabled students about their experiences of support provisions in one higher education institution. The following were among the various common areas of exploration: choosing university/courses; admission/registration procedures; learning and teaching experiences such as (availability of materials using alternative formats, contact with personal tutors, assessment methods); the provision and use of non-medical helpers; access to and training in the use of assistive technologies. The report indicated that although there was evidence of good policy development in the university putting

those policies into practice was, however, lagging in many ways, suggesting a lack of inclusive education. Evidence suggested a need for an integrative and at the same time a differentiated practice in order to meet the needs of the disabled students. Students had contrasting experiences about the academic members of staff from being responsive to others being 'prehistoric' towards appreciating the problems/needs of the disabled students. However, students with different disabilities had different types of experiences. Some disabled students stated that certain members of the academic staff lacked diplomacy and unknowingly treating disabled students in an insensitive way by drawing the attention of others about their disability in the class; while others described on interviews scenario for course application during which some interviewers (academics) presented themselves as 'patronising', 'ignorant', 'insensitive' and 'intrusive' while contrasting the same with members at other universities as being supportive to the specific needs of the disabled students. The report also showed a general lack of communication among the academics regarding access and support provisions for disabled students, indicating that, often, they were unaware as to who was or was not aware of their specific needs, (including members of the academic staff); in addition to an unawareness about what support provisions were available and how to access them.

Other evidence regarding the general lack of awareness of dyslexia with both positive and negative attitudes widespread across the non-traditional higher education institutions in relation to academic related support provided similar findings. A qualitative study by Tinklin and Hall (1999), utilising mixed approach to interview and follow up a day experience of 19 mixed disabled students, including dyslexia, 19 disability co-ordinators (interviews only), 27 members of staff, including academic

staff and few student- peers and friends, in a total of 9 Higher Education institutions, seeking views about disability, support provisions and obstacles experienced by the disabled individuals as learners. This study has been highlighting limitations, one of assisted access, in the current model of support provisions, recent improvement and gaps within the system. It aimed to explore experiences of students with a range of impairment, including dyslexia, taking into account a variety of subjects in a number of institutions. A social model of disability, indicating that disability of students is more pronounced as a result of inaccessibility in the learning environment, informed the research. Academic staff interviewed indicated a need for clearer guidelines and information on how to take consideration of dyslexic students' need. This finding was corroborated by Browne et al., (1997) who stated: 'increasing numbers of students were identified as dyslexics, but there was a lack of shared understanding about appropriate support and fair assessment for these students' (p. vii). Students' experiences of support and services, whether good or bad, depended on the level of awareness of the members of staff they came to contact with. Some students reported very positive experience where staff had been well informed; whereas others reported experiencing difficulties. Among those staff who appeared to be well informed and supportive were those who had personal experience or an interest in disability issues, rather than because of institutional training or policies. Findings also indicated variation between departments in the same institutions. Personal experiences of dyslexia or in the family appear to suggest a better understanding of dyslexic students needs by staff. Some members of staff were well-meaning but ill informed or were operating on assumptions about a student's needs without checking with the student concerned. Most staff indicated a need for better information about policies, services available and ways to work effectively with students with different impairments.

Many staff appeared to have a positive attitude but insufficient experience or knowledge to draw on. Staff development had taken place on several institutions but was not well attended, given that staff had many pressures on their time, they tended to come to awareness training only when it was absolutely necessary with disabled students among their groups of learners.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Tinklin et al., (2004) between 2001 and 2003, to examine the impact of legislation and policies upon support provisions of disabled students, the highest number being dyslexic students. Data was collected through a system of review of relevant research, policy documents and legislation; interviews with 15 key informants; analysis of official statistics; in addition to a survey of further and higher education institutions in Scotland and England; and case studies of 8 institutions and 50 disabled students. A questionnaire was sent out to all further and higher education institutions. Apart from the many findings in the areas of support provisions for disabled students, the study showed the many good practices as well as a need for improved practices in teaching and learning and the academic role towards support of students with specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia.

In the Report Dyslexia Working Party report (1999) Singleton states that for effective provision of support account should be taken of the courses dyslexic student undergo and the skills they are required to master. Academic members of the staff have a special role here, not only in helping dyslexic students in gaining access to the support, but also supporting in the course related needs with specific knowledge and skills required. This means to say that the lecturer either provide such a skill as an extra curricular requirement or delegates such a duty to support personnel who may

provides study skills appropriate to cope with the course requirement. A study conducted by Farmer et al., (2002), utilising a mixed approach to survey, seeking academic staff's views on support of dyslexic students most respondents indicated that they helped dyslexic students in accessing standardised support provisions they were entitled to in the university, such as help with extra time in examination and arrangement of amanuenses and use of word processors. However, less than half the staff in the survey had given specific advice to students with dyslexia on study strategies and an even lesser number of staff had helped in relation to essay writing and note-taking. Often academic staff referred dyslexic students to support staff services. This indicated that fewer numbers of staff were directly involved in supporting dyslexic students with their studies. Academic staff also recognised and acknowledged the special abilities some dyslexic students demonstrated during the course of their studies, such as general intellectual ability, creativity and academic success. Some academics do not view dyslexia as a separate syndrome but on the extreme of a continuum of learning difficulties of students with and without dyslexia. This is particularly so following widening access to university with students gaining entry through non-traditional qualification, often with poor academic achievements, such as an access course. Some members of the academic staff expressed the view that the support provided to dyslexic students could also be beneficial to non-dyslexic students who have been struggling academically. This is another case in favour of an inclusive approach to education. The argument is that academic staff should treat every individual student according to their unique needs as they present themselves academically with both their strengths and limitations and not only the dyslexics. As regard to inclusiveness of support there is already in existence examples of a good approach to inclusive support in both teaching and learning and assessments of

students. For example, all students regardless of their disabilities are supported with a personal tutorial prior to submission of assignments and guidance is provided in an individual basis. Often these personal tutorials are preceded by group or classroom discussions on assignments. Such an approach often does not warrant identification of dyslexia or singling out students with labelling although dyslexia is recognised as a specific problem along the continuum of learning difficulties.

Academic staff expressed the need for dyslexic students to take responsibility, that is '...the importance of the student being willing to take responsibility for their difficulties and to look for help, if necessary.' (Farmer et al., 2002, P160). This is an aspect of self-advocacy that academic members of the staff prefer to see in students of higher education. Furthermore, also identified among academic related support was a good practice of inclusiveness to support which are as follows: a sympathetic academic who can understand the specific needs of dyslexic students where each has individual needs that are different from the other; one inclusive approach to support is not to necessarily single out those students with dyslexia but any students with study difficulties to seek support provided through the personal tutorial system; another evidence of inclusiveness is issuing lecturer notes to all students prior to a lecture helping not only dyslexic students by singling them out as special favours but which is also helpful to other students who may well get into difficulties in following a lecture or taking notes while listening at the same time; fostering inclusiveness by encouraging group works where students with different academic and literacy abilities can help each other and utilise their specific strengths and weaknesses. This also helps self-organisation since every student with or without dyslexia has to organise him/herself in conjunction with the other as they are required to work together as a

group; and lastly a supportive and sympathetic approach towards the needs of students are helpful both to dyslexic and non-dyslexic students. Often dyslexic students have lack of self- confidence and self-esteem.

As the above findings in the study of dyslexia in further and higher education have shown, there is generally a dearth of information in the field, specifically from the academics' perspectives. This is specifically highlighted by the difficulties experienced by O'Shea (2003) on the study of current evidence relating to occupational therapy students with dyslexia on placement and how this might be of influence to supervisors and higher education institutions and occupational therapy departments. The study had outlined the possible implications for dyslexic students, fieldwork educators and supervising students with dyslexia and how the development of learning contracts might help in facilitating the student-supervisor relationship. The lack or absence of study in the field had forced O'Shea to abandon the methodology and concentrate solely on literature review to substantiate the findings of the study, indicating often, the severity in shortage of studies from educators' perspectives in the field.

Where lecturers' views are sought this is often centred round the nature of the reading and writing difficulties as opposed to approaches to support and academic's understanding and views of the concept of dyslexia learning difficulties (Farmer et al., 2002).

2.4 A Conceptual Framework of Help and Coping with reference to Lecturers' views of Dyslexia, Dyslexics students and Support:

As stated in the earlier chapter, the most appropriate theory of help and coping strategy assumed for the purpose of this research is one that is borrowed from the field of social-psychology, specifically related to therapeutic intervention of help-relationship between a client and a practitioner, formulated by Bricman et al. (1982). Although the framework is related to the psychotherapeutic intervention, Bricman and colleagues pointed out that this framework is equally beneficial and applicable in any professional or non-professional setting where there is a help/support-relationship or intervention between a helper and a helpee. With this in mind, the justification to the choice of this framework, as stated earlier, is assumed to be relevant in the context of lecturers and students with special needs in the higher education. For convenience rather than intent, therefore, the concept '*practitioner*' is interchanged with 'lecturer' or 'helper' and the '*client*' with 'dyslexic learner' or 'helpee'. Although the concept 'help' itself appears to be closely associated with the doing or action aspects in terms of meeting the needs of an individual, in the educational context it is interchanged with the term 'learning support'. However, support, as a concept, can also be highly complex and often subjective in interpretation, as it will be addressed more in detail later. For now, support may be interpreted as a process whereby the lecturer, as the practitioner, provides dyslexic individual with the necessary learning material or facilitates in the acquisition of such material for the student to deal with his/her problem through guidance. In this context, help and support as concepts are interchanged, as we commonly understand in adult education. However, it is hoped that the complexity of such a concept and its location will unfold itself and become clearer as Bricman et al.'s theoretical framework is elaborated further. In the current study, the help/support relationship itself is conceptualised as an interaction between

the lecturer and the dyslexic student that has the specific aim of resolving the student's presenting problems or meeting specific learning needs as opposed to dealing with the personal or private matters of the student. This is not, however, to say that the dyslexic learner may not be referred to expert personnel such as the educational psychologist, student welfare department, study skills, counselling or support staff, as and when necessary to deal with their personal needs.

There are several basic assumptions posited by Bricman and colleagues in their formulation of the conceptual framework of help and coping. Briefly stating, it is their basic tenet that in seeking help or support the individual appears to concede that there is, indeed, a 'problem' in existence that impedes his/her adaptive functioning and, as such, the individual acknowledges the unavoidable inability to deal with the presenting problem upon his/her own. In the context of this study, learning difficulties as a result of dyslexia are the underlying problems of the student who may require support to cope with his/her own learning. Based upon this assumption, therefore, it is the authors' assertion that for both the helper and helpee the helping-interaction is shaped by two fundamental factors, that is: (a) who is to be responsible for the cause or origin of the problem and (b) who or what is responsible for the solution to the problem. This is known as 'attribution of responsibility' in the help/support relationship by Bricman et al. (1982). It is the answers to these two basic questions that ultimately provide the meaning and direction of the help/support intervention. Bricman and colleagues' assumptions are based upon the 'theory of attribution', originally conceptualised by Fritz Heider (1958). But what do we understand by the term 'attribution'?

First proposed by Heider (1958) in the Psychology of interpersonal relationships, 'attribution' as a concept is the process by which we, as individuals, attempt to interpret and explain our own behaviour or actions or that of others. This interpretation or explanation is particularly related to our thinking and feeling towards ourselves or towards others. In short, we seek to understand why another person did something and, in the process, we may attribute one or more causes to that behaviour. Heider discusses what he calls 'naïve' or 'commonsense' psychology. In his term, people are like amateur scientists, trying to understand other people's behaviour by piecing together information until they arrive at a reasonable explanation of the cause of that behaviour, action or event. According to Heider, we normally make two broad attributions about our own or another person's behaviour or action, known as (a) internal attribution (in that, the inference made is that the person is behaving in a certain way because of something about the person which is making him/her to do so, such as attitudes, personality or internal environment/drive), (b) external attribution (the person is behaving in a certain way because of something about the situation s/he is in). Occasionally, however, both internal and external attributions are made at the same time. Attributing the behaviour of others are, therefore, significantly driven by both our emotional and motivational drives. As such, there is a tendency to decide whether our own or, indeed, someone else's action should be attributed to internal cause (dispositional) or external cause (situational). This is further elaborated (See Table 1, below).

Table 1: Attributing our own action/behaviour and that of others (Heider, 1958)

Action/ Behaviour	Internal (Dispositional Attribution)	External (Situational Attribution)
Own	Preferred when the outcome of our action/ behaviour is <u>positive/successful</u>	Preferred when the outcome of our action/ behaviour is <u>negative/unsuccessful</u>
Others	Preferred when the outcome of others' action/ behaviour is <u>negative/unsuccessful</u>	Preferred when the outcome of others' action/ behaviour is <u>positive/unsuccessful</u>

Illustrated in the above table, Heider posits that although most of the time our behaviour is the product of both the internal and external explanations we tend to emphasise either the one or the other and, rarely, both. As such, we may tend to give too much weighting to internal factors when it comes to judging others, depending upon how we feel or what is the underlying motive towards the other person. Hence, we may tend to either internalise or externalise the cause of a person's action, especially when that serves our personal interest or frees us from trouble or discomfort. This is known as the 'fundamental attribution error', also supported by Jones et al.(1972). Heider posits that behaviour of a person represents the 'figure against the ground'. The ground itself is comprised of the context, roles, situational pressures that, often, initiate the behaviour. As such, the behaviour is said to be conspicuous whereas the 'situational' factors are comparatively less easily perceived in another individual. In short, we easily attribute the wrong of others (and our own successes) as the cause arising from within, that is the 'internal' (dispositional bias), whereas, we attribute the successes of others (and our own failures) as the cause arising from external factors (situational bias). However, the theory of attribution is advanced further by other theorists of attribution, such as Jones and Davis, 1972; Weiner et al., 1972; Weiner, 1974, 1980, 1986 and Kelley, 1967; Harvey and Weiry,

1985; Daly, 1996; Lewis and Daltroy, (1990); Aronson and Wilson, 2003). In that, they embraced many fields of sociology and psychology, such as criminal law, appraisal, ethics, education, decision-making, marketing and communication and many others that are beyond the scope of this study to address in any depth. One among these is Bricman et al's therapeutic framework of help and coping (1982), which has been utilised and extensively elaborated in support of this study. According to Bricman and colleagues, attributing the cause of a person's behaviour, especially in help/support relationships, is highly complex, since it is often deliberately attributed to 'internal' factors in the form of 'bias disposition' perhaps, as a means to empower the individual to cope within a given environment. This is particularly discussed in the context of dyslexia support with reference to 'attribution of responsibility'.

Based upon the cause and the solution to the problem, mentioned earlier, Bricman and colleagues reflect upon a set of follow up assumptions and expectations about the client/helpee, about the practitioner/helper, about the concepts of human nature in general and consequently the implication or establishment of a unique help strategy that may suit the client. In normal circumstances, it is assumed that both the helper and the helpee, from the very beginning of a help/support interaction, each have in mind a set of personal assumptions about the nature of the problem and also about what should or could be done to solve the client's problem. To put it simply, a dyslexic student may have a notion about his/her inability to take lecture notes while listening to the lecturer at the same time; that is, dyslexic students experiencing difficulties in performing multi-tasks (Nicolson and Fawcett, 1999) and, hence, the need to seek lecture notes from the lecturer prior to lecture delivery. But, in practical terms, to give out lecturer notes without further exploration of the client's actual

problem and needs may be questionable in way of supporting the student. The lecturer may well decide that giving a student lecture-notes prior to a lecture may be potentially counterproductive in terms of empowering the learner to take control of his/her own learning and note-taking skills as an autonomous learner. As a result, the lecturer may decide that a more appropriate strategy to support may be to guide the dyslexic learner to develop the necessary note-taking skills within the remit of his or her underlying difficulties, through individual support and supervision. Arguably, it may be claimed that at one level such a personal assumption/help strategy determines the helper's/lecturer's approach to intervention in dealing with the helpee's/student's problem. Nevertheless, in help intervention, the explicit rationale always seems, according to Bricman et al., to relieve the client's problem at personal level. But implicitly, the aim is how to enact such a process, where the responsibility does or should lie and who is or should be in control for a healthy and empowering approach to support (Kaswan, 1981). Such an implicit rationale to intervention is, ideally, aimed at helping the client to reflect upon his/her own problem, address his/her own potentials to deal with the problem and assume responsibility in the help/support relationship (Rodin & Janis, 1979). From this perspective, the client may be guided or encouraged to assume a healthy role towards a successful help intervention causing as minimum stress upon the client as possible. However, a competent practitioner of help is expected to have the capacity to move around flexibly and with fluidity within all the help modalities according to the presenting problem of the client and his/her vision about the help approach that may help him/her to overcome the difficulties in a most healthy and productive way.

It is worth putting some light in our understanding of the practitioner's 'attribution' while inferring to the needs or problems of the client, based upon our discussion on the theory of attribution, as stated above. In other words, how a practitioner infers or puts the problem/needs of the client in context with relevance to the client and his/her situation? Batson (1975); Caplan & Nelson (1973); Goffman (1961); Halleck (1971) and Langer & Abelson (1974) have suggested that inevitability of errors (also known as 'fundamental attribution error' by Heider, (1958) often do take place in any help or therapeutic interaction. In the context of attribution of responsibility there is often a systematic bias that, often, takes place in the way that practitioners of help make about client's needs/problems, meaning attributing the problem and the needs upon the client (Internal attribution) when the problem actually lies in the situation or in the environment (External attribution), (See Table 1, above). However, it is noted that in therapeutic relationship, the underlying aim of attributing the problem of the client 'internally' is to give ownership of responsibility to the client. In other words, practitioners tend to make a 'dispositional' bias (perhaps, consciously). However, this is not to say that it is necessarily an unhealthy or malicious approach to help strategy (Langer and Abelson, 1974).

The theory of attribution (Jones and Davis, 1965; Kelley, 1967) suggests that normally a practitioner of support, first and foremost, tends to locate the problem of the client (helpee) as a step in the help strategy. This means that regardless of whether the client is or is not responsible for the cause of the problem, the assumption is that there is almost always a problem underlying a help-relationship and, as such, there is a need to locate the problem either in the client or in his/her environment. The location of the client's problem is said to be one single factor determining the

subsequent support processes (Batson, O'Quin and Pych, 1982). However, as stated earlier, locating such a problem in a support strategy is hardly an easy task. For example, while a dyslexic learner may try to justify dyslexia as the cause of his/her 'writing difficulties' as a means to seek lecturer's support and understanding in the marking of his/her scripts, although this may well be justifiable, to trust such a claim entirely without carefully locating where and how the writing problem of the student is arising, may well be an unhelpful or unproductive way to support. This is especially so if the difficulty turns out to be resulting rather out of poor study skills in addition to dyslexia problems. This argument seems to lie in what is known as the lecturer attempting to locate the student's actual problem-manifestation (locus attribution) as opposed to looking at 'dyslexia' as the cause of the problem (causal attribution), see further illustration of 'Attribution' in Table 2, below.

Table 2: Practitioner's attribution of responsibility about the client's problems, based on Bricman et al.(1982) framework of help and coping

Attribution	The underlying principle	Practitioner's aim	Model of support
Causal Attribution <i>(Internal)</i>	Practitioner inferring the client's problem on the actual condition of the client rather than on the individual. (e.g. Dyslexia)	To 'remediate'/ treat the condition of the client	Medical
Locus Attribution <i>(Internal & External)</i>	Practitioner inferring (locating) the client's problem upon the individual and/or the environment rather than on the condition of the client. (e.g. Reading/writing difficulties in dyslexia)	To (i) either help the client to cope and/or (ii) improve his/her environment.	Medical and/or Social
Route (i) <i>(Internal)</i>	(a) <u>Dispositional Attribution</u> : The problem is, as though, in the individual. (e.g. Dyslexic student experiencing difficulties to read/write due to poor	To help the client to cope.	Medical

Route (ii) (External)	coping strategy) (b) <u>Situational Attribution</u> : The problem is located in the environment of the individual. (e.g. Reading/writing difficulties occurring as a result of poor learning environment or support)	To improve the environment of the client.	Social
--------------------------	--	---	--------

According to the above table, Locus attribution to infer a person's problem is often attributed in the person (dispositional attribution), meaning 'as though' the problem is arising from within the person or the problem lying in the immediate physical or social environment (situational attribution). Too often, however, there is a tendency on the part of the support practitioner to make a 'dispositional bias' (meaning the problem is situated in the person although this may well be lying in the environment the person is in). While such a strategy may appear to be a form of 'bias' the practitioner of support, often, deliberately tends to make such a dispositional bias about the problem as an effort to empower the individual to self-change and cope by taking active responsibility in coping with his/her problem. This, according to Jones and Davis (1965) and Kelley (1967) appears to be a natural behaviour of practitioners who are, often, too frequently inclined to focus either consciously or unconsciously on the individual rather than the situation (environment) of the individual. While such a strategy may indeed, appear to support Oliver (1996) and Hughes (2007) medical model (See Table 2) as opposed to a social model in the field of general disability. It is, often, the fact that while it is a good strategy to change or improve the environment to suit to the needs of the individual the Dispositional attribution may help to encourage the individual to cope with his/her own problem and adapt to the environment. While it is ideal to change the environment given the many economical,

political and other constraints, however, it may not always be possible in the real world (Wilson, 2000; Zola, 2005).

The above idea is also supported even by the social advocates of disability such as Shakespeare and Watson (2002). On the other hand, as argued earlier in the literature, changing the environment of an individual with disability or the person with dyslexia does not necessarily mean that the individual is freed from his/her impairment or underlying difficulties (learning difficulties); in that, the impairment, in fact, remains a part of the disabled individual (Hughes, 2002; 2007) and, hence, the need to develop those coping strategies that are most suited to self-change in order to better adapt to the environment as opposed to constantly focussing on changing the existing environment. To illustrate this point, the lecturer, while may not be too concerned about 'dyslexia' as the cause of the student's problem (causal attribution), may prefer to focus on the student's actual reading/writing difficulties (locus attribution) '*as though*' arising from within the client (dispositional bias). As a result, the practitioner is better able to guide the learner to improve his/her reading/ writing through study skills or other means with the active involvement of the learner rather than delving into the syndrome of dyslexia. Here, to focus on dyslexia itself is unlikely going to improve the writing difficulties of the dyslexic learner, at least with reference to the role of the lecturer. Such a line of thinking is, in fact, not unknown in dyslexia support in higher education. Indeed, lecturers, as academics in their own subject specialities, are not expected to develop expertise or in-depth knowledge about dyslexia but to raise enough awareness so as to be able to 'empower' or guide/support dyslexic students in dealing with their own learning difficulties according to needs (Dyslexia Working Party in higher education, 1989; Palfreman-Kay, 2003). But to what an

extent 'awareness' of an issue in terms of knowledge is enough and in whose term. This, in itself, is a debatable issue with regard to lecturers' awareness of dyslexia which has, up to now, remained highly vague and largely undefined, as discussed earlier in the study. Hence, going back to the earlier argument about (Locus attribution) this is not to say that the lecturer is encouraged to locate the problem within the student, as though the problem is located entirely within the person, but needs to also take account of the student's learning environment, such as whether the lecturer is reflecting upon his/her own teaching strategies with an effort to eliminate any deficits underlying his/her approach to teaching and supporting the dyslexic student. Arguing about the concept of a practitioner of support making inference of the cause of the helpee's problem as 'dispositional bias' is, therefore, not necessarily a process designed to prejudice the helpee or looking for 'an easy way out' but with an intention to empower him/her sensitively as a means to take control of his/her own destiny. It may also be argued that a 'bias' is only proven to exist if the individual is deliberately placed in a disadvantaged position against what may constitute effective support. This is in the context of not only the helpee but the practitioner of support, too (Jones and Davis, 1972).

Looking at dispositional bias in detail, however, is far too complex than it has been discussed above. However, it is worth giving a few other justifications as factors influencing a practitioner of support and its relevance to dyslexia support. It is often the case that the lecturer may tend to infer the problem within the dyslexic learner although he/she is aware the problem is 'situational', that is lying in the environment. For example, if a written examination is perceived to be handicapping for a dyslexic student the focus may still remain on the dyslexic student by providing support

provision to deal with the written examination rather than attempting to alter the format of the examination. This tendency is perhaps a natural one especially at the personal level to help-intervention when the lecturer is well aware that altering the format of the examination (the situation) is perhaps beyond his /her personal control; but, supporting the dyslexic learner at an individual level to cope without altering the situation is more amenable to support. Often it is also the case that the lecturer may deliberately discount the claim made by the dyslexic student since dyslexia, being the cause of his/her writing difficulties, there is a tendency implicit within this view that people in need of help tend to externalise their problems/weakness as an excuse even though the information given may well be true. This is not uncommon regarding dyslexia as a literacy difficulty where there is, often, a very fine line drawn between what constitutes dyslexia related difficulties and average intellectual ability of a student or laziness/carelessness in academic terms (Morgan and Klein, 2000). It is not unusual to be the case that lecturers occasionally discount such information, stating that a student should not undertake a course in higher education if knowing very well that s/he cannot cope with the demand of the course due to dyslexia (McGloughlin et al., 1994). Here, lecturer's priority may perhaps lies more towards his/her loyalty towards the academic demands and quality and standards of the course requirement and maintenance of the university academic prestige or culture than the personal need of the learner with special needs (Madriaga, 2007). One is not too often surprised to hear that lecturers are reluctant to compromise academic standards (McGloughlin et al., 1994). Indeed, the primary loyalty will seem to lie towards society at large in preference to the individual needs; hence, the unsuitability of the dyslexic student, at least in the perceptions of some members of the academic staff, to undertake certain courses that may jeopardise the achievements of others. On the other hand,

practitioners/helpers are expected to help and may know that helping resources are predominantly orientated to changing the client by way of providing remedial support (Nisbett et al., 1972; Storms, 1973); such as, in the case of dyslexia the arrangement of study skills, provision of reading sources and lecture notes. As a result of these factors the approach to deal with the help strategy between the practitioner and the client may well appear as a medical approach of help strategy (Wills, 1978).

To take the discussion further, according to Bricman and colleagues there are four distinct factors that have an overarching effect upon any help-relationship. These are (a) attribution to responsibility, (b) maintenance of self-esteem, (c) control and lastly (d) commitments. Each of these concepts can have both positive and negative impacts upon the outcomes of a help-relationship, depending upon how these assumptions are viewed or translated into action either by the helper, the helpee or both in a given context. While each of these factors is in its own right too vast to discuss at any length, here, only the 'attribution of responsibility' is the underlying theme of Bricman and colleagues' framework of help and coping. Simply put, the 'attribution to responsibility' as an assumption basically aims to seek to find where and to what extent the responsibility of the 'problem' and the 'solution' of the problem is located in the help-relationship. In other word, is the problem 'dispositional – (i.e. located within the client) or is it situational - (i.e. located in the situation or environment of the client) or is it located in both contexts? If so, how the practitioner and the client is perceived, respectively? Likewise, this attribution to responsibility also applies to the solution to the problem. It is through these very assumptions that Bricman and colleagues determine their respective models of help and coping, known as: Moral, Enlightenment, Medical and Compensatory (See table-1, below). However, it is

worthy of note that while the reference to the attribution to responsibility in Table-1 seems to be making reference mainly to the client, this attribution can also be applicable from the practitioner's perspective about the client. For example, instead of stating 'Perception of self' this may also be interpreted as 'Perception about the client' by the practitioner. As a matter of fact, it is in this very context that lecturers' conceptualisations of dyslexic students and support/help strategies have been conceived in this study (see Table 2 below), since the sample population has been drawn entirely from lecturers' rather than from dyslexic students.

As stated earlier, this framework, therefore, assumes that there is, indeed, a problem. In other words, in the context of the dyslexic student, 'dyslexia as a specific learning difficulty' is assumed to be the cause of the underlying learning problems of the student. But before going further it may seem logical, on first sight, to assume that dyslexic learner, far from being responsible for the cause of his/her of dyslexia as a neurological deficit is, in fact, the victim of such a deficit, having been born with. But to what an extent and where, in a support-relationship does the lecturer attribute *the* problem of dyslexia? As it goes, this may apply to the attribution of the solution to the problem, too. It is within the parameter of this argument that the four models are proposed by Bricman et al.(See Table 3, below).

Table:3 Consequences of attribution of responsibility in the four models of helping and coping.

Attribution to self of responsibility for problem	Attribution to self of responsibility for solution	
	High	Low
	<u>Moral model</u>	<u>Enlightenment model</u>
High		
Perception of self	Misdirected/Lazy/stubborn	Guilty
Actions expected of self	Striving	Submission
Others besides self who must act as	Peers	Authority
Action expected of others	Exhortation	Discipline
Implicit view of human nature	Strong	Bad
Pathology	Loneliness	Fanaticism
	<u>Compensatory model</u>	<u>Medical model</u>
Low		
Perception of self	Deprived	Ill
Actions expected of self	Assertion	Acceptance
Others besides self who must act as	Subordinates	Experts
Action expected of others	Mobilisation	Treatment
Implicit view of human nature	Good	Weak
Pathology	Alienation	Dependency

From P. Bricman, V.C. Rabinowitz, J. Karuza, D. Coates, E. Cohn, & L. Kidder. Models of Help and coping.

American psychologist, 1982, 37, 368-384.

It is important, however, to re-emphasise that the current study aimed to seek the views of lecturers about their views of dyslexic students and support strategy. Hence, the four help modalities, presented by Bricman and colleagues, are discussed mainly from practitioner's (lecturers) perspectives as opposed to that of the clients (dyslexic students), as presented in Table 4, below.

Table:4 Lecturers' attribution of responsibility towards dyslexic students based on Bricman's et al. models of helping and coping.

Attribution of responsibility for problem	Attribution of responsibility for solution	
	High	Low
	<u>Moral model</u>	<u>Enlightenment model</u>
High		
Lecturers' perception of dyslexic students	Misdirected/Lazy	Guilty
Actions expected of dyslexic students by lecturers	Strive	Submit/conform
Others besides dyslexic students who must act as	Peers	Authorities
Action expected of others (including lecturers)	Exhort (Praise)	Discipline
Implicit view of dyslexic students by lecturers	Strong (potentially 'Able')	Bad (potentially 'Weak')
Problems/difficulties of dyslexic students identified by lecturers	Lonely (detached)	Fanaticism (Academic expectation)
	<u>Compensatory model</u>	<u>Medical model</u>
Low		
Lecturers' perception of dyslexic students	Deprived (Excluded)	Ill (Disabled)
Actions expected of dyslexic students by lecturers	Assert	Accept
Others besides dyslexic students who must act as	Subordinates	Experts
Action expected of others (including lecturers)	Mobilise (Facilitate)	Treat (Direct)
Implicit view of dyslexic students by lecturers	Good (Able)	Weak
Problems/difficulties of dyslexic students identified by lecturers	Alienated (Segregated)	Dependent

Converted from P. Bricman, V.C. Rabinowitz, J. Karuza, D. Coates, E. Cohn, & L. Kidder. Models of Help and coping. *American psychologist*, 1982, 37, 368-384.

Moral model:

According to Bricman and colleagues' conceptualisations of help and coping the model in which clients are held responsible for both the cause of the problem and its solution is called the Moral model. In this model, the client is assumed to have created his/her own problem, perhaps, as a result of his/her stubbornness, laziness or

misdirected efforts in behavioural terms. Hence, the client is expected to find a solution to his or her problem. In the context of dyslexia, however, it is inconceivable to imagine how a student can be held responsible for the *cause* of his/her dyslexia, which is a neurological deficit that the individual is born with. But in practical terms, a lecturer may, arguably, hold a dyslexic student responsible for not producing a coherent piece of written work (the problem), as the result of dyslexia as the underlying cause. In the same vein, the dyslexic learner may well be held responsible for not being adequately prepared, in academic terms, prior to undertaking university studies. As a result, s/he may be perceived as lacking in self-discipline or failing to develop a healthy coping strategy.

This takes us to the practitioner's expectation to help strategy, in the moral model. In that, the practitioner of support may have an expectation of the client as someone having the ability or duty to overcome his/her own difficulty through appropriate behaviour (solution to the problem). Here, the client as an individual is perceived as potentially 'strong' and, as such, has the capacity to re-orientate himself or herself and solve or cope with his/her own problems as an adult. In other words, the essential agent of change is the client himself/ herself. The assumption or expectation of the practitioner is that, no one else should or could solve the client's problem but himself/herself. To illustrate this point, it is the experience of the researcher once witnessing a colleague-lecturer saying to a junior student with dyslexia that she should put dyslexia behind her mind and get on with his/her assignment and that she should not allow dyslexia to affect or take the best of him/her. The role of the practitioner in the moral model is limited by way of exhorting, coercing or praising the client to change himself or herself. The role is almost that of a 'peer' of the client,

giving a message: *'you got into it by inviting yourself into it through negligence, carelessness or laziness and now you have to get yourself out of it'*. But to put this model in a rather more positive tone, the client is urged or encouraged to view himself/herself as an active causal agent who is responsible for both creating and solving the problem. Although in the context of dyslexia such a conceptualisation, as discussed above, may well be possible from the lecturer perspective it is perhaps more applicable in addressing a client's maladaptive behaviour. In that, s/he has the capacity to overcome the problem through the development of a self-help strategy. In the Moral model the client is motivated to take own responsibility through coercion or praise (Bricman, Linsenmeir, & McCareins, 1976; Janoff-Bulman & Bricman, 1982) and, at the same time, s/he is expected to be less dependent or passive. The disadvantage of the model, however, is that everything appears to be contingent upon the client's behaviour and the problem seems to be personally caused as well as solved. As a result, the 'pathologised' outcome of this model is that the client may well undergo the risk of feeling lonely and detached from others with an eventual lack or loss of self-efficiency, especially in failed outcomes. It is not uncommon to hear a dyslexic student declaring their dyslexia to the university at the outset of the course but due to the lack of external support from the institution or lecturer with the idea of *'get on with it'* s/he gives up in seeking further help, often resulting in dejection and loneliness with continuing and protracted unsuccessful outcomes in personal studies.

Enlightenment model:

In the enlightenment model, while the client is perceived to be still held responsible for the cause of the problem he/she is not perceived to be directly responsible for its solution. Again, as the above model, it is inconceivable but possible to imagine that a

dyslexic student is held responsible for the cause of his/her own problem, not necessarily in terms of dyslexia but rather in terms of lacking in the fulfilment of academic requirements. From a behaviourally maladaptive perspective, however, the practitioner, in this model, may treat the client as a 'culprit' of his/her own action; hence, he/she is perhaps believed to be guilty of that action and consequences of his/her suffering. Implicit in this model is the view of the client as someone either out of control and as a result of his/her wayward behaviour he/she is unable to deal with his/her personal problem alone. This is best illustrated in the case of an individual with alcoholism or drug addiction, whereby the client is believed to be responsible for the cause of his/her problem but the solution to come out of it is assumed to be beyond his/her personal capability. However, putting the same argument in the context of dyslexia, one may hardly be surprised to see a lecturer being uncompromising to academic standards by dyslexic students presenting poor writings. For example, writing errors or grammatical mistakes, lack of written expression and comprehension in scripts can, often, be perceived occurring due to carelessness on the part of the student (with or without dyslexia). As a result, it is believed that his or her culpable mistakes ought to be highlighted so that it will not be repeated in future. Such a mistake, if goes unheeded, can often be unforgiving, resulting into failure in assignments. In this model, the client is expected to accept the cause of his/her problems (reading/writing difficulties) and hence submit to the strength, support, discipline and legitimacy of the authority (higher education institutions). In that, the authority figure is viewed as the essential or primary agent of change. One such organisational figure or organisation can be the one dealing with issue of alcoholism, drug addiction or weight-watching or higher education institution in the case of students with dyslexia. As a result, the dyslexic student is referred to the support staff,

student welfare, counsellors or given extra time, amanuenses during written examinations or, indeed, given financial and technical support to adjust to the laid down requirement of the course. To view the Enlightenment model positively, however, the client is, at least, relieved of the responsibility of his/her immediate problem which can often be overwhelming, especially for those finding themselves repeatedly in difficulties to cope; hence, a sense of relief and free of self-reliance and responsibility; for example, in the case of an intellectually average dyslexic individual struggling to cope upon his/her own. But this model is not free from severe repercussions upon the individual, such as loss of control, self-esteem or motivation to excel in future with a resultant general passivity or over-reliance on the authority figure. Bricman and colleagues pathologised such an outcome as 'fanaticism'. Here, the dyslexic learner who is struggling with the course may resort in doing little as a way of merely surviving the course as opposed to self-develop educationally.

Medical model:

The helping model in which the client is neither held responsible for the cause of the problem nor the solution to the problem is known as the Medical model. This is akin to the model in which contemporary medicine and treatment is based on, hence the 'medical' model. The concept has also been extensively discussed earlier on dyslexia as a disability or deficits. This is further elaborated from Bricman et al.'s help and coping perspectives. In the Medical model the client perceived himself/herself or by the practitioner as essentially 'ill'. However, in the context of dyslexia, the dyslexic student is perceived as someone with neurological deficits. Hence, the individual is held responsible neither for the cause of dyslexia (an inborn characteristic) nor for dealing with it on his/her own without support/ intervention. Implicit in the model,

according to Bricman and colleagues, is the view of the client as the 'passive' recipient of support. In that the client is expected to 'accept' support offered by the practitioner or the institution with an which aim to free him/her from ordinary social obligation. In other words, the client is expected to acquiesce to the ministrations of the practitioner or the authority. Here, the practitioner of support or the authority by whom the support is provided is seen as the primary agent of change as opposed to the one proposed in the Moral or the Enlightenment model. To put it in context, dyslexia is officially known as a disability with laid down policies and procedures by the higher education institutions about support provisions for dyslexic students as a level playing field. In that, the 'treatment' (support/intervention) is either aimed directly at the source of the problem in the form of study skills, extra time in written examinations, diagnostic assessments/screening tests, provision of lecture notes, coloured papers/tinted glasses. There are also attempts to provide needed resources available to dyslexic students financially through Disabled Students Allowances, learning resource facilities, counselling and other specialised support. One potential advantage in this model, according to Bricman and colleagues, is that the client is not blamed or burdened with the responsibility to deal with the problem on his or her own. This immediate and direct form of support is helpful in acute need for support, particularly in a temporary basis. It may benefit especially those students who may be struggling with their studies with poor coping strategies. However, the approach has the potential of fostering needless and dysfunctional dependency (learned helplessness), conceptualised by Bricman et al. In that. the client may become overly passive as a result of the role expectations implicit in this form of intervention (Taylor, 1979). Moreover, the client may be dissuaded from questioning the validity of the 'treatment' or support provided to him or her. For example, in the case of dyslexia,

the dyslexic student is provided with extra time in examination as a way of support for which, far from challenging the validity of such a support, s/he is expected to comply with as the only alternative means to assessment strategies available to him or her. Hence, the student may either accept or refuse to take advantage of the support made available as standard provision made available to all the dyslexics regardless of their personal problems or needs. The client may not challenge such a measure due to the authority associated with the support figure (Rodin & Janis, 1979).

Compensatory model:

The helping model in which the client is not held responsible for the cause of the problem(s) but is still held responsible for finding a solution of it is called the Compensatory model (Bricman et al., 1982). The term reflects the underlying rationale, namely that either the client sees himself/herself or is seen by the practitioner as having to personally 'compensate' for the problem that the environmental constraints have imposed upon him/her. In this model, the client is believed to be either 'deprived' of the needs or not given enough opportunities to develop the skills necessary to deal with the problem. Although the cause of the problem may be regarded as beyond the responsibility of the client, the ultimate responsibility to the solution to the problem is believed to be within his/her grasp or ability. Implicit in the model is the view of optimism about the client's underlying potential capability to deal or cope effectively with his/her own problem on guidance. In this model, there is a belief in the inherent 'goodness or potential strengths' of human nature (Bricman et a., 1982); that is, if given the right opportunity an individual has the ability to adapt to his/her environment. In such an approach to help/intervention, the client is expected to take a problem-solving approach or

orientation to overcome his/her difficulties. The assumption is that the client can take charge and has the solution of the problem by way of developing his/her potentials as well as the capability to learn new or better coping strategies. He/she may be expected to adopt an attitude of self-confidence and assertively compel others to yield to the necessary resources or facilities available in way of training. Here, the essential agent of change is the client himself/herself and the helper/practitioner assumes a 'subordinate' role or the role of a 'guide' in the help/support strategy. As such, the practitioner is the facilitator in the acquisition of support by the client. The practitioner's primary role is, therefore, to 'mobilise' resources/support and, as such, apply a strategy of 'empowerment' to enable the (client) learner to deal with his/her own learning and coping. The practitioner applies a strategy to re-orientate the client or help the client to redefine the problem in a way that allows him/her to feel a sense of control over his/her situation (Meichenbaum & Genest, 1980). The real advantage of this model is that it helps the client to become actively involved in finding solutions to his/her own problems and, as a result, empower him to excel and develop those skills and strategies that may serve him/her to cope with new challenges in the future as a 'lifeline' (Bricman et al. 1982). Such a model is also said to foster confidence and self-esteem upon the client as explained by Rogers (1956) in the client-centred approach to counselling and support. The downside of this model, however, is that there may be a danger that the client may feel pressurised into having to continually engage in solving his/her own problem and, as a result, may lose motivation to self-support, perhaps better conceptualised by Bricman et al. as 'alienation' or feel segregated from others, especially, when the effort invested becomes unsuccessful in solving the underlying problem faced by the client.

Although no one modality in Bricman et al.'s framework is classed any superior to the other, depending upon how the cause of the problem and its solution is viewed, the Compensatory model to support seems to be a strategy most logical in supporting students with dyslexia in higher education, especially when looking at the concept from the perspective of student's empowerment. The justification for this claim relates to the fact that a Compensatory model to dyslexia support seems to be more in compatibility with the concept of students' empowerment in higher education. This is not, however, to say that some dyslexic students may not require other forms of support strategies most suitable to their individual needs and circumstances. As stated above, the Compensatory model to support is analogous to 'empowerment' of all learners to learn through self-development as well as effective learning and coping (Harvey, 2004). Additionally, there is an increasing shift since the recent past in the field of dyslexia as a way to emphasise the Difference (Design) model of dyslexia (Morgan and Klein, 2000; Cottrell, 2000; McGloughlin, 1994; Singleton et al. 1999; West, 1997) as well as the need to empower dyslexic students to cope with their own studies (Hunter-Garsch and Herrington, 2001; Fuller et al., 2004; Mortimore and Crozier, 2006). There is also an increasing recognition of the need to provide dyslexic students with appropriate support within the inclusiveness to mainstream education (Goode, 2007; Fuller et al. 2004). But within the context of a Compensatory strategy to support, what do we understand by the term 'empowerment' and how it can be fostered effectively upon those students who are marginalized as a result of their disabilities or specific learning difficulties (Madriaga, 2007)?

Importantly, it seems that dealing with the marginalisation of these students is the first step in empowering this group of learners. In the field of education, Harvey (2004)

describes the term 'empowerment' as 'the development of knowledge, skills and abilities in learners to enable them to control and develop their own learning' (p1). Panitz and Panitz (2004) state that empowerment produces an environment that fosters maturity and responsibility in the students towards autonomous learning. In that, the teacher becomes a Facilitator (akin to the Compensatory model to support) instead of a Director (Medical model) and the student becomes a willing participant instead of a passive follower/recipient of support. But 'empowerment' as it stands in education seems to be focussing mostly upon students in general, as opposed to relating to those in need for specific support. Can 'empowerment', therefore, be applied in the context of 'dyslexia support'? As stated above, while this is possible since dyslexic students are not regarded different from other learners both in terms of their general ability and intellectual capabilities, questions remain as to how dyslexic students with specific learning difficulties may be empowered to effectively cope with their own learning as well as empowered to learn alongside other learners. Looking more closely, however, empowerment is a relatively new concept, under discussion since the early 80s in management and, as such, it is viewed as a loose term (Wilkinson, 1998). As such, the term 'empowerment' is both dynamic and may mean different things to different people. In the educational field, Boomer (1982) called for the empowerment of students and investigated ways in which power and responsibility could be shared. Boomer stated that academic members of staff can empower students by allowing them to 'exercise their own powers and responsibilities' (p3). Empowerment can also be described as personal power (Ashcroft, 1987). Such a power is said to exist in both the personal and the social spheres. Ashcroft believed that empowerment should be seen as a philosophy of education, in that there is a need to examine the 'fundamental beliefs held about the

purposes of education, the nature of knowledge, of learning, of development, and of teacher-learner relationship' (p151). She further stresses that empowerment, as a process, needs to be consistent with full beliefs and commitment of the teacher. But allowing the student to exercise power and responsibility within an empowering learning environment in terms of dyslexia support requires a lecturer to take a 'subordinate' role in context of 'learning support', in compatibility with the framework of Bricman et al.'s Compensatory strategy to support, as discussed earlier. In that the lecturer, instead of taking a direct role to support, mobilises or facilitates/guides the learner to exercise all his/her 'power' (capabilities) to take control and has a voice in terms of personal needs (McGloughlin et al. 1994; McGloughlin, 2003). As such, in true sense of empowerment the learner is helped to develop the necessary skills to assert his/her own rights rather than directly acted on by the lecturer either in dealing with and in searching for support on the students' behalf.

Moreover, Kreisberg (1992) examined more closely the nature of power and its relationship to empowerment. In that, empowerment is explained as people or groups of people (as a community) gaining control over their own lives and the decisions that affect them. In this context, empowerment may be seen as analogous to empowering dyslexic students as a group different from other learners, specific to their needs, who are, often, said to be marginalised as a result of their learning difficulties (Madriaga, 2007). Such a need calls for a special kind of empowerment or 'enabling support', perhaps, different but additional to general empowerment of this group of students alongside others. Empowerment, in this context, also includes encouraging and developing the skills for self-sufficiency with a focus on eliminating the future need

for directed or extra form of specialised support provisions (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990). As such, while dyslexic learners may be empowered as other students within the mainstream education there is a need to also empower them to develop those qualities and skills that may help them to cope with their specific learning needs, which may be different from those without dyslexia. It is against the backdrop of 'empowering nature of support' that Bricman et al's Compensatory model to support is explained while, at the same time, examining the other models inherent in the framework as strategies to dyslexia support.

To sum up, it is obvious that with reference to the two former models, known as Moral and Enlightenment the client is held responsible for the cause of the problem, at least, at the behavioural level. However, while the client may be held responsible for the solution of the problem in the Moral model he/she is not perceived as responsible in the Enlightenment model. On the other hand, the client is not held responsible for the cause of his/her problem in both the Medical and Compensatory models, again, at the behavioural level, but is responsible for the solution of the problem in the Compensatory model, whereas not responsible in the Medical model. However, according to Bricman and colleagues, this is not to say that one model is necessarily better or more effective than the other. Instead, the model is seen in context, meaning the relevance of it during the process of the help-intervention. In that the practitioner, with the need of the client as the ultimate priority in mind, may move from one model to the other according to circumstances. In other words, the models are interchangeable according to the circumstances the problem is presented with and how the client may be best and most effectively supported in the given circumstance by both the expertise of the practitioner and the need of the client taken

into account. As such, the model(s) is not perceived as a rigid entity which is suitable to one type/category of client whereas unsuitable to another. In other words, in the case of dyslexia support, while a Medical model to support might be perceived as a best strategy applied by the lecturer at the commencement of a course may find the Compensatory model to be a more appropriate one as the student progresses and further develops into the course. The lecturer as the practitioner of support may choose to even return to the Medical model if that strategy is found to be more suitable, given the changed situation of the dyslexic learner at any given time. The ultimate aim is the best support strategy that can be most effectively applied to the given circumstance of the client as well as fostering within the student healthy coping without undue stress. While taking account of this ideal, the current study seeks to base lecturers' conceptualisations of the dyslexic students and support strategy with reference to Bricman et al. (1982) four modalities of help and coping.

Bricman et al. identified models to help and coping have been tested for reliability and validity as a research tool from both the quantitative and the qualitative approach to research, often the two combined as a mixed approach. One such strategy to a mixed approach has been particularly utilised in a study demonstrating the existence of the four modalities in a natural setting by Rabinowitz (1978). A few years earlier to the official establishment of the models, Rabinowitz undertook the test by interviewing respondents from four organised groups in the USA whose orientation and ideology were predictive in terms of representing each of the four helping models. Thus, the Moral model was operationalised by Erhard Seminar Training group (EST), the Compensatory model by a job training programme under Comprehensive Education and Training Act (CETA), the Medical model by a college infirmary, and

lastly the Enlightenment model by a national evangelic group (the Campus Crusade of Christ). A total of 12 participants in each group were interviewed in order to determine their beliefs, assumptions and expectations about the nature of the help offered by their organisations and the actions required by the helpers and helpees. To put it briefly, the participants were also subjected to a closed-questions survey, assessing their assumptions of each of the four models in the form of a quantitative survey. In summary, the findings indicated strong support for the initial hypothesis, namely that helping approaches can be categorised in terms of their attribution of cause of the problem and solution of the problem. The finding further revealed that, at least at a general level, approaches to helping do exist, an approach that embodies the orientation and assumptions of each of the four helping models.

As will be discussed later, the above account gave confidence that Bricman et al. framework of help and coping can be subjected to a mixed approach to survey, as this research hoped to utilise. Moreover, as stated earlier, although the framework was particularly based on therapeutic intervention of helping and coping it is equally possible, according to Bricman and colleagues, to apply in different contexts, both professional and non-professional settings where there is a help/support interaction, such as between the lecturer and dyslexic students in higher education.

Chapter 3

Phase -1 Study: The Initial Survey

3.1 The Rationale for Conducting the initial Study:

The two main questions posed at the initial phase were: (a) What were lecturers views about their understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and approach to support in their daily practices? (b) To what extent did they associate these views within a given framework of help and coping strategy? Lastly, the aim was also to compile a survey questionnaire on the basis of the findings for the purpose of conducting the next phase of the study.

The general rationale of the research with reference to this study has already been discussed in detail (See Chapter 1). Here, emphasis is on the underlying assumptions of the methodologies used as well as justifying the theoretical underpinnings of the study, based on Bricman et al. (1982) framework of help and coping.

Informed by past studies about lecturers' general lack of awareness of dyslexia and students' support (see Chapter 2), in addition to the sensitivity as well as lack of knowledge on dyslexia, choosing the right methodology to conduct the initial phase of the study was particularly challenging. The fact that the study aimed to seek knowledge, understanding and above all personal views of a given population (i.e. lecturers) who is said to have limited awareness on the subject of dyslexia (Holloway, 2001; Goode, 2007) this has influenced the researcher to exercise a great degree of caution in both the planning of the research design, including the methodology to data collection as well as conducting the process. One sensible step undertaken was to choose an approach that would allow the

researcher to proceed from an elementary level with an opportunity to build upon as the study progressed to deeper inquiry. Given the researcher's own observations, as a member of the academic staff, about level of academic support of dyslexic students in higher education, a natural step believed most appropriate was to organise a short focus group, consisting of a few fellow members of the academic staff within the same faculty where part of the research was carried out. The objectives was to conduct a small group discussion, seeking participants' views about their understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and any dyslexia related support they, as academic staff, normally provided to their students as part of their daily teaching practices. The aim of the exercise was also to generate ideas by seeking participants' views about ways this research could be best conducted seeking lecturers' views on the topic. As such, the initial perspective of the research was very broad and exploratory in approach and cumulative in terms of data collection through different phases. The findings of the preceding phase were aimed to feed upon and inform the next phase of the study towards the development of a comprehensive picture enough about lecturers' views about their understanding on the subject of dyslexia and related support.

Although this study is underpinned by Bricman et al.'s framework of help and coping it utilised an inductive approach to data collection at the initial phase. Briefly recapitulating, Bricman et al's. framework of help and coping, in therapeutic environment, is designed for a practitioner to choose a particular help modality or modalities to support his/her client. But they claim that the assumptions underlying the framework can also be used in any help/support situation in order to seek the way a practitioner conceives (a) the various characteristics of the client, (b) the client's situation or his/her personal problems, (c) the approach to support (d) his/her own role as a practitioner and lastly (e) the role of that of

the client. The underlying aim of the assumptions is for the practitioner of support to apply an appropriate help modality that may best suit to the needs of his/her client.

In order to achieve the above aim the approach utilised in the initial phase of the research is further supported by what Bricman et al. call the influence of the 'client's population-stereotypic characteristics' as a determinant factor for choosing a help modality/modalities either consciously or unconsciously. To illustrate this point, one of Bricman et al. assumptions is that practitioners often choose specific help modality/modalities is to, basically, maximise their chances of influencing the clients in what they believe to be a desirable way of helping (see Chapter 2, for detail). One of the main factors that is likely to influence such a choice, however, is the practitioner's belief or predetermination of the potentials or resources, often, possessed by that population. In the context of dyslexia, the lecturer (as practitioner of support) may be inclined towards specific help modality or modalities in order to support students with dyslexia. Such an inclination may be influenced by what a lecturer may perceive to be the general characteristics of dyslexic students as a group different to other learners without dyslexia; an example being that if they view a group of dyslexic students as particularly hard-working and competent with the potential to take responsibility for their own learning the lecturer may associate that characteristic, according to Bricman et al.'s conceptualisation of help and coping, the Compensatory or Moral models of help (i.e. client may or may not be perceived to be responsible for the cause of dyslexia but has the ability to deal with problem of reading and writing difficulties arising out of dyslexia). Hence, the support strategy that the lecturer may incline to take, in this context, is to empower the dyslexic learner to take personal responsibilities as a potentially able learner who is perceived to have the ability to cope with his/her own learning. Alternatively, a lecturer may prefer to take a Medical or

Enlightenment model of help and coping, if the lecturer perceives a dyslexic learner weak and in need of extra learning support. Arguably, practitioners of support, may choose any of Bricamn et al.'s four modalities of help and coping in more than one ways, using a single model or in combination of two or more, whichever suit best in a given context and client's need. This is not, however, to say that choosing a specific model(s) with such underlying assumptions is, necessarily, a healthy one. Indeed, the approach may well prove counterproductive if the strategy to support does not match the expectation of that of the client in terms of his/her preferred modality of receiving support (See Chapter 2, for detailed discussion).

Another justification to conduct the initial phase of the research through qualitative approach is the fact that Bricman's colleagues validated their own help and coping assumptions by the process of conducting their own research through mixed quantitative and qualitative approach. For example, Karuza and Firestone (cited in Wills, 1982) utilised a mixed quantitative (survey questionnaires) and qualitative approach (in-depth interviews) to find help models that research participants would prefer to use towards different age population groups, such as the young and the elderly. The findings showed that practitioners of help tended to perceive the elderly as more passive, weak and dependent as stereotypic-characteristics of this population compared to younger-age groups who were perceived as, comparatively, more independent and self-reliant. As a result, the preferred choice of help strategies, from the perspectives of these participants, was to utilise a 'Medical' approach of help towards the elderly; whereas, there was a preference for 'Compensatory' approach towards the younger population group. The study showed how a practitioner of help may unconsciously stereotype a given group or population with different age-groups or background. With similar approach to methodology, this study aims

to seek whether lecturers hold such a stereotypic view and how do they view dyslexic students who are in need of support. Although part of this study was conducted, utilising a survey questionnaire, the above evidence shows that it is also possible to collect such data through mixed quantitative and qualitative approach.

3.2 A Focus Group Activity:

The initial phase of the study took place in February 2002. It started with a brief discussion through formation of a focus group, consisting of a small number of four participants. The aim was to generate ideas for the purpose of conducting a set of interviews, exploring lecturers' views of dyslexia and students' support. The other objective of this exercise was to also seek information and guidance from participants about further development of this research. But first, it is important to give a brief overview of the principles and functions underlying focus group and how the underlying principles impacted upon the process of this exercise.

3.3 Principles underlying Focus Group:

This section begins by a brief exploration of key features involving focus groups in the context of this research. It begins by some discussions about the different types of focus groups generally used in qualitative research. The formation and nature of the focus group participants are considered an important factor underlying focus group approach to research and what this may mean in the context of this study. The section ends by a brief discussion in terms of the group activity and the process that took place in the initial phase of this research, especially in terms of participants' size and composition.

Using focus groups, as an approach to qualitative research, goes back over the last two decades of the 20th century in social studies (Fontana and Frey, 1993). However, the approach has rapidly developed and has become increasingly popular, especially in the recent past (Morgan, 1997). But first, what do we understand by the term ‘focus group’ in research? According to Polit and Houghlar (1987), a focus group is basically ‘an interview in which the participants form a group of two or more individuals who assemble to answer questions on a given topic’ (p529). However, key features underlying a focus group goes beyond this simple explanation of interviews in a group environment. In that data are not only generated between group participants who present their views and express their experiences, but participants also listen and reflect on the views of other group members. Although it is said that the focus group may lack the depth and intensity of individual interviews it, nevertheless, brings richness of information from a diversity of views and perspectives (Bryman, 2001; Kitzinger and Barbour, 1999). According to Bloor and colleagues (2001) such richness of information is generated collectively by participants through refinement and progressively merging into a deeper understanding or exploration of the subject during the course of the group exercise. Stewart and Shandasi (1990) state that, in a sense, focus group-participants work together in ways that group interaction is explicitly used to generate insights on a subject. Taking this into account, the underlying aim of the focus group, utilised in this research, was not only to seek lecturers’ views about their understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support but also to draw upon their views and experiences as to how this study could be best progressed in light of the participants’ experiences.

Other features of the focus group approach are the spontaneity that arises from such an activity, in the sense of its stronger social group context. In that, participants gets the

chance to respond to each other's statements or points of views; thus, tending to reveal more of their own views and feelings. By this, it is apparent that the researcher tends to have less of an active role as compared to individual interviews, since in some way participants take the role of interviewing each other and the researcher listens. In other words, the researcher deliberately allows participants more freedom of expression (Krenger and Casey, 2000). However, far from adopting a passive role the researcher plays a very important role in terms of both managing the group process and achieving the underlying aims and objectives of the exercise. This requires personal and professional skills as well a thorough understanding of principles underlying group processes.

Another important factor that concerns focus group in qualitative research is the various types or forms that it may take to achieve the underlying aims and objectives of the research. These different types of focus groups are influenced by many factors: such as, duration of the activity; frequency of times that it can be held; location where it can be held, with or without the physical presence of the participants; participants' size and group's characteristics; degree of flexibility; aims and objectives of the research and the like. While a focus group is said to normally consist of 8 to 10 participants it may vary between even 3 or more, depending again on the aim of the research. On the other hand, while some focus groups may necessitate to be held only once to achieve its underlying objectives others may require taking place on several occasions, perhaps, at periodical intervals. Indeed frequency and locations of focus groups are being increasingly influenced by modern technologies and the changing nature of political and economical positions of society (Bloor et al., 2001). Some of the examples where it is not always practical for group participants to physically meet are the use of internet (online focus groups), teleconferencing and synchronous discussion through the use of chat software to exchange

views and share ideas. Indeed, where it is not possible for individuals to physically meet it may be necessary to gather views individually and collated and circulated among the rest of the participants for their comments (Stewart and Shamdasi, 1990; Barbour and Kitzinger, 1999). One such example is the Delphi technique in which a panel of experts individually contributes their views for a common consensus (Kitzinger and Barbour, 1999).

Considering the above, the focus group utilised for the purpose of the initial phase of this research has taken the form of, what may be called, a 'brainstorming activity' through the formation of a small group of lecturer-participants, held only once for a short duration of time. However, such an activity is powerful enough, depending upon the nature of information sought and the underlying aim and objectives of the researcher.

Another important factor concerning focus group is the formation and nature of focus group participants and what they may mean in the context of research. The focus group, in this research, consisted of a total of participants within the same faculty, as lecturer-colleagues working together for a number of years, sharing common goals and aspirations in terms of their work commitments and experiences. In terms of the concept of focus group, such a group formation may also be classified as a 'pre-existing group', deliberately selected by the researcher as opposed to the formation of the group by participants unknown to each other. However, both 'stranger' and 'pre-existing groups' have advantages and disadvantages in focus groups, although both are important aspects to be considered by the researcher in order to achieve his/her underlying objectives of the research. In this research, the aim was to bring a group of lecturer-participants together who were said to share common goals, aspirations, experiences and challenges in dealing with students with dyslexia and students support in the teaching and learning environment. As such, such a group has several benefits in both providing and sharing views with

common knowledge and experience of the problem or issue at hand. Indeed, Kitzinger and Barbour (1999) state that pre-existing groups are generally very helpful:

'These are, after all, the networks in which people might normally discuss (or evade) the sorts of issues likely to be raised in the research session and the 'naturally group' is one of the most important contexts in which ideas are formed and decisions made.' (p8-9)

As such, pre-existing group can also provide an atmosphere in which participants can feel safe enough to reveal both their strengths and likely limitations that are, often, not possible to achieve among participants unknown to each other. However, the pre-existing group is not immune from many disadvantages, too. In that, there is a danger of participants having a common agreement on an issue under discussion, such as lecturers' common understanding and experiences about the issue of dyslexia and support that they may tend to agree readily with each other without much discussion. Such a situation, therefore, has the danger of the issue not being elaborated fully. It then becomes the challenge of the researcher to identify such a situation and attempt to further the discussion to new areas for a fuller discussion and sharing of views from diversity of perspectives among the group participants.

The formation of the group in terms of size and character along with the diversity of experiences by participants in this research has been an important factor to consider. As stated earlier, the focus group for the purpose of this phase of the study consisted of a small number of lecturer-participants (details of participants' background are followed in the next section). There are various factors that influence group size in qualitative research (Ritchie and Lewis, 2004). First, briefly stating, the content of the discussion and amount of information that participants are likely to share is an important factor in determining group

size. Second, the sensitivity and complexity of the subject matter under discussion; for example, unexpected pregnancy among young women or life after divorce, are issues sensitive enough to require small group discussions in order to allow expression of views and feelings among participants by not allowing them to feel vulnerable and exposed to larger number of people. Third, another important factor to consider is the extent to which the researcher may require breadth and depth of information. If breadth of data is required, it may necessitate the researcher to form a larger group; whereas a small group formation is adequate for depth of information. In terms of this research, depth of information with a very focus aim and objectives was the underlying purpose of small group formation. Fourth, the population group involved is also a determinant factor in size of group required in qualitative research. In that, the focus group may consist of a group of participants within a specific age, such as children, the elderly or individuals with special needs. Lastly, the structure and task involved in the focus group largely influence the group size. For example, if specific task requiring formation of sub-groups to achieve the underlying objectives such an exercise may require either a large group of participants.

In addition to the above, the heterogeneity and homogeneity of the group formation is an important factor in determining the character of the group. In other words, while some commonality of knowledge and experience is required of group participants it is also important that there is a need for diversity of views and background knowledge or experience. However, too big or too small differences or gap in the heterogeneity and homogeneity factors may also have serious impact in the outcome of the exercise. This is especially so, if the researcher is not careful enough to achieve the right balance between these two important factors during the formation of the focus group. In that, for example, some less experienced participants may hesitate to contribute as a result of too big a gap in

status or experiences among the group members. The aim is, therefore, that the researcher strikes a right balance in terms of choosing participants based on their background, experience and knowledge of the subject matter that may neither allow a participant to intimidate nor to over power another member(s) during the group discussion. Many factors are, therefore, a matter of concern in terms of group size and formation from the homogeneity and heterogeneity perspectives, such as the socio-demographic make-up, age, social class, educational background, occupational experiences and the like. The differences about the background of the participants for the purpose of conducting this part of the research are further elaborated in the next session.

3.4 (i) The Participants:

The session took place in a non-traditional university, in the school of Nursing and Health Care studies with a total of four members of the academic staff, all having at least between 8 to 10 years of teaching experiences in the field of Pre-registration nursing course. The group consisted of 3 males and one female, although gender was not considered as an influencing factor in this activity. However, it was important that these members of the academic staff, all known as senior lecturers, had similar professional backgrounds and teaching experiences so that differences in status or field of teaching would not adversely impact on the participants and in their effort to contribute during this exercise.

3.4 (ii) The Process:

The whole process lasted for less than an hour, including briefing and ending the session. First, the group was briefed about the purpose of the brainstorming activity which was to enable the researcher to conduct a study on dyslexia and lecturers' role and responsibilities towards this group of students. As such, the main purpose of the activity was to generate as

many ideas as possible in order to guide the researcher with informed knowledge about dyslexia and students' support from the lecturers' perspectives. The participants were reassured prior to the start of the activity that no information that would be generated from the group discussion would be divulged to anyone, either verbally or in writing, other than for the purpose of this research, respecting confidentiality and preserving full anonymity of all the participants.

Given the fact that dyslexia is still a relatively new concept in higher education with dyslexia support provisions and university policy introduced into the said university relatively recently the idea was not to emphasise on very personal knowledge but rather a generalised perspective of lecturers' views and their understanding of issues outlined below:

- Dyslexia,
- Dyslexic students and their common problems/needs
- Support commonly provided to dyslexic students by the academic staff
- Challenges that dyslexia posed to lecturers in the school
- Support lecturers themselves would require to support dyslexic students
- Any other issues that might arise as a matter of interest about dyslexia and students' support.

The above topics were not exhaustive and the discussion was as open as possible. In this way, the brainstorming activity was kept least stressful without any threat of personal intimidation to the participants about their knowledge base and understanding of dyslexia. Moreover, the above discussion was kept as simple as possible, allowing the participants to feel free not only to express their personal experiences but to express their general views, hearsay and/or observations they might have made about dyslexia and students' support

during the course of their duties as academic staff. The participants were also invited tentatively to feel free to give their opinions, express any values and beliefs or attitudes they might have potentially held regarding the above issues. Lastly, the participants were asked to give any suggestions that might help the researcher towards the future direction, progression and/or about improving the general scope of this research undertaking.

3.4 (iii) The Outcome:

Information derived from the focus group activity identified the following areas that helped formulation of the interview schedule, the contents of which were:

- Views about dyslexic students' specific problems/needs and lecturers' knowledge
- Personal values and beliefs held by academic staff about dyslexia and knowledge in the area.
- Lecturers' need for dyslexia awareness and students' support.
- Views about dyslexic students and general coping
- Nature of support normally required by students with dyslexia
- Lecturers' perceptions of the nature and approach to dyslexia support
- Lecturers' role and responsibilities regarding dyslexia related support
- Lecturers' expectation of dyslexic students, their role and responsibilities
- Challenges dyslexia posed to lecturers.

The next step was to utilise the above areas generated through the focus group to develop an interview schedule for the purpose of finding lecturers' views about their understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and related support. However, perceived as a broad topic at this stage of the research, the approach was exploratory in terms of data collection, utilising qualitative research through in-depth interviews. It is, therefore, important to present an overview of the principles underlying in-depth interviews with reference to the initial phase of this research before proceeding further.

3.5 Principles underlying in-depth Interviews:

This section, in support of the qualitative approach to this research, begins with a brief explanation of our understanding of interviews in research methodologies. It then follows with an overview of the various perspectives embraced by interviews in traditional approaches to qualitative research and what they may mean in terms of this research. Key features, such as personal and professional skills underlying interview processes are seen as a vital part of any such approach to data collection and analysis. However, some of the practical issues, such as conducting the research process itself, are implicitly raised in relevant sections.

Interviews are said to be one of the main methods of data collection in qualitative research. But what do we understand by the term 'interviews'? Burgess (1982) stressed the importance of 'talking' to people in order to understand or try to grasp their perspectives of life accounts in a given context, as they themselves perceive. Such an interaction is, therefore, central to social research. According to Burgess (1982) and Lofland and Lofland (1995) an interview is essentially a form of conversation but with a purpose. This means that there is an underlying aim which is different from conversation people normally engage in, in daily life. One of the fundamental purposes of the researcher in using the interview as a method is to construct knowledge through engagement with the research participants (Kvale, 1996; Rubin and Rubin, 1995). Such a face- to- face interaction entails not only what the participants share with the researcher in terms of personal views and ideas but also provides an opportunity for the researcher to observe various non-verbal cues, such as feelings and attitudes which are all a powerful aspect of communication. These views and personal observations provide the researcher with a rich and invaluable

source of information in terms of knowledge construction. The interview is, therefore, one of the most powerful ways of understanding the social world (Kvale, 1996). Indeed,

Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) state that

'The expressive power of language provides the most important resources for accounts. A crucial feature of language is its capacity to present descriptions, explanations, and evaluations of almost infinite variety about any aspect of the world, including itself.' (126)

However, the expressive power of language takes a variety of shapes and forms in social research. As such, there are different theoretical perspectives attached with in-depth interviewing. To elaborate this point, the different traditions of qualitative research is said to have resulted in a diversity of perspectives on in-depth interviewing. In other words, the underlying issue is the debate as to how far knowledge is constructed in a given approach to interviews or how flexible or structured the interview should be in terms of data collection (Kvale, 1996). By this, it is clearly apparent the extent to which a researcher can be creative or has control in the development of his/her research tool most appropriate to data gathering. Such a level of flexibility, not surprisingly, has brought forth varieties of ways to use interviews as a research tool, especially in contemporary research. These are explained from the perspectives of post-modernism, constructionism and feminism, since the recent past (Fontana and Frey, 2000; Kvale, 1996). Post-modern approaches to qualitative research emphasise the way in which reality is constructed in the interview and the relationship that develops between the researcher and participants. For example, in creative interviews the researcher may tend to move away from the traditional approach to interviewing and adopt a free sense of expression (Douglass, 1985); whereas, in dialectical interviewing the interviewer focuses on the potential for action or change, most appropriate in social policy or decision making issues. On the other hand, a heuristic approach to interviewing may emphasise the researcher's personal experience. In that, the process of interviews is seen as a collaboration between the researcher and the participant (Douglas

and Moustakas, 1985). Feminism (Finch, 1984; Nielson, 1990; Oakley, 1981; Olesen, 2000; Reinhartz, 1992) as a research perspective to interviewing, on the other hand, emphasises on the issues of freedom of expression by the interviewer; but in that, embracing elements of self-disclosure and reciprocity of information between the researcher and participants. This is again a powerful tool for constructing knowledge, especially in sensitive or personal issues in research. However, feminism takes this approach a bit further by emphasising on the issues of culture. In that, it is preferable that the researcher shares the same socio-cultural background of that of the participants. Similarity of gender, in particular, such as women conducting research with women participants (feminism) has also been viewed as an important element of this approach to interviewing (Finch, 1984; Oakley, 1981).

Post-modernism has also brought diverse perspectives to research, such as biographical, narratives and life history (Chamberlayne et al., 2000; Miller, 2000; Thompson, 2000), which have further influenced the qualitative approach to research; hence, the creative styles to interviewing. Based on the above explanation, this research emphasises on the traditional approach to interviewing; in that, data were generated through a purposeful interaction whereby the participants were informed about the research aim as opposed to deriving information in a naturally occurring environment. The interview schedule was repeated with a small sample population while the researcher remained as objective as possible. In traditional interviews, the researcher refrains from influencing the views of the participant and maintains objectivity throughout, an area that will be further discussed later. The aim of the research, the aim of this research was to seek the objective and independent views of lecturers about their understanding of dyslexia and students' support. The

traditional approach to interviewing was particularly used in this research so as that the researcher least influenced participants' views and was as objective as possible.

In addition to the diversity of theoretical perspectives associated with interviewing which are influenced by a variety of research models in social studies, one of the most important factors that influence the outcome of any interview is the personal and professional skills of the interviewer himself/herself. But such human skills are too immense to discuss in any fair detail here, but a brief overview will be given in support of this study. Briefly stated, an interviewer in research, is said to possess or should strive to culture several personal and professional characteristics or qualities that are conducive to good human interaction, specially when one is to delve into or explore the personal life and feelings of another person. This is not without a challenge and personal commitment on the part of the researcher before committing himself/herself to research involving human interaction. This is more so while the researcher aims to explore sensitive personal matters that are likely to generate strong feelings on the part of the interviewee, such as fear, anxieties, anger, grief and the like. Marshall and Rossman (1999) state that in interview techniques for data collection, the researcher himself/herself is the research instrument. As such, the approach calls for the development of a great degree of personal and professional talents on the part of the researcher. However, one of the most basic qualities of the researcher is to possess the ability to listen and observe during the interview. It is through the ability of listening acutely together with a good sense of observation both of what is said as well as not said in addition to the power of observing non-verbal cues of the participant that the researcher is able to draw upon the data and construct objective knowledge with a clear and logical mind. Curiosity and interest about the participant and the subject matter of the research are the pre-requisite of good interviewing on the part of the researcher. A sense of empathy,

modesty towards and for the participant with a calm and collected attitude of mind are believed to be essential elements of good rapport and trust building exercise between the researcher and the participant. Besides, the interviewer should be seen to be highly motivated, keen and well informed with credibility on the subject matter in order to instil a sense of confidence on the interviewee and the interview process. Last but not least, a careful preparation of the interview process prior to, during and following the end of the interview process are vitally important for good and successful interviewing techniques. Mason (2002) emphasises that a range of tasks in interviewing is involved for the researcher to consider simultaneously, such as the ability to interact effectively with the participant as well as the competency to oversee the actual interview process taking place smoothly; such as, ensuring a conducive environment free of disruption or noise, avoidance of discomfort of the interviewee and smooth running of the equipment. The interviewer is said to be acutely aware of the smooth transition from one stage to the other in the interview process as well as being prepared in dealing with any untoward occurrences or eventualities. Mason (2002) states that the interviewee's needs is paramount in any research interview and it is the primary duty of the researcher that this needs overrides any other aims or objectives of the research.

It is acknowledged that there are other personal and professional qualities for good interviewing techniques that have not been possible to even mention here. Some of these are techniques that involve questioning skills, the skills of dealing with difficult personalities in interviews and dealing with participants' emotional outbursts, such as, anxieties, fears, grief, anger and the like. However, the main principles underlying interviewing have been explored in fair depth in relevance to this study, specifically with

relevance to the diversity of interviewing perspectives both in traditional and contemporary research, utilising qualitative approach.

3.6 (i) The Interview Schedule:

As indicated earlier, the interview schedule was initially informed and guided by the finding of the focus group exercise, indicated above. Information derived from the focus group helped the formulation of the interview schedule. However, this information was closely guided by the five main statements, underlying Bricman et al.'s framework of help and coping. They are summarised in (See Table 5, below).

Table 5: Main issues generated from the focus group exercise

Main issues generated from focus group exercise	
1	Lecturers' need to know about students with dyslexia as individuals
2	Lecturers' expectation of dyslexic students' responsibilities as learners
3	Lecturers' expectation of their own role and responsibilities in the support strategy
4	Lecturers' support of students with dyslexia
5	(This is incorporated as part of No.1, above)
	Lecturers' need for dyslexia awareness/ knowledge
	<u>Note:</u> Although generated from the focus group, this statement is not forming part of Bricman et al.'s underlying assumptions of help and coping

The overarching assumptions of the above statements were based on Bricman et al.'s 'attribution of responsibility' about both the cause of the *problem* as well as the *solution* to the problem. However, given the limitation of lecturers' knowledge of dyslexia and students' support these assumptions were utilised with care, in terms of seeking views

rather than personal knowledge of the subject matter. In that, the statements were carefully translated in ways that no participant would feel personally challenged by questions posed about dyslexia, dyslexic students or knowledge about dyslexia support during the interviews. The aim was to emphasise more on participants' general views about their daily practices towards students with dyslexia. Moreover, although the prompts were included as part of the interview schedule (see Table 6, below) this was sparingly used, especially when it was absolutely necessary to seek elaboration on an issue. As such, the interview schedule was kept simple and open as far as possible.

Table:6 Questions/statements of the interview schedule generated through focus group exercise, based on Bricman et al.'s framework of help and coping.

<p style="text-align: center;">Statements Framework of Help and Coping (Bricman et al.)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Statement/Questions Framework of Help and Coping (Interview Schedule)</p>
<p>(1) Practitioner's perception of the client</p>	<p>Lecturer's perceptions of dyslexic students - (see also No. 5 below)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on your observations and/or experiences, what is your general understanding of students with dyslexia in H.E.? <p><u>Prompts:</u> with disability/ deprived Hard worker/ lazy</p>
<p>(2) Actions expected of the client</p>	<p>Lecturer's expectation of dyslexic students' responsibilities as learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What role and/or responsibilities, in your views, do you think dyslexic students should have towards own support in your school/faculty? <p><u>Prompts:</u> Assert rights/ get help given Strive harder/follow Uni. policy</p>

<p>(3) Others besides the client (i.e. lecturer) who must act as</p>	<p>Lecturer's expectations of his/her own responsibility regarding dyslexia support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you see your own role and/or responsibilities towards (a) dyslexia awareness and (b) students' support? <p><u>Prompts:</u> Develop expertise/ be a guide in support</p>
<p>(4) Actions expected of the self as practitioner of support</p>	<p>Approach to support expected of the self as a lecturer (lecturer's approach to dyslexia support)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What approach to support do you normally apply towards dyslexic students experiencing learning difficulties? <p><u>Prompts:</u> Facilitate/ direct support Discipline/ coerce or praise</p>
<p>(5) Implicit view of human nature</p>	<p>Lecturer's view of the dyslexic student as an individual</p> <p>(as No. 1 above)</p>

3.6 (ii) A Trial Interview:

Given the sensitivity of the topic, first a trial interview of approx. 20-30 minutes duration was conducted with two experienced lecturers who were not involved in the group exercise. This was conducted within the same faculty. The aim was to establish the timing of the interview process and the need to identify untoward occurrences prior to conducting the main interviews. Following review, it was important that the interview was kept as short and focussed as possible in order to generate data without going too much into detail on the issues of dyslexia.

3.6 (iii) The Participants:

As an inductive approach to research in this phase of the study the trial interview was followed, utilising semi-scheduled interviews with 12 participant-lecturers. The participants were used as a purposive sample, all from the same faculty. It took place between June and mid-August, 2002. Given the fact that it was a small-scale exercise it was decided that the interview would be conducted within the same cohort of staff with broad similarities in their general experience as lecturers and possibly about dyslexia, students with dyslexia and support strategies. While it is acknowledged that other faculties within the university might have been practicing dyslexia support differently, including them at this stage of the study would have resulted into a lack of uniformity or incompatibility of responses. All the participants were experienced and qualified lecturers, representative of both genders (8 male and 4 female members of the academic staff) with most having offered between 3 to 10 years of teaching experience; among them were 2 members of the academic staff with over 20 years of teaching experience. The aim for the sample selection was, therefore, to receive diversity of responses within a homogenous group of participants, based on duration of service offered.

3.6 (iv) The Procedure:

Here too, similar to the focus group activity, the general aim during the interview process was to keep the areas of exploration simple and open, bearing in mind that dyslexia, as an unseen disability, was a slowly evolving concept in the institution. Moreover, the procedure was kept informal and as brief as possible. All the 12 participants were interviewed separately over a period of two months. The timing of the interviews was dependent upon the availability of the participants which was mostly in between their work commitments as and when they were free to participate. As a result, on a couple of occasions the pre-

arranged interviews had to be postponed due to the fact that sometimes some participants were called out to teach or meet other academic duties. Each interview lasted between 25 to 30 minutes. Prior to the commencement of each interview participants were reassured about the confidential nature of this exercise and that it was solely for the purpose of conducting research. It was important to reassure the participants that, at no circumstances, any extract of the interview contents would be shared with others, other than for the purpose of this thesis. Furthermore, any recorded information was dealt with totally anonymously. Scripts were made available to individual participants for review should they have required it.

The interview process took place according to participants' preferences of both time and place in between commitments of their academic duties, depending on their availability. While some participants preferred the interview to take place in the privacy of their own office, others preferred in an unoccupied classroom whenever available in the teaching centre. Other participants preferred the interview to take place in the small counselling room of the faculty to noise and other disturbances to a minimum. Moreover, since the interviewer himself was one of the members of the academic staff its potential impact of seeking fellow participants' views about dyslexia and support practices were an important issue to consider prior to conducting the interviews. As such, it was important not to delve too deep on the subject of dyslexia but enough to seek participants' experiences. Moreover, the participants were given the choice whether they wished to respond to a particular issue raised on the topic of dyslexia and students' support. Their general views were again tentatively sought with regard to both their role and responsibilities, as they perceived towards students with dyslexia. As such, although the interview was treated as a semi-scheduled format it was, nevertheless, adhered with as much flexibility as possible. In

practical terms, this meant that if an area was explored where the interviewer felt the participant showed hesitancy to respond this was avoided as a matter of respect the participant, taking consideration of his/her general level of understanding about dyslexia. Lastly, each participant was duly thanked and given the opportunity to add or comments on any issues they wished to raise or contribute in the interview before calling it to an end.

3.6 (v) Data Analysis:

Stage-1:- Reducing the data into categories:

As indicated earlier, since the purpose of the interview schedule was, primarily, to explore lecturers' views about their understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support the approach to data analysis was an interpretative one. Although the interview schedule itself was guided broadly by Bricman et al.'s underlying assumptions the approach, at this phase of the research, was essentially data –driven. It means that themes identified through interpretation were derived from the interview data. A total of 12 interview transcripts were obtained from the initial phase of the research. To begin with, each transcript of the interviews was read and extracts were underlined and pasted separately (see Appendix A for detail). Each extract consisted of a single idea or concept transcribed verbatim either in the form of a sentence or phrase. In this way, the 12 interview transcripts generated a total of 177 extracts. Based on these extracts, it was then possible to generate sets of coded items that were grouped together into specific categories (see Appendix A). Depending on the interviewees' response to specific issues raised in the interviews, a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 14 extracts was identified in each category. These are identified in detail (See Appendix A).

At this stage, checking closely on each of the categories, it was clear that most of these items were found opposite to each other in terms of their meaning, in line with Bricman et al.'s conceptual framework of Medical and Compensatory models of help and coping. To illustrate this point, while the interview participants perceived some dyslexic students as highly motivated and competent learners there were also views held about other dyslexic students, as a group, lacking in confidence and were in need of support to cope with their own studies. These opposing views were dependent on how participants perceived dyslexic students, based on their general strengths as well as having specific weaknesses to cope with their learning. In addition to difference in views among participants about dyslexia, dyslexic students and support information was also sought about participants own role and that of dyslexic students in the support strategy. The findings are presented in detail (See Table 8, below).

It is important to emphasise that, as discussed earlier (see Chapter 2) Bricman et al.'s four modalities of help and coping are summed up on the underlying assumptions about the extent to which the client is perceived responsible for the '*cause*' and to the '*solution*' of the problem. To illustrate this point, if the client is perceived '*not*' responsible for the cause of the problem then the responses of the participants could only be categorised in the Medical and Compensatory models of help and coping framework and not in the Moral or Enlightenment models. It is recalled that it is only in the Moral and Enlightenment models that a client is perceived to be responsible for the cause of his/her problem by the practitioner of support. This is especially important to emphasise at this stage of the findings since, according to the data findings, the interview participants did neither perceive dyslexic students responsible for the cause of their '*dyslexia*' nor did they appear to hold them responsible for their specific difficulties to learn as a result of dyslexia. From

this perspective, therefore, the findings of the interviews can only be located in the Medical and Compensatory models. In that, while dyslexic students were not responsible for the cause of their dyslexia or learning difficulties there was, nevertheless, a diversity of views among the participants about the extent to which the found dyslexic students responsible to deal with their learning difficulties in terms of both coping with their own learning and seeking dyslexia related support as adult learners in higher education.

Stage-2: Identifying themes within the categories:

Based on the data generated through the interviews, the next step was to reduce each set of extracts into a meaningful group that best represented them. Each group of extract was, in turn, translated into a meaningful statement by the best judgement of the researcher. These statements, as indicated earlier, were closely associated with Bricman et al.'s medical and compensatory models. The statements were particularly formulated for the purpose of conducting the next phase of the study. They were later named as questionnaire items to compile a survey instrument, discussed in detail (See Chapter, 4). For the purpose of illustration, an example of two such statements that are closely linked with the medical and compensatory models is shown (see Table 7, below).

Table:7 Example of statements generated per set of items in each category

Coded set of extracts from interviews	Statement (Generated by the researcher based of the coded extracts)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...one thing I have remarked, though, that they (dyslexics) always want their works seen by staff... • ...sometimes they (dyslexics) do say they have certain problems with their writing and want their works checked before submitting for marking. • ...I have noticed (dyslexic students needing help) especially when it comes to their assignments, exams and the like... 	<p>Dyslexic students often seek support of their lecturers more often as compared to their non-dyslexic peers</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Bricman's concept: 'Support dependent' (A medical model)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can hardly differentiate them (dyslexics) from their colleagues... • They (dyslexics) can contribute to the class just like anyone else... • They (dyslexics) can show you that they are very capable and with a lot of enthusiasms... • (Others) 	<p>Dyslexic students are as autonomous in their learning as their non-dyslexic peers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Bricman's concept: 'Independent' (A compensatory model)</p>

As discussed earlier, regarding the theoretical underpinning of the data findings, each statement was structured in ways that it did not only represent the collective meaning of the set of coded extracts, based on the best judgement of the researcher, but it was also closely associated with Bricman et al.'s models of help and coping. Based on the above categories, a total of 45 such statements (questionnaire items) were generated.

Stage-3: Reducing the statements into theoretical construct to Bricman et al.'s support strategy:

In the final stage of the data reduction the 45 items were further reduced into a total of 14 themes (see Table 8, below). As stated earlier, these statements/items were closely associated with Bricman et al.'s assumptions of the problem of the client, the perceptions of the client, the approach to support, the practitioner's perceptions of his/her own role and that of the client's in the support strategy. To illustrate this point, a statement, based on interview extracts that characterises dyslexic students, for example, as 'weak' or 'able' constitutes a specific theme, which according to Bricman et al.'s theoretical framework, fit into a specific model of help and coping (i.e 'weak learner' in the Medical model and 'able learner' in the compensatory model). As stated earlier, each theme that was constructed on the basis of the interview extracts were in pairs as opposite to each other in meaning. For example, the dyslexic learner was either perceived as 'weak' or 'able' and 'dependent' or 'autonomous' (see table 5, below).

As the next process in the analysis, each pair of themes, in turn, was placed on Bricman et al.'s conceptual framework as 5 domains of help and coping (See Table 8, below).

These domains are as follows:

- Lecturer's perception of dyslexic student's problem
- Perception of the dyslexic student
- Lecturer's role in dyslexia support
- Action expected of the dyslexic student
- Lecturer's approach to dyslexia support

As part of compiling a survey instrument for the purpose of conducting the next phase of the research it was important that a comprehensive framework of dyslexia support, based on Bricman et al.'s models, is developed. Based on the interview data, a total of 15 items were identified in support of lecturers' approach to dyslexia support. This number, however, was not perceived adequate prior to the validation of the survey instrument in terms of finding lecturer's approach to support, based on medical and compensatory models. As such, a total of six further items were generated from literature on dyslexia, 3 items in each theme (no. 13 and 14 with asterix). Although these items were not generated through the interview data it is, however, found relevant for the purpose of collating data. The items are carefully chosen to support the argument about directive versus facilitative approach to support, in association with Bricman's conceptualisation of medical and compensatory models. To argue this point, as discussed in the literature section (Chapter 2), dyslexia support has traditionally been discussed from a directive approach to support in higher education (giving support to the dyslexic student as a level playing field). However, there has been a gradual shift, in the recent past, for the need to empower the dyslexic learners to cope with their own learning through a facilitative approach to support within mainstream education as opposed to providing 'exclusive' or 'extra' support that are, often, perceived different from other students. In that, there has been an argument in favour of inclusiveness of support, that is, 'what is good for dyslexic students is good for other students in the learning environment'.

Table: 8 Domains, themes, categories and questionnaire items based on Bricman's framework of help and coping.

Domains	Themes	Bricman's Medical & Compensatory Models	Theoretical assumptions underlying help and coping framework	Dyslexia Questionnaire Items (Generated from interview data)
1	1	Medical Model	Perception of student's Problem (Dyslexia: A disability)	Dyslexia perceived as a disability (1) Since dyslexia is protected by the disability policy of higher education it should be treated strictly as a disability (2) Due to particular learning difficulties of dyslexic students dyslexia should be treated alongside other disabilities
	2	Compensatory Model	(Dyslexia: A different way of learning)	Dyslexia perceived as a 'different way of learning' (1) Given appropriate support, most dyslexic students should experience minimal learning difficulties in higher education (2) Dyslexia is a different way that dyslexic students often learn
2	3	Medical Model	Perception of the dyslexic student (Weak)	(Lacking in confidence) (1) Dyslexic students often appear to be generally less confident as compared to their non-dyslexic peers (Lacking in capability) (2) Dyslexic students often appear to be generally less capable in coping with their studies as compared to their non-dyslexic peers

	4	Compensatory Model	(Able)	<p>(Hard worker)</p> <p>(1) Dyslexic students often work harder than their non-dyslexic peers in producing their written works</p> <p>(Special strengths)</p> <p>(2) Dyslexic students often show special strengths in their ability to learn</p>
	5	Medical Model	(Dependent)	<p>(Dependent on Support provisions)</p> <p>(1) Dyslexic students often depend on dyslexia support provisions of the university in order to cope with their own learning</p> <p>(Dependent on Lecturer)</p> <p>(2) Dyslexic students often seek support of their lecturers more often as compared to their non-dyslexic peers</p>
	6	Compensatory Model	(Independent/autonomous)	<p>(Autonomous learner)</p> <p>(1) Dyslexic students are as autonomous in their learning as their non-dyslexic peers.</p> <p>(Coping independent)</p> <p>(2) Dyslexic students are generally as independent in their coping as their non-dyslexic peers</p>
3	7	Medical Model	<p>Lecturer's role in dyslexia support</p> <p>(knowledgeable practitioner of support)</p>	<p>(Knowledgeable lecturer)</p> <p>(1) It is important that lecturers, teaching dyslexic students, have a good knowledge of dyslexia</p> <p>(Dyslexia/Disability sensitive)</p> <p>(2) For effective teaching, it is important that lecturers have a good understanding of the specific learning difficulties of their individual students</p>

	8	Compensatory Model	(Subordinate practitioner of support)	<p>(Lecturer as a subordinate in support)</p> <p>(1) Lecturers, as academics, should hardly be expected to be highly knowledgeable about specific disabilities of individual students in higher education.</p> <p>(Lecturer as a guide in support)</p> <p>(2) Lecturers should act as a guide than be knowledgeable practitioners of dyslexia support.</p>
4	9	Medical Model	<p>Action expected of the dyslexic student</p> <p>(To passively accept support)</p>	<p>(Student to conform to support)</p> <p>(1) Dyslexic students should take every advantage of university support provisions given to them</p> <p>(Student to passively follow advice/instructions)</p> <p>(2) It is important that students, declaring their dyslexia, follow every advice and instruction given to them in the university</p>
	10	Compensatory Model	(To assert own rights in support)	<p>(Student to assert own rights)</p> <p>(1) It is important for dyslexic students to assert their rights in order to gain individualised support in the university</p> <p>(Student learn to seek own support)</p> <p>(2) It is preferable that dyslexic students seek their own support provisions than lecturers act on their behalves</p>

	11	Medical Model	(Not Responsible) (Passive recipient of dyslexia support)	(Student as passive recipient of support) (1) It is should be the personal tutors responsibility to arrange dyslexia support than dyslexic students approaching members of the academic staff
	12	Compensatory Model	(Responsible) (Active participant in dyslexia support)	(Dyslexic students as active participant in support) (1) Primarily, it is the responsibility of the dyslexic students to approach lecturers for dyslexia support (2) Dyslexic students should be aware of their personal problems/needs prior to claiming for support provisions in the university (3) An effective way for dyslexic students to secure support provisions is by familiarising themselves with dyslexia policy of the university
5	13	Medical Model	Lecturer's approach to support (Directive approach)	(Lecturers with directive/authoritarian approach to support) (1) Providing good academic support to dyslexic students is for lecturers to focus more on their specific weaknesses than underlying strengths (2) Dyslexic students should seek the help of dyslexia experts more than the support of their lecturers Note: 8 items are added to this theme (see Table 9) as continuation of Directive approach to support

	14	Compensatory Model	(Facilitative approach)	<p style="text-align: center;">(Lecturer as facilitator/mobiliser of support)</p> <p>(1) An effective way for lecturers to develop the learning potentials of dyslexic students is by stressing more on their strengths than their learning difficulties</p> <p>(1) An effective way to deal with the learning difficulties of dyslexic students is by, first, acknowledging their strengths they often possess.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note: 8 items added to this theme (see Table 9) as continuation of Facilitative approach to support
--	-----------	-----------------------	-------------------------	--

Practitioner: Represents the Lecturer and **Client:** The Dyslexic student in dyslexia support strategy.

Dark shaded areas represent Medical model.

Table 9 is the continuation of Table 8 (see Themes 13 & 14) about lecturers' approach to dyslexia support. Here, it is important to emphasise that Bricman et al.'s Medical model is not misunderstood with the medical or social models of disability since they are not described, as such, by these authors. In that, Medical model, as the term denotes in the traditional field of medicine, is described as a 'directive or authoritative' way to provide support to a client who has little or no control over the help strategy; whereas, Compensatory model is viewed as 'facilitation' of support (see Chapter 2, for details). In other words, the aim, in Compensatory model, is to mobilise support or empower the client towards self-help.

Table:9 Lecturer's approach to dyslexia support, based on Bricman et al.'s framework of Medical and Compensatory models of help and coping.

<p>Lecturer's approach to support</p> <p>Medical model</p> <p>(Directive approach)</p>	<p>Lecturer's approach to support</p> <p>Compensatory model</p> <p>(Facilitative approach)</p>
<p>(1) A good lecturer is one who puts priority in the whole class in preference to the individual needs of students. *</p> <p>(2) Dyslexic students, experiencing difficulties in searching for their own reading sources, should be given extra reading materials, on request.*</p> <p>(3) Dyslexic students should not be allowed to use special electronic learning facilities that may distract other students in the class.*</p> <p>(4) Dyslexic students are expected to participate as much as their non-dyslexic peers in class activities.</p> <p>(5) Allowing dyslexic students to take alternative forms of assessments is unfair to their non-dyslexic peers.</p> <p>(6) Marking the scripts of dyslexic students differently from that of their non-dyslexic peers compromises academic standard</p> <p>(7) Giving lecture notes to dyslexic students prior to a teaching session promotes effective learning</p> <p>(8) It is preferable that lecturers provide dyslexic students with relevant information on university</p>	<p>(1) A good lecturer is one who puts priority on the individual students in preference to the whole class.*</p> <p>(2) It is preferable that dyslexic students face the challenges of searching their own reading sources than lecturers giving extra reading materials to them as and when they request.</p> <p>(3) Dyslexic students should be allowed to use electronic learning materials that may, often, be different from those used by their non-dyslexic peers in the class. *</p> <p>(4) Dyslexic students, experiencing specific learning difficulties during a class activity, should be allowed to opt out on request.*</p> <p>(5) Higher education should allow dyslexic students to take alternative forms of assessments, on request.</p> <p>(6) Written works of dyslexic students should be marked flexibly by making allowances for their reading and writing.</p> <p>(7) It is preferable that dyslexic students learn the skills of taking their own notes in the class than lecturers giving teaching materials to them, on request.</p> <p>(8) Lecturers should guide dyslexic students to seek information on support provisions for themselves</p>

support provisions than letting them search for themselves.	than given to them, on request.
---	---------------------------------

The above 6 items with asterix (*) are derived from dyslexia literature than from the interview data.

As it can be seen from the items (Tables and 8 and 9, above), although both approaches to dyslexia support are equally relevant, depending on the needs or personal circumstances of the dyslexic individual, a 'directive' approach to support emphasises a direct form of support by the lecturer as opposed to facilitation of support or empowering the learner towards a healthy coping strategy. In that, the dyslexic learner is allowed to take control of his/her own learning while the lecturer takes a subordinate role in the support strategy.

Here, the analogy: 'if you're given a fish you will have a meal but if you're given a fishing-rod you will have meal for the rest of life' is the underlying assumptions behind a directive/facilitative approach to support. However, this is not to say that these two approaches are without disadvantages in application. This is dependent upon the context these approaches are applied. For example, while a specific approach to support may be helpful towards one student may, indeed, be counterproductive towards another, depending upon the context it is applied and the student's unique problems and needs. Here, lecturers' approaches to dyslexia support or, indeed, their views of dyslexia and dyslexic students, to that matter, are examined from broad perspectives, as opposed to judging the effectiveness of a given approach with reference to a given context or situation.

3.6 (vi) The Findings:

With reference to the main aim of the initial study, the findings showed that lecturers were orientated towards two of Bricman et al. four modalities of help and coping, such as the Compensatory and Medical models (see Table 8). As stated earlier, while participants' responses, arguably, could also have been possible to partially associate with the Moral and

the Enlightenment models, respectively these were, however, avoided due to the fact that no participants in the interviews held dyslexic students responsible for the cause of their dyslexia problem. This was rather expected since dyslexia is not an outcome of a maladaptive behaviour on the part of the individual but, rather, a condition the person is normally born with. It is often stated that dyslexia is a neurologically determined learning deficits arising as a result of the way dyslexic individuals' brain is wired (Nicolson and Fawcett, 1999). However, participants did hold dyslexic students responsible for the solution of their learning difficulties arising as a result of dyslexia in terms of seeking support and coping in their studies (the underlying framework of Bricman et al.'s medical and compensatory models of help and coping).

Depending on the responses of the participants, to what an extent lecturers held dyslexic students responsible for the solutions of their dyslexia problems was a determining factor in their choice between the medical and compensatory models. In that, participants' choice of the specific models were influenced by several factors, such as the way they viewed dyslexia, the perceptions of dyslexic students, approach to dyslexia support and participants' perception of their own role in the support strategy as well as that of dyslexic students (See Table 8, for detail). To illustrate this point, lecturers perceived dyslexic students from broadly two perspectives, depending on their general ability and coping strategies as learners. For example, while participants perceived some dyslexic students as weak and dependent on support to cope with their own learning they also perceived others as able and autonomous in their learning. These differences were closely associated with the medical and compensatory models, respectively. As such, participants held a diversity of views in the in-depth interviews.

From a Compensatory model of help and coping, according to the findings, while some participants perceived themselves as a guide or facilitator of support they, nevertheless, had an expectation of dyslexic students to be aware of their own needs, disclose their dyslexia, approach lecturers should they have required their support, as well as a need to familiarise themselves with the university support policies and provisions. At the same time these students were expected to approach welfare department of the university to gain extra support provisions, if and when required. As such, the onus was placed on dyslexic students to assert their rights and take responsibility to deal with their problems and be an advocate of their own support.

The need for dyslexic students to disclose their dyslexia in order to seek lecturer support appeared to be a statement repeatedly arising in the interview response in the initial phase of the study. Looking at the comment more closely, it was evident that far from taking the role of facilitators, some participants preferred to act as support-consultants, whereby dyslexic students were expected to approach the lecturer for consultation and, if necessary, referred to the appropriate university support personnel. It seemed that lecturers' general aim was to emphasise on the students' potential strengths by way of enabling them to take active responsibility of their own learning. The underlying aim in the compensatory context to support was, predominantly, to facilitate or mobilise support.

On the other hand, participants also expressed the need for a 'direct' form of support to those dyslexic students struggling to cope with their studies. But how does such an expectation coincide with the view of dyslexic students as weak learners, meaning association with the Medical model of help and coping, as opposed to Compensatory model? Lecturers' views of dyslexic students from the medical model was perceived as a

choice arising as a result of participants also perceiving some dyslexic students with a need for extra support. Here, dyslexia itself was being viewed by some participants as a form of disability, often defined as such by the university policy and guided by legislation (DDA, 1985 and SENDA Report, 2002/3)). As such, some dyslexic students were also perceived as a group weaker as compared to their non-dyslexic peers and, hence, a need for them to be provided with special support. In this model, some participants appeared to claim the need to arrange support on behalf of some dyslexic students as opposed to guiding them to seek support for themselves, depending upon their general capabilities and limitations as learners. In that, participants emphasised on the weakness of dyslexic students rather than on their underlying strengths. They found, often, the need to refer dyslexic students to the support personnel for extra support. The emphasis, in the medical model was to apply a 'directive' as opposed to a 'facilitative' approach to support. Moreover, the finding also showed that, in some instances, there was no clear indication in lecturers' choice or association with neither of the two identified models since they, often, preferring to perceive dyslexic students as 'individuals' rather than stereo-typing them as weak or able but rather as individuals with unique needs.

3.7 Conclusion:

While the above findings showed participants overall perceptions of dyslexia, dyslexic students, their approach to support as well as their own role and that of dyslexic students from the perspectives of Bricman et al.'s Medical and Compensatory models of help and coping, the initial phase of the study was, nevertheless, based on a small sample population within one faculty of a chosen university. The findings, therefore, could hardly be generalised. Further study was, therefore, required to find the extent to which lecturers

associated with the two support modalities. However, it was important that, as a quantitative methodology, the survey questionnaire generated from the findings of this phase of the study is tested for its validity and reliability, followed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Phase -2 Study: Testing the Survey Questionnaire

4.1 Introduction:

One of the aims of the initial phase of the research was to compile a survey questionnaire. In this chapter, the aim is to test the questionnaire items for its reliability and validity. The purpose was to conduct a large-scale quantitative survey to find the extent to which lecturers associated with Bricman et al.'s medical and compensatory models of help and coping identified in the previous phase of the study.

Based on the findings of the in-depth interviews in the initial phase of the research, a total of 45 items were generated as pre-validated survey items. These items were placed against a five-points Likert scale with corresponding numerical values between 5 (Strongly Agree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree) for rating purposes by participants in the survey.

As stated in the previous chapter, given the fact that only a total of 15 items were possible to generate through the in-depth interviews on lecturers' approach to dyslexia support it was necessary that more items were included at the pre-validation stage of the questionnaire for a more comprehensive understanding of lecturers' views about their approach to dyslexia support. The underlying aim was, basically, to retain a reasonable number of items, following the validation of the survey questionnaire. These items are indicated in detail (see Table 8) in Chapter 3. A total of 6 such items were derived from dyslexia literature to represent both medical and compensatory approaches to dyslexia support.

In addition to the items based on the Likert scale, indicated above, another 3 items were derived from the interview schedule, namely: (a) lecturers' awareness of dyslexia (b) lecturers' understanding of dyslexia and (c) lecturers' ability to support dyslexic students. It is important to emphasise that these three items were neither possible to subject them to Likert scale in this questionnaire nor consider as part of Bricman et al.'s medical or compensatory models of help and coping. These items were identified as no. 7, 8 and 9 in the pre-validated survey questionnaire (see Appendix- C, for detail). As such, number 7 was subjected to an answer between 'yes/No' and number 8 and 9 placed under ordinal values within a scale of between 1 to 5 (see Appendix C, for detail). This meant that in addition to the above 45 items which were placed on Likert scale, a total of 3 further items were included in the survey questionnaire.

In addition to the above, 6 further items were included in respect to seeking participants' personal details in the survey questionnaire. The first 9 items, as stated below, form part of the personal details of the research participants in this phase of the study.

- (1) Name of institution, faculty and school or subject area taught
- (2) Occupational status: (Lecturer/senior lecturer/other)
- (3) Whether full/part time employed
- (4) Approximate number of years in teaching; types of students currently taught
- (5) Undergraduate/post-graduate/both/ other
- (6) Whether lecturer teaches students with dyslexia in school
- (7) Whether lecturers attended dyslexia awareness training
- (8) Lecturers' rating of their understanding of dyslexia and lastly
- (9) Lecturers' rating of their ability to support dyslexic students.

Finally, a space was provided at the end of the survey questionnaire, requesting subjects to give any comments upon completion of the questionnaire.

4.2 Piloting the Survey Instrument:

The survey tool was initially sent out as a short pilot study to a group of 15 members of the academic staff within a chosen faculty where this study was conducted. The purpose was to make a final revision of the survey questionnaire and to avoid any ambiguity as well as to review any items that might appear unclear or complex. The sample was a purposeful one, sent out especially to staff known by the researcher personally, explaining the purpose of the exercise and a request for detailed feedback about the format or wording of the survey items, in addition to the layout, ease of completing the form, readability, the quantity of information placed or any other information helpful towards further improvement of the survey questionnaire before sending it out for validation. There was a return of 13 completed questionnaires back with comments for improvement. Two completed questionnaires were returned much later with appropriate feedback but were not possible to consider due to lateness. However, this information were invaluable at the post-validation stage of the survey questionnaire. The overall feedback and comments received were highly valuable towards the final revision of the survey questionnaires before sending them out for validation purposes.

4.3 The Procedure:

The survey questionnaire, still at its pre-validated stage, was sent out across two faculties in one of the universities where the study was planned to take place: The Faculty of Science and Technology and the Faculty of Business and Law. Each consisted of three separate schools. The Faculty of Science and Technology comprised of the School of Pharmacy and

Chemistry, the School of Biology and Earth Sciences and the School of Psychology. The Faculty of Business and Law, on the other hand, consisted of the School of Management, the School of Languages and the School of Law. The two faculties were particularly chosen as one being a faculty of science whereas the other as the faculty of Art in order to find if there was any specific difference in response. Following permission obtained from the heads of the faculties a total of 250 questionnaires were delivered through the internal mail. A letter of request to complete and return the questionnaire was included with self-addressed envelope (see sample of Pre-validated Survey questionnaire and attached letter in Appendix- D). The months of November and December' in 2002 for sending out the questionnaire survey was felt to be a better timing, especially towards the end of the first academic semester and before the beginning of the Christmas festive season. But given the fact that it was also a particularly busy time for staff marking students' scripts following end of the semester assessments there was the possibility of staff overlooking the survey request, with excessive workload. Hence, a letter of reminder with apology to those who might have already sent back the completed survey forms was followed to all the academic staff again after three weeks of the initial postage (see sample in Appendix- D). Out of 250 survey questionnaires sent out a total of 80 (32%) completed questionnaires were returned. These faculties were to be excluded from the main survey in order to avoid repetition of the survey completion. The amount of data obtained was found adequate to subject it to test the reliability and internal consistency of the tool.

4.4 Testing the Internal consistency of the Survey Tool:

All the data which were based on the Likert scale (excluding the first 9 items) were next subjected to repeated Chronbach alpha test. At the end of the test a total of 14 items, all being below alpha (0.7), were rejected. This meant that only those items above alpha (0.7)

were retained. The fact that the reliability coefficient based on 80 cases was reading an overall alpha of (0.7152) in the item list with correlation coefficient of the 31 items ranging between (0.0) to (0.5) this was deemed acceptable for the internal consistency and reliability of the tool. At the end of the test, a total of 4 items, although they all scored an alpha above (0.7) were, nevertheless, removed from the selected list, as explained below:

- (1) Item No. 53 (alpha 0.7153 – ‘Dyslexic students should not be allowed to use electronic learning facilities that may distract other students in the class’ was removed. This item was directly opposite to item No. 43 (alpha 0.7156) – ‘Dyslexic students should be allowed to use electronic learning facilities that may, often, be different from those used by their non-dyslexic peers in the class’. The rationale for this decision was that there should be no two items directly opposite to each other in meaning in the same tool, or else this may cause confusion and distorting of subjects’ response.
- (2) Item No 52 (alpha 0.7165) – ‘A good lecturer is one who puts priority on individual students in preference to the whole class needs’ was removed for the same above reason as it was found directly contradicting item 39 (alpha 0.7066) – ‘A good lecturer is one who puts priority on the whole class in preference to the individual needs students’.
- (3) Item No. 36 (0.7212) – ‘Dyslexic students should be aware of their own needs before seeking lecturers’ support’. This item closely resembled with item No. 41 (alpha 0.7118) – ‘Dyslexic students should be aware of their personal problems/needs prior to claiming for support provisions in the university’ and, therefore, removed in order to avoid repetition of statements with possible distortion of response in the final survey.
- (4) Item No. 28 (alpha 0.7186) ‘Dyslexic students often show especial strengths in their ability to learn’. This item, too, seems to closely resemble item No.15 (alpha 0.7033) -‘An effective way to deal with the learning difficulties of a student is first to identify especial strengths he/she may possess’ and, therefore, removed with the same above reason.

On the other hand, a total of 3 items although they scored an alpha below (0.7) were, nevertheless, retained for the following reasons:

- (1) Item No. 42 (alpha 0.599)– ‘Primarily, it is the responsibility of the dyslexic students to approach lecturers for dyslexia support’. The fact that this statement attracted among the highest response as a common comment based upon the interview data process with the highest number of codes (Total: 14) it was decided to retain this item to see response into this area in wider scale (see detail in Appendix- B).
- (2) Item No.13 (0.5623) – ‘Dyslexic students, often, work harder than their non-dyslexic peers in producing their written works’. This item, too, attracted among the highest response with 9 coded items and, therefore, retained for the same above reason.
- (3) Item No. 25 (alpha 0.6484) – ‘Lecturers should hardly be expected to have knowledge of the specific disabilities of individual students in higher education’. This item was retained within the relevant domain to obtain diversity of views about lecturers’ role as practitioners of support.

Upon completion of the above test, out of 45 a total of 30 items were retained for the main survey questionnaire. This meant that a total of 39 items/statements, inclusive of 9 items relating to subjects’ personal details were to be found in the main survey tool (see sample of the post validated final Survey Questionnaire in Appendix- f). Having retained the basic format of the pre-validated questionnaire layout the final survey questionnaire was finally packaged ready to be sent out for the purpose of the main data collection.

4.5 Conclusion:

To sum up, it is recalled that participants' comments received through the initial brainstorming activity and the initial semi-scheduled interviews helped the development of the main survey instrument. As such, data derived from the initial interview schedule was utilised to formulate lecturers' broad conceptualisations of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support intervention. The questionnaire items were based upon Bricman's Medical and Compensatory model to help and coping.

Chapter 5

Phase -3 study: The main survey

5.1 Introduction:

While the previous chapter has explored the development of the survey tool this chapter addresses the main phase of the study. It starts by a brief overview of the rationale of the study, explaining the time frame and settings where it took place, sample selection and a detailed procedure that was followed. The latter section of the chapter gave an overview of the data analysed, packaged and reported before presenting a brief summary of the main issues emerged. Based on the findings, the chapter is concluded by building the case for the fourth and final phase of the research, utilising a qualitative approach to data collection.

5.2 The Rationale for conducting the main Research:

While the first phase of the study added substantially to the understanding of lecturers' orientation towards specific models of help and coping, based on Bricman et al. theoretical framework it was, nevertheless, supported with a small sample population within a given faculty of one of the three universities where this study was conducted. As such, it may be argued the extent to which the finding could be generalised across the wider population. Previous research studies show that lecturers vary in both their awareness of dyslexia as well as approach to support across the different faculties, often, within the same university (Mortimore and Crozier, 2006). On the other hand, while the main aim of the previous phase of the study was to identify lecturers' views of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support, based on Bricman et al.'s framework of help and coping, the next phase was to build on it on a larger scale. As such, the main aim was to find the extent to which the

findings from the initial phase of the study represented the views of lecturers in a larger sample population across three universities within the same region of the U.K. The rationale for the sample choice is explained in the relevant section below. Implicit within the aim was also to identify lecturers' views of dyslexic students, their expectation of students and that of themselves in the support strategy. The aim was also to identify differences on the above with respect to lecturers' awareness training as well as any likely differences existed among the chosen universities. In addition, lecturers' understanding and ability to support dyslexic students was an important factor in order to form an overall basis about their views of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support.

5.3 The Aims:

The main aim was to find the extent to which lecturers associated with the two identified modalities (medical and compensatory) of help and coping with reference to dyslexia, dyslexic students and support interventions. The above was followed by a set of research questions, as follows:

- (a) Was there was a significant difference between the lecturers who had attended and those who had not attended dyslexia awareness training in their views of (i) dyslexic students and (ii) their approach to dyslexia support?
- (b) Was there a significant difference among the three universities in lecturers' views of (i) dyslexic students and (ii) approach to support?
- (c) To what an extent lecturers rated their understanding of dyslexia and ability to support dyslexic students?

5.4 Locations and time - frame of the Study:

This phase of the study was conducted for a period of four months between April and July 2003. Given the scale of the survey, conducted at several locations, the projected time scale of this exercise was at premium in terms of both the distribution of the survey questionnaires and collection of data. The study took place in three post-92 higher education institutions in the North-West of England. In order to respect personal privacy and preserve confidentiality of participants, the institutions in this study were given fictitious names, as University-J, University-E and University-H.

The study was kept within the confine of only the post-92 universities. Among other reasons, the decision not to include the pre-92 traditional universities was due to the fact that there were some fundamental differences between these two groups of universities in several ways; the notion being that, historically the traditional universities were different in terms of governance, funding and degree awarding powers (Tinklin et al. 2004). Although, originally the aim in the abolition of the binary divide in 1992 was to create a level of uniformity between the institutional differences, however, this continued to persist with the traditional university retaining its 'academic orientated' culture; whereas the post-92 universities, previously known as the 'polytechnics' continued to emphasise the vocational knowledge and transferable skills. The post-92 universities were traditionally also better equipped with the ability to attract the 'under-represented groups', including the disabled and those with an ethnic background; whereas, the pre-92 traditional universities had to freshly put in place a system of support towards meeting the needs of minority groups of students (Wolfendale & Corbett, 1996). The Russell group of universities, the so-called group of elite universities including Oxford and Cambridge, are mainly concerned with admission policies of socially and, perhaps, economically disadvantaged students. Since

disability or other specific learning difficulties, apparently, did not form part of this policy and the fact that the study was concentrated in a small section of the country Russell group of universities was not considered in this study. Among the three universities in this study two were almost equal in size in terms of overall number of students' intake while one was comparatively smaller. As a convenient sample population, a selective number of faculties were considered for the purpose of this study, those with similarity on subjects/courses offered across the three universities; hence, there was the need to retain the consistency and reliability of data in terms of lecturers' common background, experiences, subject expertise and support practices towards students with and without special needs (see Table 10 below for detail).

Table:10 Faculties where the main study was conducted and whether dyslexia awareness training was held by specific institutions.

Institutions	Faculties	Dyslexia training
University-J	- Faculty of Education - Faculty of Humanity and Applied Social Sciences - Faculty of Engineering & Design	None But 'Dyslexia Working Group' (Lasted 18 months)
University-E	- Faculty of Education - Faculty of Humanistic, Management & Applied Social Sciences	Dyslexia Awareness Training (Ongoing)
University-H	- Faculty of Education - Faculty of Humanities - Faculty of Arts, Communication and Design - Faculty of Sciences and Social Sciences	None

In addition to the above differences as well as similarities the three non-traditional universities were also selected in terms of their background differences in dyslexia support practices (see Table 10, above). While University-J was at an evolving stage of establishing Dyslexia Working Group at central level, while this study was being conducted, University-H had a well established support system for students with disability in general. However, this university did not have in place a system of support specific to dyslexia support, other than providing support provisions according to legislative policies and requirements. University-E was, comparatively, at an advanced stage of dyslexia support with awareness training offered to members of the academic staff. However, the above-mentioned Dyslexia Working Group in University-J only lasted for a period of 8 months in a trial basis before it was discontinued, following change in policy within the university. The working group, however, merged with the Disability Support group of the university which had existed from before. The rationale for this move was that dyslexia support was no longer perceived as a separate group from that of other disabilities and, hence, it was aimed to conduct support system in a unified manner. This indicated that a comparative study across these three universities would be helpful to find whether there were differences in lecturers' views of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support strategies. Hence, among the detailed questions sought regarding lecturers' views and understanding of dyslexia was also found important to establish whether lecturers attended dyslexia awareness training, regardless of whether such training was offered or not in their specific universities. Moreover, a comparative study was also conducted to find lecturers' level of dyslexia awareness, knowledge and ability to support dyslexic students between lecturers who had attended and those who had not attended dyslexia awareness training. The rationale was to find potential effectiveness of such training on students' support by members of the academic staff. As such, while the above issues were generated by the

interview data, they were, nevertheless, also supported by differences in dyslexia practices across the institutions.

5.5 Sample Selection:

As indicated earlier, only lecturers with similarity in experience, subject expertise, knowledge and practice were selected across the three universities as a purposeful sample population. The aim was to retain the stability and consistency of data obtained. Moreover, the intrinsic variability of the sample population were kept under control through seeking various personal details of subjects, which were also used for comparative purposes; such as, respondents' years of service offered as academics as opposed to seeking their age. This information was important in order to find likely differences in response by staff due to the fact that dyslexia being, relatively, a new concept in higher education, especially following wider access to post-92 universities as well as the introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995). As such, various controversies were likely to persist with possible resistance by members of the academic staff in accepting the problems of dyslexia as a genuine learning difficulty. Moreover, lecturers' occupational status (see Table 11 for details) was also important as variable since different positions in terms of occupational status and staff responsibilities were factors likely to influence lecturers' views and students' support, especially between those in management and non-management positions among the academics, previously found by (Tinklin et al., 2004).

Table:11 Level of seniority of respondents in number and percentage in each university.

Status	Uni-J	Uni-H	Uni-E	Total (%)
Lecturers	23 (24%)	27 (28 %)	46 (48 %)	96
Senior lecturers	59 (35 %)	36 (22 %)	73 (44 %)	168
Academics as Managers (incl. heads of departments)	8 (36 %)	7 (32%)	7 (32%)	22
Others (Exp: academics with honorary contracts, etc.)	3 (30 %)	3 (30 %)	4 (40 %)	10
Total N= 298	93 (31%)	73 (25%)	130 (44%)	296

Note: columns do not always sum to 100% because of rounding errors

Lastly, the different groups of students that lecturers taught on their courses appeared to be an influencing factor in terms of sample comparison since potentially there were likely to have differences in support practices by staff teaching, for example undergraduate as compared to postgraduate students. The study, however, did not consider gender as an influencing variable with regard to seeking lecturers' views about dyslexia and support in higher education since no such differences has been an issue of concern in the field of dyslexia support.

Table:12 Types and number of students taught across the 3 universities.

Students	Uni-J	Uni-E	Uni-H	Total
Undergraduate	35	62	26	123 (42 %)
Postgraduate	3	9	7	19 (6 %)
Both	55	58	41	154 (52 %)
Total	93	129	74	296

5.6 The Procedure:

First a letter of application was sent to each head of the department to seek their permission in order to conduct the study, explaining the purpose of the study. On occasions, a letter of reminder was also required at a later date, attached with a copy of the original letter of application due to delay in response (see sample of letter of application in Appendix- D). Upon approval, the survey questionnaires were then posted to each member of the academic staff to the relevant faculties through internal mails of the universities. This was conducted in stages, one university at a time until all the three institutions were covered according to plan (see Table 12, above). Along with the questionnaire was also attached a letter, requesting the participants to complete the questionnaire and return in a self addressed pre-paid envelope (see letter sample in Appendix-D). A total of 860 questionnaires were sent out across the three universities with a total of (35%) 296 returned (see Table 12 below, for detail). However, due to personal expenses incurred both in distributing and in the collecting the data as well as to avoid the possibility of irritating those respondents who had already returned the completed questionnaires a letter of

reminder was neither found right nor feasible in terms of cost. On the other hand, the fact that the time was nearing to annual leave season for the university staff in the months of July and August, a poor response was, nonetheless, predicted and, hence, another prohibitive factor in addition to those mentioned above in sending out reminders.

Table:13 Survey Questionnaires sent out with response rate

Institution	Total sent out	Questionnaires returned
University-J	260 (100%)	93 (36%)
University-E	220 (100%)	73 (33%)
University-H	380 (100%)	130 (34%)
Total	860 (100%)	298 (35%)

² questionnaires response not accounted for.

5.7 Data Analysis and Findings: (A Quantitative Survey)

5.7 (i) (a) Data Analysis (Lecturers' views of dyslexic students):

It is recalled that data collected, utilising a qualitative survey at the initial phase of the study, formed the basis of the quantitative survey instrument. In that, while the primary aim was to find lecturers' conceptions of dyslexia, dyslexic students and approach to support underpinned by Bricman et al.'s (1982) models of help and coping, the purpose here was to seek lecturers' broad conceptualisations of these views and the extent to which they were associated with these views across the three universities. It is through the conceptualisations of dyslexic students' characteristics along with lecturers' approach to

support that the study hoped to determine the extent to which lecturers associated with the two identified Bricman et al.'s modalities in phase one of the study. Following post-validation, a total of 21 items represented characteristics of dyslexic students and lecturers' role; whereas a total of 9 items constituted lecturers' approach to dyslexia support, based on both Bricman et al.'s Medical and Compensatory models of help and coping. Hence, data derived on the basis of the two sets of items were reduced and analysed separately, utilising principal component analysis.

First, the 21 items representing dyslexic students' characteristics and lecturers' role were subjected to factor analysis, utilising Varimax with Kaiser Normalization method of rotation (see details in Table 14, below). The Kaiser-Meyer- Olkin Measure (KMO) of Sampling Adequacy showed a figure of (0.662), indicating a strong and reliable result. As table 10 indicates, a total of 5 factors were extracted on the basis of all the 21 items with none having been rejected. It is a common practice when using this kind of reduction techniques that those variables or items that do not load strongly are removed altogether. In this case, however, although some variables loaded weakly (below 0.2), though few in number, they were, nevertheless, retained. David De Vaus (2002) states that, in social research, taking consideration of low loading items in factor analysis can be taken into consideration especially if they are meaningful to the particular factor in which they are loaded. In addition, three variables that were negative were also retained since they had an inverse relationship with the group of variables in which they loaded. Following trials with different methods of rotations it was noticed that the variables in most instances were loaded strongly in one component more than in others. If an item was loaded equally strongly into more than one factor (indicated in italics) it was, non-the-less, selected only once, as a common practice to such approach to data reduction. All the Eigenvalues above

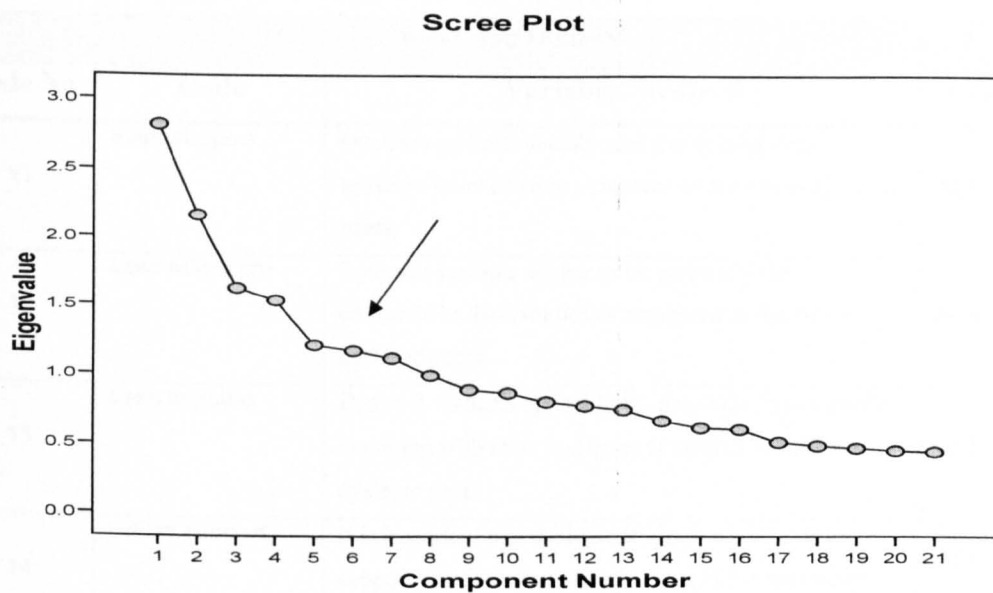
1, indicating a total of 7 factors or components in this instance, was extracted. These 7 components accounted for 55.418% of the variance of the relationship between variables. However, due to poor loading of the variables in components No.6 and 7, these were rejected as factors, meaning a total of 5 factors only were extracted, as indicated above. The Scree plot (see Fig.1, below) gives a visual representation of the component extraction that further reinforced the fact that 5 components were clearly apparent before the line started to straighten at the curve, indicating 5 distinct factors in the analysis.

Table:14 Factor analysis of Lecturers' conceptualizations of dyslexic students.

		Rotated Component Matrix(a)						
No	Code Title	Component						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Assert rights			.676		-.154	.339	
2	Special strengths	-.147		.619	.281			
3	Emphasis on strengths		.107	.694		.157		
4	Approach lecturer		-.198	.228	-.301	.106	.643	.110
5	Work harder			.191	-.109			.769
6	Problem & needs	.525		.191		.168		-.177
7	Personal tutor			-.110	.225	.116		.617
8	Able & Succeed		.770	.162		-.179		
9	Minimal learning		.736			.137		.104
10	independent	-.569	.409			.164	.135	.148
11	Seek support	.591		-.115		-.248	.170	.140
12	Less confident	.566	-.140		.112	.181	-.228	.309
13	Less capable	.452	-.482	.113			.103	.192
14	Utilize support	.453	.261	.136	.190	.373	.179	.210
15	Treated differently	.253		-.129	.322		.696	
16	advice	.187			.105	.752		
17	Extra support	-.111	-.132		-.161	.590	.323	.136
18	Support dependent	.569				.336	.225	-.136
19	Good understanding			.156	.753	.118		
20	Good knowledge	.148		.330	.682			
21	Hardly know	.209	-.150	.196	-.500	.245		-.135

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. A Rotation converged in 16 iterations. **NOTE:** See the representation of the code/Nos. located in Tables 11 to 14 and table 21.

Figure:1 Scree Plot for factors regarding lecturers' conceptualizations of the dyslexic Students.



Each of the 5 factors was, in turn, given a name on the basis of the collective meaning of the variables that loaded together, as indicated on each of the tables (between 12 and 15, inclusive).

As such, factor analysis showed that out of the 5 factors lecturers seemed to have a total of 4 factors representing specifically their views of students with dyslexia, naming them as follows: (a) Able and Responsible (b) Independent (c) Weak and Disabled and (d) Support dependent. Each of the above four factors is represented in detail with the extent to which each variable loaded within the factor (see Tables 15 to 18). While Factors 1, 2, 3 and 5 represented lecturers' broad conceptualisations of dyslexic students Factor 4 represented Lecturer 'Expectation of the Self' in the support strategy (see Table 22, later). It is noted that this factor does not form part of lecturers' views of dyslexic students but rather their

role as they perceived in the support strategy, based on Bricman et al.'s framework of help and coping. As such, Factor 4 is discussed at a later stage (see section 5.7 iii).

Table:15 Factor 1 (Derived from the rotated Component matrix a - Table 14)

Weak and Disabled			
Code No	Code	Variables/Items: 5	Loading
11	Seek support	Dyslexic students usually seek the help of their lecturers more often as compared to their non-dyslexic peers.	.591
12	Less confident	Dyslexic students appear to be, generally, less confident in their studies as compared to their non-dyslexic peers.	.566
13	Less capable	Dyslexic students appear to be, generally, less capable in coping with their studies as compared to their non-dyslexic peers.	.452
14	Utilize support	It is important that dyslexic students utilise every support provision available to them in the university.	.453
15	Treated differently	Due to their particular styles of learning dyslexic students should, often, be treated differently from other students during a teaching session.	.253

Table:16 Factor 2 (Derived from the rotated Component matrix a - Table 14)

Independent			
Code No	Code	Variables/Items: 3	Loading
8	Able & Succeed	Given appropriate support, most dyslexic students have the ability to be as successful as their non-dyslexic peers in their own studies.	.770
9	Minimal learning	Given appropriate support, most dyslexic students should experience minimal learning difficulties in higher education.	.736
10	independent	Dyslexic students are, generally, as independent in their approach to learning as their non-dyslexic peers.	.409

Table:17 Factor 3 (Derived from the rotated Component matrix a - Table 14)

Able and Responsible			
Code No	Code	Variables/Items: 7	Loading
1	Assert rights	It is, often, important for dyslexic students to assert their rights in order to gain special support in the university.	.676
2	Special strengths	An effective way to deal with the learning difficulties of a student is first to identify special strengths he/she may possess.	.619
3	Emphasis on strengths	An effective way for lecturers to develop the learning potentials of dyslexic students is by emphasising more upon their strengths rather than their weaknesses.	.694
4	Approach lecturer	Primarily, it is the responsibility of the dyslexic students to approach lecturers for dyslexia support.	.228
5	Work harder	Dyslexic students, often, work harder than their non-dyslexic peers in producing their written works.	.191
6	Problem & needs	Dyslexic students should be aware of their personal problems/needs prior to claiming for support provisions in the university.	.191
7	Personal tutor	It is the personal tutor who should arrange for dyslexia support on behalf of the student across the school rather than the student approaching every lecturer for personal support.	-.110

Note: Variables 5, 6 & 7 although weakly loaded are nevertheless meaningful to the component.
No.7 has inverse relationship with the rest of the variables

Table:18 Factor 5 (Derived from the rotated Component matrix a - Table 14)

Support Dependent			
Code No	Code	Variables/Items: 3	Loading
16	advice	It is important that students, declaring their dyslexia, follow as much advice of the support/academic staff as they can towards their own learning needs.	.752
17	Extra support	Dyslexic students should normally seek the help of dyslexia experts rather than approaching lecturers for specialist support.	.590
18	Support dependent	Generally, most dyslexic students depend on support provisions of the university in order to cope as effectively as other students with their studies.	.336

Table:19 Factors on the conceptualisations of dyslexic students representing Bricman's Medical and Compensatory models of help and coping strategy.

	Factor	Medical Model	Compensatory Model
1	Weak and Disable	•	
2	Independent		•
3	Able and Responsible		•
5	Support dependent	•	

5.7 (i) (b) Findings (Lecturers' views of dyslexic students):

In addition to the factor analysis, next was to determine the extent to which lecturers associated with their broad conceptualisations of dyslexic, based on Bricman et al.'s models. These are briefly explained with reference to the detailed results showed (see Table 20, below), utilising simple descriptive statistical analysis. On the 'able and responsible' a SD of 3.18 indicated a small variability in responses and a mean of 24.8 within the of 0 - 35 indicated a tendency in favour of lecturers viewing dyslexic students as 'able and responsible' learners. Similarly, a total mean of 12.14 within the range of 0-15

indicated that lecturers had a tendency to perceive dyslexic students as ‘independent’ learners in their own learning. A SD of 1.96 and the ranges shows a small variability in the range.

However, when looking at the detailed results of the other two factors about lecturers’ conceptualisations of dyslexic students as (c) ‘weak and disabled’ and (d) ‘support dependent’ these results seem to give an opposite view of the above characteristics of dyslexic students perceived by lecturers in the study. In lecturers’ views of dyslexic students as ‘weak and disable’ a mean of 13.66, within the range of 0 - 25 indicated, however, a slight tendency in perceiving dyslexic students as ‘weak and disable’. A SD of 2.93 indicates a small variation in the response. With regard to lecturers’ views of the dyslexic students as ‘support dependent’, again a mean of 10.17 within the range of 0 -15 indicated a moderate tendency in their perceptions of the dyslexic students as ‘support dependent’. A SD of 2.08 indicates a small variation in the responses (see Table 20, for detail).

Table:20 The score in each factor (Lecturers’ conceptualisations of the dyslexic students)

No.	Factor	Mean	SD	Range
3	Able & Responsible	24.8	3.18	0-35
2	Independent	12.1	1.96	0-15
1	Weak & Disabled	13.7	2.93	0-25
5	Support dependent	10.2	2.08	0-15
4	Lecturers’ expectation of the Self	11.3	1.95	0-15

Results showed that lecturers were associated with both the Medical and Compensatory modalities in their conceptualisations of dyslexic students. This phase of the research which is conducted in a much larger scale across three universities support the findings of the initial phase of the study about lecturers' conceptualisations of dyslexic students.

5.7 (ii) (a) Data Analysis (Lecturers' approach to dyslexia support):

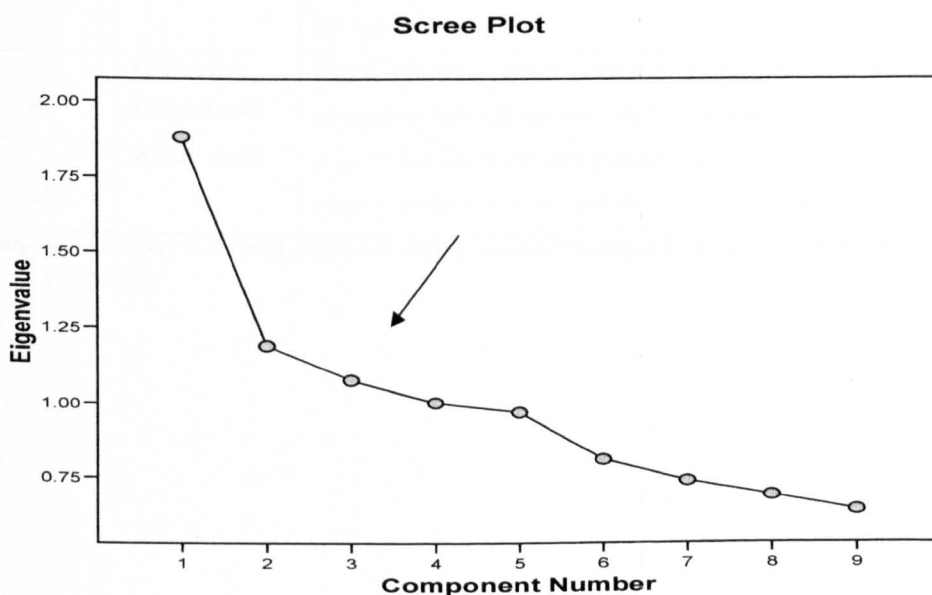
As indicated earlier, lecturers' approach to dyslexia support, on the basis of Bricman et al.'s Medical and Compensatory models, was also sought as an integral part of the questionnaire survey. A total of 9 variables were identified as support strategies which were again subjected to the same format of principle component analysis as explained above (see Table 21, below). According to the Scree plot (fig. 2, below), a total of 4 components were extracted, accounting for 57.287% of the variance of the relationship between variables. The KMO reads at (.635), which is relatives. However, due to poor loadings, components 3 and 4 were entirely rejected, retaining only components 1 and 2 (See Table 21). In addition, with regard to the two variables: coded as (own note & use electronics) (See Table 21) the fact that these were loaded strongly in components 3 and 4 respectively (indicated in italics) they were, therefore, rejected. Moreover, there were fewer than 3 variables in components 3 and 4.

Table:21 Factor analysis on Lecturers approach to dyslexia support.

No	Codes (Tables 18 & 19)	Rotated Component Matrix (a)			
		Component			
		1	2	3	4
22	Mark flexibly	.762			
23	Opt out of class	.679	.128	-.234	-.141
24	Alternative assessment	.490			.567
25	Whole class	-.196		.431	-.158
26	Own support		-.858		.146
27	Extra copies	.359	.565		.229
28	Given information	.110	.420	-.438	.174
29	Own note*			.864	
30	Use electronics*	-.249		-.113	.827

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. A Rotation converged in 5 iterations. **NOTE:** See the code title & No. located in tables 19 & 20.

Figure:2 Scree Plot for factors regarding lecturers' approach to dyslexia support



As Tables 22 and 23 (below) show, each factor was named according to the variables grouped within them, giving a common meaning as 'Facilitative' and 'Directive' approach to dyslexia support. The Facilitative approach to support (meaning the lecturer mobilises support and guides/empowers the learner) refers to Bricman et al.'s Compensatory strategy to support whereas the Directive approach (lecturers act on behalf of dyslexic students in the acquisition of support) refers to the Medical strategy to support.

Table:22 Factor 1 (Derived from the rotated Component matrix a- Table 21)

Facilitative Support			
Code No	Code	Variables/Items: Total (4)	Loading
22	Mark flexibly	Written works of dyslexic students should be marked flexibly by making allowances for their reading and writing difficulties.	.762
23	Opt out of class	A dyslexic student, experiencing specific learning difficulties during a class activity, should be allowed to opt out on request.	.679
24	Alternative assessment	Higher education should allow dyslexic students to take alternative forms of assessments, on request.	.490
25	Whole class	A good lecturer is one who puts priority on the whole class in preference to the individual needs of students.	-.196

Note: Variable No. 4 although loaded weakly is inversely meaningful to the rest of the variables in the component.

Table:23 Factor 2 (Derived from the rotated Component matrix a- Table 21)

Directive Support			
Code No	Code	Variables/Items: Total (3)	Loading
26	Own support	It is preferable that dyslexic students seek their own support provisions than lecturers act on their behalves.	-.858
27	Extra copies	Dyslexic students, experiencing difficulties in searching for their own reading materials, should be given extra copies on request.	.565
28	Given information	It is preferable that lecturers provide (give) dyslexic students with relevant information on university support provisions than letting them search for themselves.	.420

Note: Variable No. 26 is strongly loaded, having inverse relationship with the rest of the variables.

5.7 (ii) (b) Findings (Lecturers' approach to dyslexia support):

The means of the two factors, both rating just above average 12.8 within the range of 0- 20) and 9.02 (range 0 – 15) respectively, indicated that lecturers were again orientated towards both the Facilitative and Directive approach, based on Bricman et al. models of help and coping (see details in Table 24, below). As such, lecturers found that both approaches were important towards support of the dyslexic students.

Table:24 The score in each factor (Lecturers' approach to dyslexia support)

No.	Factor	Mean	SD	Range
1	Facilitative support	12.8	1.32	0 - 20
2	Directive support	9.0	1.93	0 - 15

It is, however, important to note that the Facilitative approach to support as a factor, particularly, addressed two items on assessment strategies which is worthy of giving particular attention in relation to dyslexia (see Table 25, below). These items were as follows: (No.22) 'Written works of dyslexic students should be marked flexibly by making

allowances for their reading and writing difficulties' and (No.24) 'Higher education should allow dyslexic students to take alternative forms of assessments, on request'. With regard to - 'flexibility in marking the works of dyslexic', data showed that more lecturers were disagreeable than agreeable with 21% of respondents rated as being unsure. On the other hand, as regard to 'alternative approach to assessment', data analysis again showed that almost half (47%) of the number of lecturer in the study were disagreeable with (28%) being unsure. The findings, in relation to assessment strategies, indicated that there was a degree of resistance among academic staff across the three universities in favour of a flexible and facilitative approach to assessment support assessment for students with dyslexia. However, a high percentage of respondents scoring as 'unsure' in these items (see Table 25) also indicated that, perhaps, these members of the academic staff were either undecided as to how flexibility in assessment strategies may help dyslexic students to succeed in their studies or the applicability of such a strategy in their courses. Moreover, results showed that while lecturers across the three universities were almost equally divided in favour for an alternative approach to assessment strategies they, however, comparatively rated as being more flexible in marking the works of the dyslexic students with sensitivity to their specific reading and writing difficulties.

On the other hand, in the facilitative approach to dyslexia support there were two further items (No. 23) 'A dyslexic student, experiencing specific learning difficulties during a class activity, should be allowed to opt out on request' and (No. 25) 'A good lecturer is one who puts priority on the whole class in preference to the individual needs of students'. With reference to item No. 23, although over half the number of respondents (51%) rated in favour of allowing dyslexic students to opt out of class activity due to their specific learning difficulties the rest of the staff were almost equally divided between disagree

(22%) and Unsure (28%) which are again showing either some unwillingness among staff to support dyslexic students in the class with sensitivity to their specific needs or uncertain of taking such a decision in relation to dyslexia. However, a high percentage of staff (51%) being agreeable increasingly shows a sign of dyslexia friendly learning environment, at least among some members of the academic staff. With respect to item No. 25, it is noted that this item is incorporated in the facilitative approach to dyslexia support since it was inversely loaded within this factor (See Table 21, above). Again, this rating was similar to that of item No. 23, in which just over half the number of respondents (51%) were agreeable in favour of lecturers putting priority in whole class as opposed to individual needs of students. However, the rest of the respondents were divided in their views which again indicating either an unwillingness to support students on individual basis in higher education with an emphasis on lecture- form of teaching or they were being uncertain. An individual approach to teaching is conducive to dyslexia friendly approach to teaching (Gilroy and Miles, 1996); hence, a facilitative approach to teaching.

Table:25 Lecturers' facilitative and directive approach to dyslexia support.

Code No	Code	Mean	SD	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Facilitative						
22	Mark flexibly*	3.40	1.208	(79) 27%	(61) 21%	(158) 53%
23	Opt out of class	2.57	1.115	(151) 51%	(83) 28%	(64) 22%
24	Alternative assessment*	3.31	1.124	(75) 25%	(84) 28%	(139) 47%
25	Whole class	2.59	1.119	(152) 51%	(84) 28%	(62) 21%
Directive						
26	Own support	3.61	1.103	(51) 17%	(67) 23%	(180) 60%
27	Extra copies	2.99	1.139	(107) 36%	(96) 32%	(95) 32%
28	Given information	3.64	1.005	(39) 13%	(88) 30%	(171) 57%

With reference to directive approach to dyslexia support, a total of three items were loaded (See Table 21, above). While item No. 26 was inversely loaded within this factor this was however poorly loaded. This was, nevertheless, taken account of as it was meaningful to this factor. As it can be deduced from the above table, while lecturers were almost equally divided in a directive approach to students' support an almost equal percentage were unsure in their rating, again showing uncertainty in terms of dyslexia support in higher education. These were, particularly, in relation to giving students extra reading materials and providing dyslexia related information.

The open-ended survey comments analysed and showed in Appendix- H further added support to the above statistical findings on the issue of assessments. This was particularly, with reference to the standard of written works required of students, for example in the Teacher Training courses. Some respondents' comments indicated a disparity in opinion about the written works required of students in certain university courses and the likely stress this might pose to dyslexic students in terms of meeting the curricular requirements. On the other hand, perhaps there was also a need to address the extent to which such a curriculum could be imaginatively created for an inclusive education. The results so far are rather concerning since there were not only differences of views but also uncertainties in the institutions where this study was conducted about meeting the needs of the dyslexic students in respect to assessments.

A Comparative study of Lecturers' approach to Dyslexia support across the three

Universities:

The research question asked whether lecturers in the three universities differed significantly in their views about approach to dyslexia related academic support with reference to (a) the Facilitative and (b) Directive approach to support (see Table 26, below).

Table:26 Facilitative and Directive approach to dyslexia support among lecturers across the 3 universities.

	Mean	SD	F	P
Facilitative				
Uni -J	12.10	2.40	3.378	<0.05
Uni-E	13.05	3.09		
Uni-H	12.82	2.45		
Directive				
Uni -J	8.94	2.04	0.795	>0.05
Uni-E	9.20	2.19		
Uni-H	8.82	2.43		

Data obtained were subjected to a univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) between the lecturers in the three universities (Uni-J, Uni-E and Uni-H). The statistical analysis showed that the three universities differed significantly in lecturers' rating their views for a Facilitative approach to dyslexia support at less than 5% level (see Table 27, below). Because the F value was significant for the Facilitative approach to dyslexia support Post Hoc Tests, utilising Scheffe analysis, were carried out to find which pair of means were significantly different among the 3 institutions. Results showed that lecturers in 'Uni-J significantly differed from Uni-E but not from lecturers at Uni-H at less than 5% level.

Lecturers at Uni-E did not differ significantly from lecturers at Uni-H. Hence, the means difference indicated that lecturers at Uni-J rated their views for a Facilitative approach to dyslexia support significantly lesser (mean: 12.10) than lecturers at Uni-E (mean: 13.05). It was interesting to find that in the university where lesser number of lecturers attended dyslexia awareness training (Uni-J) as compared to Uni-E where dyslexia awareness training was held, there lecturers appeared to be more resistant to flexibility to dyslexia support. This again, indicated a general lack of sensitivity to support dyslexic students by lecturers as a result of limited awareness of dyslexia. As it is noted, the means difference is, however, marginal. Moreover, facilitative approach to support, as discussed earlier, consisted largely of assessment strategies which were beyond individual lecturers' realm of control. In that lecturers remained divided. This result indicated that there was a significant difference among the three universities in lecturers' approach to supporting dyslexic students with sensitivity to needs. There was, however, no evidence to suggest that the three universities differed significantly in lecturers' views with regard to the directive approach to dyslexia support. This result showed that lecturers, across all the three universities were almost equally in favour of utilising different approaches to support, depending upon the needs of dyslexic students.

5.7 (iii) Data Analysis and Findings: (Lecturers' perception of their own role in the support strategy):

Table:27 Component 4 (Derived from the rotated Component matrix a- Table 21).

Lecturers' perception of their own role in the support strategy			
Code No	Code	Variables/Items: 3	Loading
19	Good understanding	For effective teaching, it is fundamental for lecturers to have a good understanding of the specific learning difficulties of their individual students.	.753
20	Good knowledge	It is fundamental that lecturers, teaching dyslexic students, have a good knowledge of dyslexia.	.682
21	Hardly know	Lecturers should hardly be expected to have knowledge of the specific disabilities of individual students in higher education.	-.500

Note: Variable No. 21 has inverse relationship with the rest of the variables.

An integral part of the factor analysis is the fifth factor naming: 'Lecturer's Expectation of Self' in the support strategy (see Table 27, above). This factor, in particular, looked at lecturers' views about the need to develop their understanding of dyslexia as an integral part of their academic role. The factor consisted of three questionnaire items seeking lecturers' knowledge of dyslexia and about dyslexic students as a pre-requisite to dyslexia related support. Following a descriptive statistical analysis, utilising average means (see Table 28) and frequency tests, results indicated that lecturers seemed to generally disagree with the need to develop an understanding of dyslexia or have an awareness of their students with dyslexia as a way to provide dyslexia support. It is interesting to note that, according to the results lecturers largely disagreed with both item 19 (76%) and item 20 (64%). The results indicated that these lecturers preferred a 'subordinate role' in the support strategy, comparable to Bricman et al.'s Compensatory model of help and coping as opposed to a willingness to develop a deeper understanding or 'expertise' in the field, akin to the Medical model. However, as Table 28 also shows, a substantially high number

of lecturers remained undecided which is again suggesting a lack of knowledge on the part of lecturers to make informed decision on their role in relation to dyslexia support as members of the academic staff.

Table:28 Lecturers' expectation in developing their own understanding of dyslexia and dyslexic students.

Code No	Code	N	Mean	SD	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
19	Good understanding	298	3.96	0.853	(20) 7%	(51) 17%	(226) 76%
20	Good knowledge	298	3.70	0.944	(33) 10%	(76) 26%	(189) 64%
21	Hardly know	298	2.32	1.030	(190) 65%	(65) 22%	(43) 14%

The need to raise dyslexia awareness: A comparative study between lecturers who had attended and not attended dyslexia awareness training:

An important analysis was to find whether there was a significant difference in results between lecturers who attended dyslexia awareness training and those who did not, in raising their awareness of dyslexia in order to support dyslexic students. Results (See Table 29, below) showed that lecturers who had attended dyslexia awareness training rated significantly higher at less than 5% level than lecturers who had not attended, indicating that better informed members of the academic staff about dyslexia placed higher importance about dyslexia awareness training than their less informed colleagues.

Table:29 The need to raise own awareness of dyslexia between lecturers who had attended and not attended dyslexia awareness training.

	N	Mean	SD	F	P
Attended	119	11.61	1.85	3.825	<0.05
Not attended	178	11.16	2.00		

5.7 (iv) Summary of the findings (Lecturers' views of dyslexic students and approach to support:

In brief, taking considerations of the above findings on lecturers' views of dyslexic students, approach to support and expectation of their own role regarding dyslexia awareness it can be concluded that lecturers' views were associated with both Bricman et al.'s Compensatory and Medical models of help and coping. The results confirmed the findings of the initial study, stating that lecturers put importance on both strategies in their conceptualisations of dyslexic students as well as support intervention. On the other hand, lecturers also perceived their own role from a Compensatory perspective, preferring to take a 'subordinate' role in the help/support strategy. As regard to their approach to support, again lecturers associated with both the facilitative and directive approach to support. As indicated earlier, however, the facilitative approach to support was orientated mainly towards assessment strategies as an aspect to dyslexia support which lecturers had very little control over, since a course assessment is essentially curriculum-based in higher education. The next step was to find the extent to which lecturers' conceptualisations of dyslexic students differed between lecturers who attended and those who had not attended dyslexia awareness training as well as difference across the three universities.

5.7 (v) Data Analysis (Views of dyslexic students between lecturers' who attended and not attended dyslexia awareness training):

A comparative study was conducted to find whether lecturers who had attended dyslexia awareness training as part of their academic role differed significantly from lecturers who had not attended in their conceptualisations of dyslexic students with reference to the four identified factors (a) Able and responsible (b) Independent (c) Weak and disabled and (d) Support dependent learners (See Table 30, below). There was evidence at 1% level that the two groups of lecturers differed significantly in their views of the dyslexic students as 'support dependent'. The average mean score indicated that lecturers who had attended dyslexia awareness training rated significantly higher as compared to lecturers who had not attended in their views of the dyslexic students as 'Support dependent'. However, the statistical test revealed no significant difference between the two groups of lecturers in their views of the dyslexic students as (a) 'able and responsible' learners (b) 'independent' learners and (c) 'weak and disabled' learners.

Table:30 Lecturers' views of dyslexic students: (between those who had attended and had not attended dyslexia awareness training).

	Attended (119) 40%			Not attended (179) 60%				
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	F	P
Able & Responsible	119	24.91	3.41	177	24.73	3.01	0.211	<0.05
Independent	118	12.33	1.75	179	12.02	2.05	0.211	<0.05
Support dependent	119	10.54	2.07	177	9.92	2.05	6.517	>0.01
Weak & Disabled	118	14.03	2.98	179	13.41	2.88	3.267	<0.05

In conclusion, referring to the above results, it is interesting to find that lecturers who had attended dyslexia awareness training perceived dyslexic students as more dependent upon support as compared to those lecturers who had not attended dyslexia awareness training. The findings indicate that dyslexia awareness training itself is perhaps orientated towards dyslexia problems and, hence, a need to support dyslexic students in higher education. Alternatively, the perception of lecturers having attended dyslexia awareness training are, perhaps, are more in tune with the recent legislative changes on disability rights (DDA, 1995 and SENDA Report, 2001-2) and, hence, dyslexia is being increasingly perceived as a disability, coupled with increasing number of students declaring their dyslexia and looking for additional support in higher education.

5.7 (vi) Analysis and Findings (Lecturers' views of dyslexic Students across the three Universities):

A comparative study was also conducted to find if there was any significant difference among the lecturers in the three higher education institutions in their views of dyslexic students. Data obtained was subjected to a one-way analysis of variance (Anova) between the lecturers in the 3 universities. The statistical results according (see Table 31, below) showed that there was no significant difference among lecturers in the 3 universities in their views of dyslexic students as (a) 'able and responsible' and (b) 'independent' learners. The result seemed to signify that lecturers across the 3 institutions equally rated dyslexic students as 'able and responsible' and 'independent' learners. However, the statistical evidence showed that there was evidence at less than 5% level that lecturers differed significantly in rating their views of dyslexic students as (a) 'weak and disabled' and (b) 'support dependent' (Table 31). Because the F value was significant for both 'weak and

disabled' and 'support dependent' Post Hoc tests, utilising Scheffe analysis, were carried out to find which pair of means were significantly different among lecturers in the three universities.

First, the significance level indicated that with regard to the dyslexic students as 'weak and disabled' learners, lecturers at University-J significantly differed at 5% level from lecturers at University-E and lecturers at University-H. However, lecturers at University-E did not differ significantly from lecturers at University-H. Hence, the mean difference indicated that lecturers at University-J rated their views of dyslexic students as 'weak and disabled' significantly lower than lecturers at University-E and lecturers at University- H. According to the above findings this meant that lecturers at University-J rated lower in their views of dyslexic students as 'weak and disabled' compared to both the other two universities.

Secondly, the significance level indicated that with regard to dyslexic students as 'support dependent, lecturers at university-J significantly differed at 1% level from lecturers at university-E and less than 5% level from lecturers at university-H. However, lecturers at university-E did not differ significantly from lecturers at university-H. Hence, the mean difference indicated that lecturers at University-J rated their views of dyslexic students as support dependent' significantly lower than lecturers in university-E as well as in university-H.

To sum up, it is interesting to find that in university-J where there was no dyslexia awareness training held there lecturers rated lower in their views of dyslexic students as 'support dependent' compared to lecturers at both other two universities, particularly with reference to university-E where dyslexia awareness training was held and, where, comparatively more lecturers had attended dyslexia awareness training. This again seems

to suggest that dyslexia was also perceived as a sign of weakness and dyslexic students dependent on support. The above also indicated that perhaps the nature of dyslexia awareness training itself had an impact on lecturers' perceptions of dyslexia and dyslexic students more from a disability and support dependent perspectives as opposed to different way of learning. However, this suggestion remains speculative.

Table:31 Lecturers' views of dyslexic students across the three universities.

	Uni-J			Uni-E			Uni-H			F	P
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD		
Able & Responsible	91	25.31	2.63	129	24.77	3.50	74	24.28	3.156	2.158	>0.05
Independent	91	12.38	1.46	129	11.94	2.19	74	12.22	2.02	1.450	>0.05
Support dependent	92	9.18	2.01	129	10.85	1.97	74	10.22	1.90	19.197	>0.01
Weak & Disabled	92	12.91	2.43	129	13.99	3.08	74	14.03	3.14	4.472	>0.05

5.7 (vii) Data Analysis and Findings (Lecturers' knowledge of dyslexia):

The main aim of this section of the study was to find (a) extent to which lecturers, across the three universities, attended dyslexia awareness training, (b) their knowledge of dyslexia and (c) ability to support dyslexic students. These questions were based, using different variables, such as (i) lecturers' occupational status, (ii) number of years served as academics and (iii) whether they had taught students with dyslexia into their courses.

Various statistical questions, using SPSS, were posed to seek the relationships between these issues. The questions posed were as follows:

- (a) To what an extent did lecturers attend dyslexia awareness training across the three universities?
- (b) Was there a significant difference in (i) knowledge of dyslexia and (ii) ability to support dyslexic students between lecturers who had attended and not attended dyslexia awareness training?
- (c) Was there a significant difference in lecturers' knowledge of dyslexia and ability to support dyslexic students across the three universities?
- (d) Was there a significant difference between lecturers in management and non-management positions in their knowledge of dyslexia and ability to support dyslexic students?
- (e) Was there a significant difference in (a) knowledge of dyslexia and (b) ability to support dyslexic students between lecturers who (i) taught, (ii) did not teach and (iii) did not know whether they taught dyslexic students on their courses.

In the institutions where this study was conducted findings showed that there was not only a poor uptake of dyslexia awareness training among members of the academic staff but also a general lack in the understanding of dyslexia and ability to support dyslexic students. As indicated in Table 29 the highest percentage of lecturers who said that they had they had attended dyslexia awareness training was in University- E, followed by University --H, then University- J. On the other hand, it was interesting to find that in University-E over 50% of lecturers said that they had attended. However, it was worth noting that University-E was also known to have had an established and ongoing system of dyslexia awareness training, whereas, University-J was at an evolving stage of dyslexia awareness through the establishment of a newly formed Dyslexia Working group by a group of academic and

disability support staff while this study was being conducted. University-H was said to be reputable for good practice for students with disabilities in general. However, there was no ongoing dyslexia awareness training offered to members of the academic staff in these two universities while this study was being conducted.

Table:32 Lecturers' who had attended and those who had not attended dyslexia awareness training across the three universities.

Institution	N	Attended	Not attended
Uni-J	03	22(24%)	(71) 76%
Uni-E	128	(71) 55%	(57) 45%
Uni-H	74	(25) 34%	(49) 66%
Total	295	(118) 40%	(177) 60%

Note: * Total number of respondents was 298 (3 missing).
Percentage counted to the nearest whole figure.

Data were further sought to find whether there was a difference in lecturers attending dyslexia awareness training according to duration of service. This information was also sought, in particular, to establish likely change in recent trend in dyslexia awareness training in the higher education institutions where this study was conducted, especially following the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and SENDA report (2001/2002).

Duration in teaching service offered by staff did not seem to make a substantial difference in lecturers attending dyslexia awareness training. However, there was a slight difference between those staff newly recruited in the profession as compared to staff with longer duration of service. According to the results (see Table 33, below) a comparatively higher percentage of lecturers below 2 years of service said that they had attended dyslexia awareness training as compared to those who served between 2 to 5 years service.

However, despite this increase, two-thirds of the number of staff in that group did not attend dyslexia awareness training. On the other hand, evidence showed an opposite of the above findings; in that, more senior members of the academic staff with progressively longer duration of service have had attended dyslexia awareness training, seemingly, at some point in their career as compared to their junior colleagues. This was mainly so between members of the staff from 5 years service onwards. This trend in dyslexia awareness training by duration of service seems to demonstrate two interesting findings: there was either a better opportunity offered to newly recruited members of staff as parts of their teacher training programme or there was a willingness among these staff in raising their dyslexia awareness as a recently evolving issue in higher education, following the introduction of Disability Discrimination act of 1995. However, this was speculative and further study is required to establish likely causations of such trends in dyslexia awareness training.

Table:33 Lecturers who had attended and not attended dyslexia awareness training by duration of service.

Years in service	N	Attended	Not attended
0 - 2	29	9 (31%)	20 (69%)
2 - 5	44	9 (20%)	35 (80%)
5 - 10	56	21 (37%)	35 (63%)
10 - 20	96	41 (43%)	55 (57%)
20 and over	70	38 (54%)	32 (46%)
Total	295	118 (100%)	177 (100%)

Note: Percentage counted to the nearest whole figure.

In addition to dyslexia awareness training, data were also sought regarding lecturers' general understanding of dyslexia and ability to provide dyslexia related academic support to students. Results indicated that regardless of whether or not lecturers attended dyslexia

awareness training there was, overall, a severe lack in dyslexia knowledge among lecturers as well as in their ability to support dyslexic students in their respective institutions. In the scale between 1 and 5, a score of 1 indicated 'not good at all' to a score of 5 being 'very good'. Using a one-way ANOVA results showed that attending dyslexia awareness training had a positive effect on lecturers' knowledge of dyslexia and ability to support dyslexic students. As indicated (see Table 34, below) lecturers who attended dyslexia awareness training differed significantly at less than 1% level than lecturers who did not attend. Lecturers who had attended rated higher (mean = 3.18) than lecturers who had not attended (mean = 2.62). Again, there was evidence at 1% level ($P < 0.001$) that lecturers who attended dyslexia awareness training rated higher (mean = 2.80) in their ability to support dyslexic students than lecturers who had not attended (mean = 2.20).

However, results indicated that regardless of whether or not lecturers had attended dyslexia awareness training there was a general lack of dyslexia knowledge as well as ability to support dyslexic students among the members of the academic staff. The means of both groups of lecturers (see Table 34) showed a score of average to below average.

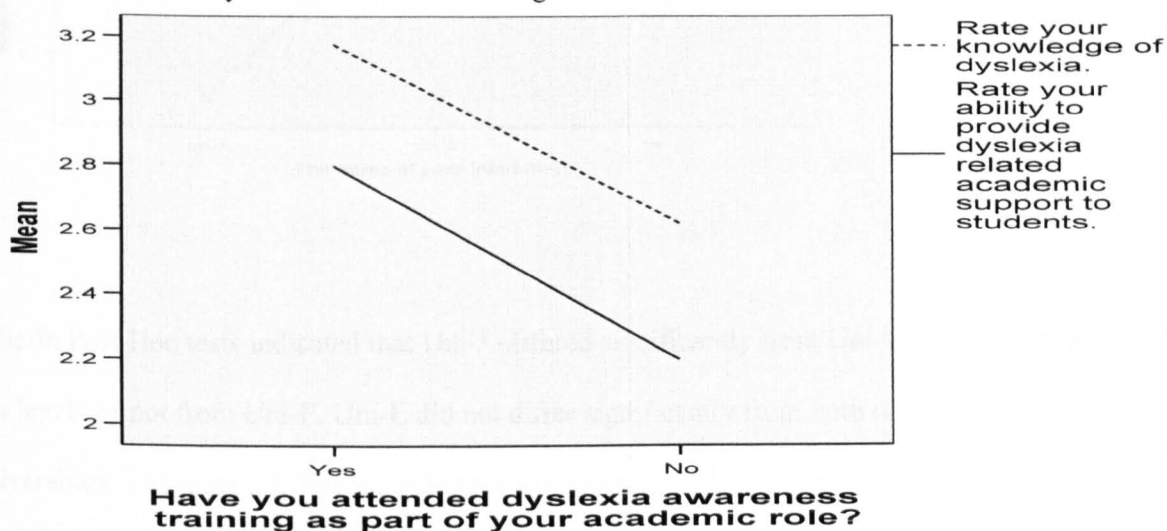
Table:34 Effects of training on lecturers' knowledge and ability to support dyslexic students.

	Dyslexia Knowledge		Ability to Support			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Attended N(119)	3.18	0.67	2.80	1.39	25.64	0.0001
Not attended N(179)	2.62	0.97	2.20	1.24	15.26	0.0001

Test: One-way Analysis of variance

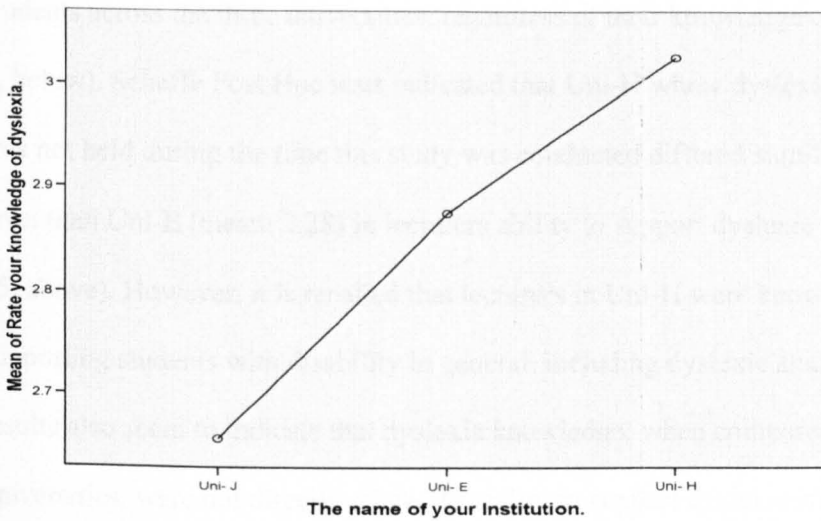
Moreover, a correlation test revealed that lecturers with a better knowledge of dyslexia also scored higher in their ability to provide dyslexia support to students ($r = .578$, $n = 298$ $P < 0.001$, two-tailed), indicating the beneficial impact of dyslexia awareness training in the effectiveness of dyslexia support in higher education (see Fig. 3, below for details).

Figure 3: Lecturers' level of dyslexia knowledge and ability to support dyslexic students based on dyslexia awareness training.



Results showed some disparity among the three institutions in lecturers' knowledge of dyslexia (see Figure 4, below).

Figure: 4 Lecturers' rating of dyslexia knowledge across the three universities.



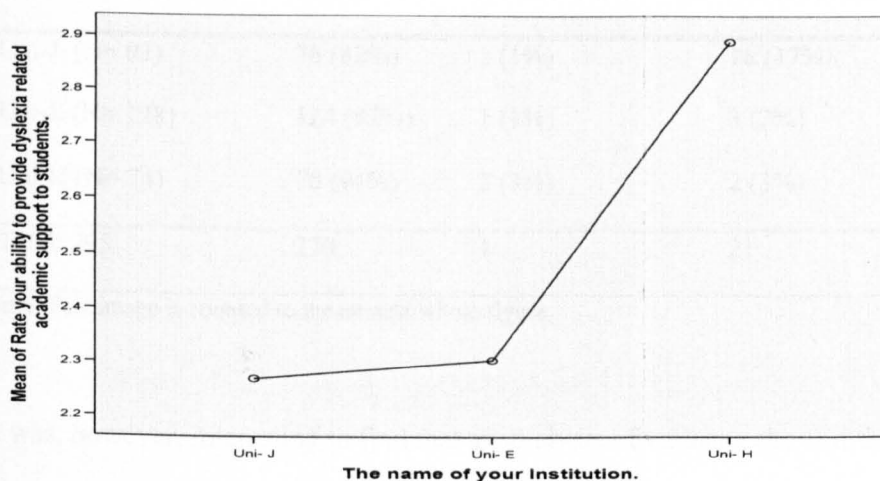
Scheffe Post Hoc tests indicated that Uni-J differed significantly from Uni-H with less than 5% level but not from Uni-E. Uni-E did not differ significantly from both of the other two universities. The means difference indicated that lecturers at Uni-H rated their knowledge of dyslexia significantly higher (mean: 3.11) than lecturers at Uni-J (mean: 2.88) but not significantly higher than lecturers at Uni-E (mean: 2.85).

Table:35 Knowledge and ability to support dyslexic students by lecturers who had attended dyslexia awareness training across the three universities.

	Dyslexia Knowledge					Ability to Support				
	N	Mean	SD	F	P	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Uni-J	22	2.88	0.894	0.768	<0.05	22	2.52	1.234	7.285	<0.01
Uni-E	71	2.85	0.816			71	2.28	1.491		
Uni-H	25	3.11	0.995			25	3.02	1.000		

There was also a disparity among lecturers regarding their ability to support dyslexic students across the three universities, regardless of their knowledge of dyslexia (see Figure 5, below). Scheffe Post Hoc tests indicated that Uni-H where dyslexia awareness training was not held during the time this study was conducted differed significantly lesser at 1% level than Uni-E (mean: 2.28) in lecturers ability to support dyslexic students (see Table 35, above). However, it is recalled that lecturers in Uni-H were known as pro-active in supporting students with disability in general, including dyslexic students. The above results also seem to indicate that dyslexia knowledge, when compared across the three universities, were not directly related to ability to support dyslexic students. However, dyslexia knowledge was directly related to dyslexia knowledge when compared with lecturers' attendance to dyslexia awareness training. The findings also seem to suggest that there may be other unknown factors impinging on lectures' ability to support students with dyslexia other than dyslexia awareness training in the institutions where this study was conducted.

Figure: 5 Lecturers' rating of dyslexia knowledge across the three universities



There was not only a general lack of knowledge and ability to support dyslexic students by lecturers in the three universities but also some lecturers were unsure as to whether they had, indeed, been teaching students with dyslexia on their courses. The findings showed a lack of consistency in staff's response. As indicated (see Table 36 below), in the faculties where a majority of lecturers acknowledged to have been teaching students with dyslexia a few lecturers (see Table 36 for details) stated that they were not teaching students with dyslexia, whereas, between 2 to 17% lecturers across the three universities stated that they did not know whether they had been teaching students with dyslexia on their courses. Among the lecturers who stated that they did not know was from University -J which was by far the highest in number, that is (16) 17% as compared to the other two universities. It is recalled that lecturers in University-J also rated lower not only on dyslexia awareness training but also in their knowledge of dyslexia as well as ability to support dyslexic students as compared to one of the two other universities (see Table 35, above).

Table 36: Lecturers' views about whether they taught or did not know they taught dyslexic students across the three universities.

	Teach	Do not teach	Do not know
Uni-J (N= 93)	76 (82%)	1 (1%)	16 (17%)
Uni-E (N= 128)	124 (97%)	1 (1%)	3 (2%)
Uni-H (N= 74)	70 (94%)	2 (3%)	2 (3%)
Total: 295	270	4	21

Note: Percentage is counted to the nearest whole figure.

It was, however, interesting to find that an analysis of variance showed that there was no significant differences between the three groups' of lecturers (teach/did not teach/did not know) whether they taught dyslexic students with regard to their self-rating of dyslexia knowledge (see Table 37 below, for details).

Table:37 Lecturers' self-rating of dyslexia knowledge, based on whether they taught or did not know they taught dyslexic students.

	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Teach	270	2.87	0.95	2.108	>0.05
Do not teach	4	3.00	0.82		
Do not know	21	2.43	1.12		

However, the three groups of lecturers differed significantly in their 'ability to support dyslexic students (see Table 38, below) at less than 1% level.

Table:38 Lecturers' self-rating on their ability to support dyslexic students, based on whether they taught or did not know they taught dyslexic students.

	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Teach	270	2.51	1.34	6.122	<0.01
Do not teach	4	2.75	1.71		
Do not know	21	1.48	0.81		

Post hoc tests, utilising Scheffe, revealed that lecturers who acknowledged to have been teaching dyslexic students on their courses scored significantly higher (mean: 2.51) with ($P < 0.05$) as compared to lecturers who 'did not know' whether they taught dyslexic students (mean: 1.48). However, they were not significantly different as compared to those lecturers who stated that they 'did not teach' dyslexic students.

A comparative study was also conducted to find whether there was a difference between lecturers in management positions in their respective schools as compared to those in non-management positions in their knowledge of dyslexia and support of dyslexic students. Results showed that there was no significant difference between these two groups of lecturers regarding dyslexia knowledge. As indicated (see Table 39, below), there was no significant difference between these two groups of lecturers in their general knowledge of dyslexia. Both groups of lecturers, however, scored average in their dyslexia knowledge, according to the simple descriptive analysis.

Table:39 Manager and non-manager lecturers' self-rating of dyslexia knowledge.

	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Lecturer (Non-manager)	276	2.82	0.10	2.207	>0.05
Lecturer (Manager)	22	3.14	0.71		

Note: * Total number of respondents was 298 (3 missing). Percentage counted to the nearest whole figure.

However, it was interesting to note that despite no significant difference in dyslexia knowledge the two groups of lecturers were significantly different at 5% level in their ability to support dyslexic students (see Table 40, below). The means score indicated that lecturers in management position self-rated comparatively higher than their colleagues in the non-management position. Despite this difference, the means scores, again, remained low for both groups of lecturers.

Table:40 Manager and non-manager lecturers' self-rating of their ability to support dyslexic students.

	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Lecturer (Non-manager)	275	2.38	1.32	2.207	<0.01
Lecturer (Manager)	22	3.14	1.28		

Note: * Total number of respondents was 298 (3 missing). Percentage counted to the nearest whole figure.

5.8 Data Analysis and Findings: (A Qualitative Survey)

5.8 (i) Lecturers' Awareness of Dyslexia:

In addition to the findings of the quantitative data analysis, comments received through the survey questionnaire (see Appendix- H, for details) shed further light on lecturers' views of dyslexia and related support to students. The findings showed that some members of the academic staff were often disappointed due to the lack of guidance and support by the central management towards meeting the needs of students with specific learning difficulties in their faculties. Dyslexia support was often limited to standard support provisions, regardless of students' specific problems and needs. There was a general lack of conviction by the central and departmental management in their views about the provision of academic related dyslexia support as well as promoting dyslexia awareness among the academic staff. Instead, according to the views of some members of the academic staff, disability policy and support provisions in the university were made available simply to meet legislative requirements, claimed by one respondent as *'lip-service'*. Even where dyslexia training existed this was conducted mainly to promote the university disability policy and standard support provisions available to students rather than to address the specific learning needs of dyslexic students within an inclusiveness approach to education.

Findings also indicated that there was a dearth of staff in the respective institutions with dyslexia expertise to offer guidance and support to students. These members of the staff were, often, overworked by taking responsibility for a large number of students with special needs as well as supporting fellow colleagues. Moreover, they often felt disheartened as a result of management's lack of recognition of their voluntary role of special support to both students and staff, in addition to meeting their other academic duties within the faculty. Such a lack of recognition was often exacerbated by poor financial

support by central management both in terms of raising dyslexia awareness and in the provision of further incentives to staff willing to offer their support. Where financial support was available it, often, came as a one off special disability fund, previously backed by the HEFCE initiatives to promote dyslexia support in higher education rather than the university undertaking a structured and committed system of support through central budget.

Evidence, based on staff comments, clearly showed that dyslexia support, far from being valued as an integral role of the academic staff within an approach of inclusiveness to education, was considered to be rather the responsibility of support personnel in the student welfare department of the university. While a few members of the academic staff felt satisfied with the standard support provisions provided through the disability policy of the university as adequate enough to support students with dyslexia, others complained about the serious lack of guidance and absence of policy at school level to raise dyslexia awareness or to provide academic support to dyslexic students. Academic staff derived their own knowledge of dyslexia, often, through '*hearsay*', '*self-taught*' or from '*own understanding*' as some lecturers put it. However, there was a variation among lecturers in their understanding of dyslexia knowledge and competency to support dyslexic students. Despite a limitation or absence of dyslexia awareness training with general lack of management support a minority group of staff appeared to have acquired some basic understanding of dyslexia either as a result of having previous contacts with dyslexic students who required their support or simply had personal experience of dyslexia within the family. A few members of the academic staff showed a greater awareness and insight into dyslexia as a result of themselves being dyslexics. As such, they had developed a natural empathy and understanding towards the needs of students with dyslexia. Some of

these staff had taken an active role in providing voluntary support to both students and fellow staff in their respective schools. The study also showed that staff who had attended dyslexia awareness training rated significantly higher in the need for lecturers to attend dyslexia awareness training as compared to those who had not attended (see Table- 24), indicating the extent to which better informed staff placing higher importance on dyslexia awareness in higher education.

While some lecturers recognised dyslexia as being neither a disease nor a disability but rather a real problem among adult learners, a small number of staff expressed doubts about the existence of dyslexia as a genuine learning difficulty. For example, dyslexia was described by one lecturer as a socially manipulated phenomenon, rooted in childhood education as political correctness. Occasionally, declaring dyslexia by adult students has also been interpreted as jeopardising one's opportunity in securing certain types of employment, indicating that, at least in the opinion of some lecturers, students declaring their dyslexia problems has not always been a wise proposition, especially, in to-day's work market and job competition. Concerns were also raised by some members of the academic staff about the risk of lowering academic standards through the provision of special support to dyslexic students. This was, particularly, in relation to certain courses that appeared to be placing high literacy and writing requirements upon the students. As such, literacy and academic writing continued to be treated as fundamental elements of 'graduateness' in higher education. Moreover, it was interesting to find that higher education, in relation to some courses, continued being treated by one participant as an institution belonging mainly to the 'elites', that is those endowed with high intellectual ability. On the other hand, students with special needs continued being classified among those either lower than average in general ability or having behavioural problems. As such,

these students were often considered unsuitable to main stream higher education, as one respondent put it when asked about dyslexia: *'..we don't make special allowances for people with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder), substance abuse problems or low I.Q. on degrees....)*. These members of the academic staff are unlikely to put much importance on dyslexia awareness or, indeed, towards meeting the needs of students with specific learning difficulties, for that matter.

5.8 (ii) Lecturers' Views of Dyslexic Students:

Based upon the comments, it became evident that lecturers had a perception of many dyslexic students, regardless of their specific learning difficulties, as highly motivated, conscientious, confident and hard working individuals who were capable of achieving academic success and career aspirations just as any other students. Some of these students were known to have developed successful coping strategies as self-directed learners without the need for extra support or adjustments in higher education. Their strengths appeared to be attributed not only to their personal and intellectual abilities but also as a result of their very dyslexia syndrome, such as an ability to communicate fluently and a tendency to work with consistency and conviction towards achieving one's educational goal. *'A dyslexic that has got to HE probably has strategies we should be learning from...'* as one lecturer put it. Academic staff also seemed to have an expectation of the dyslexic students to take a certain degree of personal responsibility both in terms of disclosing their dyslexia and in approaching lecturers for support as and when required. Such a view of dyslexic students represented Bricman et al. Compensatory model of the clients' conceptualisation.

On the other hand, some other comments also indicated that due to a lack of ability to cope with their studies some of these students were perceived as demanding of the lecturers'

time and energy, hence a characteristic of 'dependence'. As a result, some members of the academic staff felt stretched, at times, with the extra workload. Lecturers also found that although some dyslexic students were highly motivated in their learning, there were others who lacked self-confidence, consistency or a willingness to learn. *'I do think though that we have students (dyslexics and non-dyslexics) who are very lazy and do not apply themselves...'* as one lecturer put it.

Moreover, an additional concept of the dyslexic students appeared to emerge, namely the dyslexic student as an 'individual' (see Appendix- H, for details). In that, lecturers preferred to treat dyslexic person's as unique individuals rather than labelling them as either able or weak, a *"dyslexic students are just as 'diverse' as non-dyslexic students"* as one lecturer put it. Research citation in the literature showed that, often, dyslexic students are either unaware of their specific learning difficulties (Morgan and Klein, 2002), do not declare their dyslexia or cope without the need for extra support (Morris and Turnbull, 2006) and, as such, retain their 'individuality' as other students in higher education.

Moreover, the fact that lecturers conceptualised the dyslexic students from two very opposing perspectives further strengthened the view that far from holding extremes of opinions about the dyslexic students as either very able or very weak they preferred to see these strengths and weaknesses across a spectrum. This appeared to implicitly suggest that while lecturers held broad conceptualisations of dyslexic students they also seemed to perceive their learning difficulties *'rather like in a continuum, a spectrum...'* as one lecturer put it.

The 'Individual' model of dyslexia and the dyslexic student seemed to be further supported by criticism made about the actual survey questionnaire by some respondents (see detail in

Appendix- H). A few members of the academic staff said that they had experienced some difficulties in giving appropriate response to some of the questionnaire items since they believed that there was no single answer to dyslexia or the need for the categorisation of their dyslexia related characteristics. According to them, every dyslexic is an individual and, as such, has problems and needs that could hardly be compared with another individual. Moreover, this statement was further supported by the fact that some respondents opted for 'unsure' in the response scale, indicating their indecisiveness for a generic perspective of dyslexia characteristics. One respondent clearly objected to the assumption that students with specific learning difficulties could be generalised since they were all different in both their specific problems as well as in their coping strategies.

5.8 (iii) Dyslexic Students' Role and Responsibilities in the Support Strategy:

The thematic analysis of respondents' comments derived from the survey questionnaire as well as results obtained from the fourth phase of the study further justified a Compensatory perspective of support strategy, particularly, in relation to the 'role expected of dyslexic students' towards the self as a 'helpee'. The analysis of the survey comments indicated that despite a preference by some lecturers for an 'individual' perspective of dyslexic students they, nevertheless, seemed to have an expectation of them to take active responsibility in the support strategy. In that, lecturers preferred to treat the dyslexic student as an independent adult and, as such, s/he was expected to take a certain degree of responsibility into the support relationship. Most of all, the findings showed, overwhelmingly, that lecturers preferred the dyslexic students to declare their dyslexia to the academic staff as a process of seeking lecturer's support.

5.8 (iv) Lecturers' own Role and Responsibilities in the Support Strategy:

The thematic analysis of lecturers' comments clearly identified lecturers' views of their own role as academic staff towards support of students with dyslexia in Higher Education. In brief, it was the views of some lecturers that support of dyslexic students was primarily the role of the support personnel such as the personal tutors, the student welfare staff, the student counsellors, the specialist tutors, the study skills staff, the central support staff and also those academic staff who undertook a voluntary role to support dyslexic students in their faculties. According to some of the comments received, lecturers, as 'educators' with subject expertise, did not see their role as support for a minority group of students with dyslexia. According to some members of the staff, personal support to students with dyslexia was almost an impractical undertaking against the constraints of many other academic duties of the lecturer. In brief, comments suggested that some lecturers simply did not regard dyslexia support as one of their primary roles. However, this was not the case among a few lecturers who appeared to have been putting a very informed perspective of how lecturers value students contribute towards the academic support of the dyslexic students in Higher Education. This is largely explored in the follow up section of the study

5.8 (v) The Nature of Support provided by Lecturers to Dyslexic Students:

Based upon the qualitative data analysis and survey comments, it was encouraging to find that some lecturers seemed to possess a sound knowledge about the specific needs and, hence, support of dyslexic students. These members of the staff were, however, thin and far apart across the three universities. The nature of the support was mainly related to:

1. Support during teaching activities with reference to a sensitive teaching approach in small groups as opposed to large class size; multi-sensory teaching methods;

- teaching content that might be broken down in stages with periodical review in teaching delivery; academic related lecturer support and meeting individual needs during class activities.
2. Support in assessment strategies, such as, provision of support during an examination or written assignments through allowance of extra time and especial support in an environment with minimal distraction; support on written works and sensitivity in marking of student' scripts.
 3. General aspects to support, such as a need to closely monitor the progress of dyslexic students; provision of good information and accessibility to information on support; support on written draft works; liaison with other personnel within the university on behalf of the dyslexic students; and innovative curriculum designs for an inclusive education.

The nature of support were, in the findings, were mainly related to (a) support during teaching activities with reference to teaching approach, multi-sensory teaching methods, teaching contents, academically related lecturer support and meeting individual needs during class activities, (b) support in assessment strategies, such as, provision of support during an examination or written assignments, support on written works and sensitivity in marking of students' scripts (To avoid repetition, see detail as indicated above under the heading of 'Facilitative approach to support) and (c) the third aspect of dyslexia support from the lecturers' perspectives was general aspects to support, such as a need to closely monitor the progress of the dyslexic students, provision of good information, support on written draft works, liaison with other personnel within the university on behalf of the dyslexic students and innovative curriculum designs for an inclusive education.

However, it was interesting to note that most of the above views were derived from respondents who appeared to have either an active role in supporting students with dyslexia in their respective faculties or themselves being dyslexics with personal knowledge of dyslexia and coping. In addition to the three main areas indicated above, lecturers also commented upon the challenges posed in supporting dyslexic students in Higher Education. However, these views were sparse in terms of comments derived from some respondents. The challenges posed to lecturers in supporting dyslexic students had significant impact upon the way they appeared to view dyslexia support in Higher Education. It was interesting to note that 5 respondents commented on issues of writing skills as fundamental for student's success in higher education studies. This was particularly in relation to certain course requirements such as the teacher training and language related courses. High importance was being placed upon the student's ability to express in writing. Such demands, undoubtedly, place dyslexic students at a severe disadvantage. This was particularly so when some lecturers were reluctant to recommend alternative forms of assessments other than in writing, such as oral or practical assessments.

While it was possible for students, in general, to be assessed about the content of the curriculum through group/posters presentation, seminars and debate or discussions, dyslexic students are required to take written examination alongside non-dyslexic students as part of their course requirements. On the other hand, some members of the academic staff expressed opposite views, such as the many challenges conventional reading and writing are likely to pose on the dyslexic students. Few respondents showed concern about the risk in dropping academic standards through lowering writing expectation by students with specific learning difficulties. One respondent expressed concern over the unrealistic demand placed upon her by a dyslexic student for proof reading his work and his request to

highlight grammatical errors as a result of his dyslexia. Such a support was, often, viewed as unrealistic by an already overworked staff. The other challenges lecturers often appeared to encounter was the limitation in the ability of dyslexic students to, often, make best use of information technology. In most areas of today's education, information technology is seen as one of the latest and most important educational tools that the students with or without specific learning difficulty need to master in order to succeed.

5.9 Conclusion: The Case for a Follow-up Study

The main survey questionnaire raised several issues that appeared to have remained partially incomplete specially regarding a comprehensive examination of lecturers' views and understanding of dyslexia, the dyslexic students and support. Hence, the aim of the second phase of the study was to unveil some of these issues by further exploration of questions raised as a result of the first phase of the study. Here, far from giving a comprehensive explanation only salient points are highlighted in justification for putting a case for a follow up study, utilising a semi-schedule interview approach to data collection.

First, the study aimed to find out more information about whether lecturers had attended dyslexia awareness training as part of the academic role. As a closed-ended question seeking a closed response in the questionnaire was somewhat limited for a comprehensive understanding about lecturers' awareness of dyslexia. The nature of dyslexia awareness training, its duration, place during employment when training was attended and above all the extent to which such a training had been helpful to the lecturer in supporting dyslexic students were among some of the issues were helpful to explore further in the last phase of the study. Secondly, lecturers were asked to rate their knowledge of dyslexia within a given

numerical scale in the main questionnaire. However, these were again limited to some extent as to what was meant by the term 'dyslexia knowledge' and the expectation of it from lecturers as academics as opposed to dyslexia experts; hence, the rating of dyslexia knowledge in the questionnaire, although had benefits, was somewhat arbitrary and could be open to many interpretations. As such, there was a need to further explore not only the knowledge base of lecturers but also to find out their values and beliefs about dyslexia and the likely impact of these attitudes towards knowledge acquisition about both dyslexia and students' support. Thirdly, lecturers were asked in the questionnaire to rate their ability to support dyslexic students with limited opportunities to seek the nature and type of support they might have provided to students with dyslexia; or, indeed, any challenges this might have posed to them. In addition to the above issues, there was a need to further examine the nature and types of dyslexia related problems students presented to the academic staff; also, the approach lecturers might have been using in dealing with the problems of dyslexia and in relation to students' support. Fourthly, since the study was conducted in three different institutions there was also a need to find reasons for any differences between institutions. Nevertheless, finding individual differences or similarity in response by the interviewees was hoped to put further light into the likely causations of such differences. Moreover, since dyslexia is an unseen disability there was also the need to find not only whether lecturers taught students with dyslexia but also the extent to which they had come across students with dyslexia related problems and needs. It was also intended to find the extent to which they felt confident to support dyslexic students, their expectation of themselves and that of dyslexic students in the support strategy. The above were some of the issues that were intended to explore through a follow-up interview survey in order to further illuminate the findings from the quantitative survey.

Chapter 6

The Final Survey

6.1 Introduction:

The purpose of this phase of the study was to further investigate findings identified in the main phase of the research. As a qualitative study it utilised an in-depth interview technique to data collection. As such, it aimed to demonstrate a comprehensive picture of lecturers' understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support, utilising thematic approach to data analysis. The section starts with a brief overview of the principal of the methodology used. It then gives a brief explanation about the interview-participants, followed by a detailed procedure of the interview process itself. Lastly, the section ends by a detailed exposition of the thematic analysis of the data obtained.

6.2 The Rationale of the Methodology:

The aim of in-depth interviews used in this phase of the study was to further collect data on lecturers' views about dyslexia, the dyslexic students and approach. To avoid repetition, the theoretical underpinning of thematic data analysis utilised has been extensively explored and incorporated into the data analysis (See Section 3.5). Based on this approach to data analysis this phase of the study, short as it is, aimed to provide a suitable framework for exploring participants' views that has not been possible in the quantitative phase. The interview approach is especially relevant since dyslexia is little known in higher education from lecturers' perspectives.

One among the many weaknesses of this approach to data collection may be the quality of the data gathering itself as discussed earlier (see Section 3.5). The aim of the final phase of the study was, therefore, to further explore and amplify lecturers' views of dyslexia, the dyslexic students and support interventions (see Section 5.9, for detail).

6.3 The Interview Schedule:

A semi-schedule interview process was devised to seek further information as an attempt to explore those areas that have been left largely unanswered (see sample of interview schedule in Appendix-I).However, in brief, the following areas have been addressed as the main areas of interest in the interview schedule:

- The nature of dyslexia awareness training attended by the participant, if any
- Participants' willingness to attend dyslexia awareness training and how this may help in his/her academic role
- Participants' views and attitude towards dyslexia and the dyslexic students requiring academic support;
- Extent to which participants come across students with dyslexia and types and nature of support given
- Extent to which participants feels confident to provide support and action taken, if unable to provide support required by dyslexic students
- Participants' expectation of students' role in the support strategy
- Challenges dyslexia posed to the participants
- Managements' role in the support strategy
- General support provided to dyslexic students in the school;
- Views about any support strategy put in place by the management to provide support to staff as well as dyslexic students in the school

- Lastly, anything that the participant wishes to add.

6.4 The Participants and Sample Choice:

Since the aim of the study was to add information that guided in the quantitative study this was purposefully a small-scale in-depth interview survey, seeking detailed information about lecturers' views and attitudes towards dyslexia, dyslexic students and support strategy. As such, the interview study consisted of 4 members of academic staff chosen purposefully from the same faculty, representing different staff groups in terms of age and experience in teaching with diverse background and course commitments. These members of the academic staff were approached individually and they all accepted to participate willingly.

Participant-1:

The first participant interviewed was a female member of the academic staff in her early 30s with approximately 4 years in the teaching profession as a postgraduate teacher in higher education. She was involved in the Pre-registration nursing education. As such, she was considered among the new members of the academic staff with, comparatively, least amount of experience in the teaching profession as compared to the other participants in the interview survey. The aim in selecting her was to bring fresh perspectives regarding disability and students' support as compared to more experienced members of the academic staff with a longer duration of service. Moreover, this participant was said to have extensive experience in dealing with younger individuals with general disabilities in the past and, as such, she was well informed about general needs of individuals with especial needs, including dyslexia. She was also among the members of the academic staff who

were dealing with large cohorts, often over 100 students at any one time. However, interestingly, it was disclosed by the participant on completion of the interview process that she was dyslexic with a few close members of her family being dyslexics, too. However, she had never offered herself for a diagnostic test due to fear of stigmatisation. However, her high level of dyslexia awareness as well as sensitivity to students' support was duly reflected into the interview data and, as such, was acknowledged at the end of the interview. This participant kindly gave permission, without being asked, to reveal this information into the research as an aid to put further perspective on the data findings.

Participant-2:

This participant was a mature male with well over 20 years of teaching experience in the same faculty, taking responsibility of post-registered students undergoing shortened courses as qualified nurses. Hence, although this participant has had extensive experience in a variety of settings in the past; since about ten years ago he diverted from the main stream Pre-registration nurse training, and is now holding shortened courses that normally last between six months to a maximum of 18 months period before taking up a new cohort of mature students. As such, the participant managed a maximum of 10 mature students in average in a given cohort. This meant that the participant had a close contact and relationship with his students and knew them well in person. As such, there was likely impact of this relationship both in terms of support strategy and contact with students with special needs. The general background of this participant, although appeared to have some commonality with the previous participant in terms of area of teaching and student support, had some fundamental differences too with a potentially different perspective to add into the interview data.

Participant-3:

This participant was also a male with at least 8-10 years of teaching experience in the health care field. As a mature individual in his early fifties he had an enriched experience for many years prior to taking teaching profession as a recruitment and admission officer in the field. Moreover, in addition to taking responsibility of large cohorts of over 100 students at any one time he was also the designate disability officer as well as Equal Opportunity Officer of the university, representing the faculty. This meant that his interview responses might put a different perspective as compared to both of the above two participants, given his especial background and extra responsibility in the field of disability support and students' needs.

Participant-4:

This participant, too, was a male in his mid-fifties with over 20 years of teaching experience in the Pre-registration nurse-training course. He also has the responsibility of both managing and teaching large cohorts of students. In addition to his designated job as senior lecturer he had also taken on acting up position for a short duration of time as principle lecturer; hence, having some managerial experience. As such, his experience was hoped to bring a different perspective to the interview data from the management perspective.

To sum up, while there was some commonality among the sample choice with regard to their teaching background and subject expertise as well as types of students taught these participants were also fundamentally different from each other as individuals with a diversity of experiences and professional responsibility. As such, given the scale of the

exercise taken these background differences of the participants hoped to provide a diversity of responses in data collection.

6.5 The Location and Procedure:

Each interview lasted between 45 to 60 minutes duration. The interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of the participants. The participants were duly reassured that the contents of the interview would be solely for the purpose of conducting the research and that, in no circumstances, would it be divulged to any other parties. The scripts obtained were also offered to participants for review and correction, if required. However, there was no request for such an offer. An opportunity for choice of interview locations was given to each participant. However, apart from one interview that took place in the participant's own office, the rest were taken in a quiet empty classroom of the campus, free from distraction by visiting students or fellow colleagues as well as telephone calls. Prior to the start of the interview the participants were given a general overview of the areas the interview schedule aimed to cover. Again, given the nature of the subject great caution was taken to avoid interviewees feeling sense of being questioned about their personal knowledge of dyslexia or students' support, The aim was to seek a general awareness and personal views of the issues raised regarding the challenges of dyslexia within the faculty. As such, most of the areas were addressed with open-ended questions, giving every opportunity for the participants to feel free to express views they wished to address in response with appropriate prompts, where necessary. The interview process was ended by giving participants the opportunity to add anything of relevance to the topic of the interview.

6.6 Thematic Data Analysis and Findings:

First, given the fact that this phase was considerably smaller as compared to the first phase of the study the aim was to collect all the data before starting the actual analysis. As such, a flexible approach to data analysis was taken (Patton, 1990). Based on the explanation of Braun and Clarke (2006) a six-phase approach to thematic approach to data analysis was used. The first phase of the analysis consisted of transcribing all the recorded data in written form, known as the key phase of a qualitative analysis (Bird, 2005). Following the transcription of all the data in visible form this was then actively read and re-read before the researcher familiarised himself with the depth and breadth of all the four interview contents. This meant that detailed notes were taken and main ideas jotted down from the data set while, at the same time, searched for meanings and underlying themes, which is known as data-driven analysis as opposed to theory-driven approach to thematic search (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

During the second phase of the study, utilising the above analytical processes, a total of 243 coded items were extracted from the data set, many being repeated (see details in Appendix- J). An example of a coded item is shown (see Table 41, below. As such, the aim was to code the content of the entire data as opposed to partial or limited features of the data set. The main objective of this early phase of the analysis was to code for as many potential themes as it was possible. Moreover, the coding of the data was performed manually which is said to be equally effective particularly in the case of a small-scale study as this one, as would have been conducted through a computerised software programme (Kelle, 2004; Seale, 1999, 2000,).

Table 41: Example of a coded item based on data extracts

Data extracts	Coded items (Interpretation)
<p>...again it shows ignorance then. They (academic staff) will refer them (dyslexic students) to you (the interviewer), University Students Welfare, these sorts of things... (R4)</p> <p>...from my personal experiences, we have one of our colleagues saying 'I am not too sure what's involved here or what do I do'... (R3)</p>	<p>Lacking in dyslexia awareness and support</p>

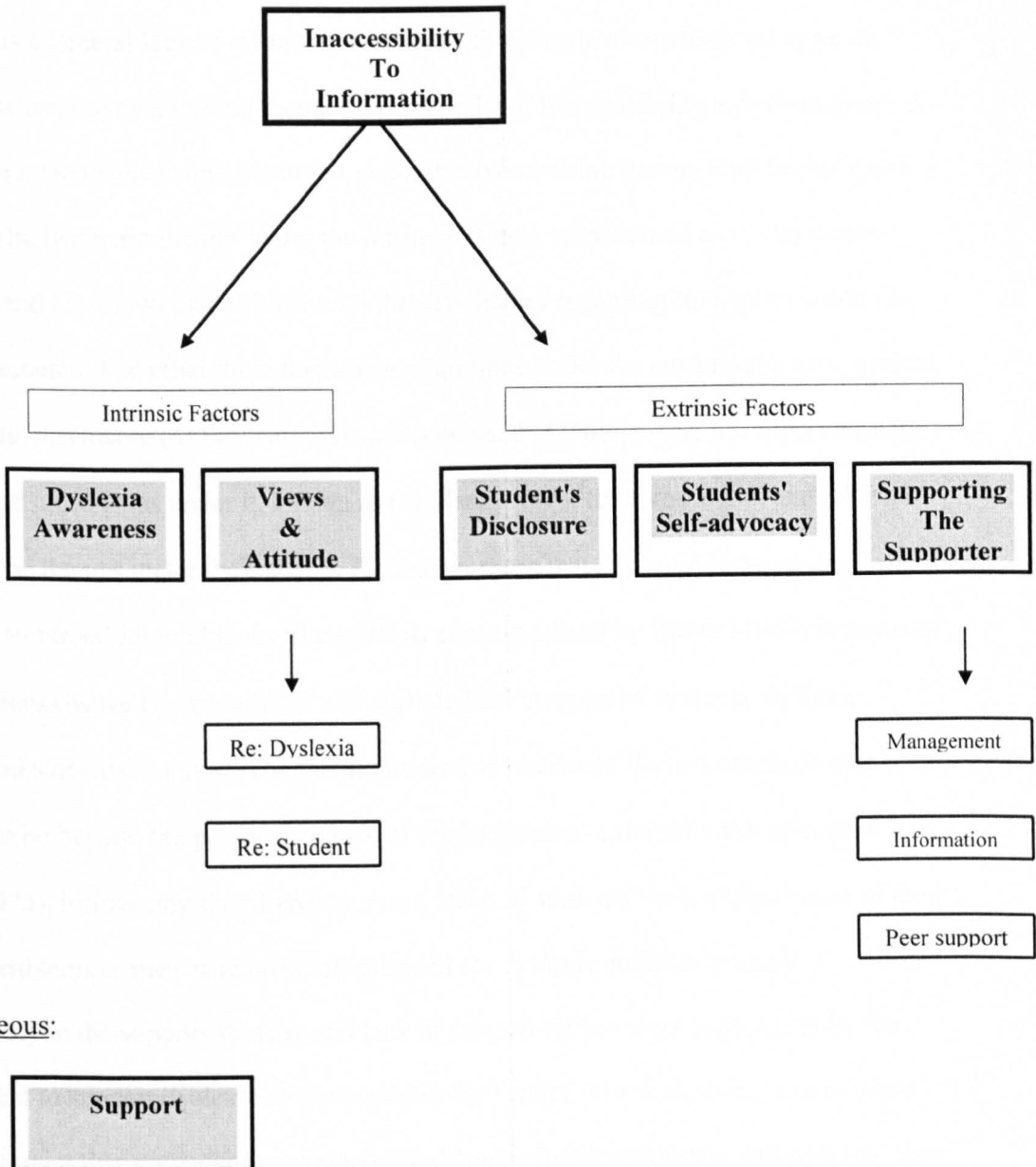
R represents for Respondent.

This approach to coding of the data extracts, however, still represented the most basic segment or element of the raw data at this stage. Tuckett (2005) states that it is still possible to start attaching some basic meanings to such raw data. The aim for utilising this approach to coding also identified a feature of the data in terms of 'semantic' (ideas) content for the purpose of this particular analysis as opposed to 'latent' (interpretative) content utilised in the first phase of the study (Boyatzis, 1998).

As the data analysis progressed the third phase of the analysis consisted of utilising the identified codes to develop as many themes as it was possible. As such, this phase of the analysis focused at the broader level of the themes. It involved sorting the different codes into potential themes and collating all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Following several drafts works and trials a set of 6 themes and 7 sub-themes were initially identified (see Figure 6, below). However, following further review, reading and re-reading the extracts and reviewing the coded items

as well as the main draft themes and sub-themes a set of definitive themes and sub-themes was produced as the a final representation of the whole data set as indicated (See Fig. 6).

Figure 6: The Thematic Map (Factors influencing lecturers' behaviour towards dyslexia support)



Following further refinement of the thematic map it was then possible to label the themes with names that appeared most suitable to define and describe them. It was interesting to note that the thematic map revealed various factors that seemed to impinge upon lecturers' behaviour towards support of the dyslexic students, as they perceived (see Fig. 6, above). The main factor that seemed to influence lecturers' behaviour towards support of dyslexic students was a general lack of information about both dyslexia awareness and dyslexic students. Hence, the overarching theme was labelled as: 'Inaccessibility to information'. A total of five main themes were identified under this overarching theme, both intrinsic and extrinsic. The two main themes under the intrinsic factors were named as (1) Dyslexia awareness and (2) Views and attitude with the sub-themes regarding (a) Dyslexia and (b) Dyslexic students. The other three themes were grouped under the extrinsic factors, such as (3) Students' disclosure (4) Students' self-advocacy and (5) Supporting the supporter with three further sub-themes under it, known as (a) Management (b) Information and (c) Peer support'. The themes under the Intrinsic factors are those that appeared to be arising from within the lecturers' internal locus of control as conceptualised by Rotter (1975) in terms of their awareness as well as knowledge and attitude held in terms of dyslexia, dyslexic students and students' support. The themes under the 'Extrinsic' factors are those that appeared to be beyond the personal control of the lecturers as external locus of control (Rotter, 1975), influencing their behaviour as a result of students' lack of disclosure of their dyslexia problems to the academic staff, the need for dyslexic students to share responsibility in the support strategy and lack of support for lecturers themselves by the management to support dyslexic students within the faculty. The underlying aim to place all the five main themes under the overarching theme - 'Inaccessibility to Information' was due to the fact that, according to the participants, the 'overarching' factor influencing dyslexia support was either due to a lack of information (Inaccessibility to information)

about dyslexia, dyslexic students or as a result of lack of support that lecturers themselves experienced in the institution to support students with especial needs. As such, lecturers attributed the underlying cause of their support behaviour external to themselves, in expectation of Heider's theory of external attribution (see Chapter 2 for detailed discussion). To conclude, although the main themes were homogeneous (internally consistency in characteristics) they were also heterogeneous (externally different in characteristics) from each other with a commonality of factors impinging upon lecturers' behaviour towards support of dyslexic students. As such, the analysis was data-driven as opposed to theory-driven.

Lastly, one theme labelled as 'Way to Support', (see Fig. 6) seemed to fit with none of the above five themes as factors influencing lecturers' behaviour towards support of students with dyslexia. However, since it was a set of views expressed by three out of the four participants, giving suggestions about ways to support dyslexic students in the faculty this theme was found equally important to consider under the category of a miscellaneous theme and as such was duly examined. The theme did not only show views of lecturers about their understanding and support of dyslexic students in higher education but also their attitude that might likely be representative among other members of the academic staff towards the support of students with dyslexia in higher education. Each theme and sub-themes was further examined in detail, below.

6.7 The detailed Findings:

Several factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic, were identified which had an influence on lecturers' behaviour towards support of students with dyslexia in higher education. The two intrinsic factors identified were: (a) Lecturers' awareness of dyslexia and (b) Lecturers'

views and attitude; whereas, the three extrinsic factors were: (a) students' disclosure of dyslexia, (b) students' self-advocacy to support and (c) supporting the supporter.

Lecturers' awareness of dyslexia:

All the respondents who were interviewed stated that they had not attended dyslexia awareness training either because it was not available or they were unaware of such training in their institution. The finding is hardly surprising since previous studies repeatedly show that dyslexia awareness training has been very scant, if any, in higher education (Mortimore and Crozier, 2006; Tinklin et al. 2003).

I have not attended one. I haven't actually gone through a training...(R1)

No.....None whatsoever.(R2, R4)

I haven't been in any specific day or development day put on for lecturers.(R3)

There was, however, a variation in the extent to which lecturers were aware about dyslexia and in their competency to support students. Despite a limitation of dyslexia knowledge and a general lack of management support to staff, some of the interviewees seemed to have a good understanding of dyslexia and sensitivity to support students. This was mainly due to the fact that either they had previous contacts with dyslexic students or had personal experience of dyslexia among the close members of the family or as with participants one was dyslexic herself. The finding is not unknown in previous, as previous studies show a variation in staff awareness about dyslexia awareness among members of the academic staff (Goode, 2007; Tinklin et al. 2003; Tinklin and Hall, 1999). Those members of the staff who were themselves dyslexics or someone being dyslexic in the family showed a

greater sensitivity to the needs of dyslexic students with a propensity to support despite management recognition.

I very clearly can identify students who may have dyslexia and students who are not applying themselves.... I have lived with dyslexics as well from personal point of view and really understand issues around it.... really believe that I have an eclectic experience in this area (dyslexia).... a few family members, in my family unit have got dyslexia. (R1)

I realise that (dyslexia) from ordinary members of distant family.... (2)

...there are individuals who have more expertise and more knowledge about it (dyslexia and support).... (R4)

When asked the extent to which the respondent (previously a Disability Co-ordinator of the school) felt confident in supporting dyslexic students, he replied:

Relatively confident, reflecting the knowledge that I have, if I don't feel confident then I can find someone who do know about it and point them (dyslexic students) in the direction.(R4)

Other interviewees acknowledged a limitation of dyslexia knowledge that had an impact upon their ability to adequately support students.

I don't know enough because of reading to know whether it (dyslexia) is a sort of chemical imbalance or some physical part of the brain got some deficiency. I do not know . But I believe there is something like that and I believe these are mainly because all frailty, I do not know of... (R2)

From my personal experiences, we have one of our colleagues saying, 'I am not too sure what involved here or what do I do?' (R3)

Despite having an established system of dyslexia policy in higher education to-day, guided by legislation, these participants' knowledge of dyslexia and support was often limited either to 'hearsay', 'self-taught' or derived from 'own understanding'. This indicated that lecturers' knowledge of dyslexia was often developed through personal contacts with

students requiring dyslexia support in higher education. Again, the finding supports previous studies, whereby some academic members of staff appear to develop their own understanding of dyslexia either through direct contact with dyslexic students or some being themselves dyslexics with personal experiences. This group of staff appear to possess a greater affinity to support students with dyslexia (Goode, 2007)

I have very limited knowledge (of dyslexia) and hearsay....(R2)

...what I have picked, as from programme leader, and the knowledge that needs to have with students with specific needs, i.e. dyslexia. It is like self-taught (R3)

The information I have got about dyslexia, nobody has given me, it is my own ...understanding. (R4)

All the respondents, however, showed a willingness to attend awareness training, if available. There was a genuine concern among them about an increasing number of students with dyslexia entering higher education in the recent past and, hence, the need to for staff members to raise their own awareness of dyslexia.

... there is a need for it now because more and more students claiming to be dyslexic. So, it is a matter of requirement, if you like, on a regular basis to make the facilitators/ lecturers aware what's going on from the point of view of support... (R3)

I think the general awareness (of dyslexia) is increasing in education throughout the ordinary population, so people out there are more knowledgeable... (R2)

... we still need to educate the staff in general, raise their awareness... They (academic staff) need a level of awareness both in terms of process and how to deal and get over with some difficulties that some students have and where from to get more information... (R4)

Despite an acknowledgement about the need for dyslexia awareness training the interviewees often complained about a lack of time and an excessive workload that prohibited them from attending awareness training for students with special needs. This indicated that dyslexia awareness training was not a priority among the other commitments of lecturers. A general lack of time and workload have been repeatedly arising in previous

studies (see Mortimore and Crozire, 2006; Tinklin et al., 2003) as a factor impacting upon lecturers' support of students with dyslexia.

I don't see there's any great urgency. But if I reached a quiet stage, say, a six months or so and something (training) is coming up, I wouldn't have mind spending a morning or an afternoon learning something about it (dyslexia). (R2)

Awareness of dyslexia and the competency to support students, according to the findings, was often influenced either by the lack of interviewees' knowledge of students having dyslexia or simply by the fact that they had limited or no contacts with students requiring dyslexia support. This was particularly apparent in those courses accommodating fewer numbers of students than courses with greater number of students.

....I can't remember ever knowing that I taught a person who has dyslexia. ...If they don't come to me to say they have dyslexia they came to me having problems, I won't sort of think they have dyslexia (R2)

But I can imagine that adults coming to me and no one ever having picked up that they were to some extent having dyslexia. (R2)

Thinking back, I can't remember ever knowing that I taught a person who has dyslexia. I suppose, I might have done. But I might have not realised that. (R2)

.....our colleagues because they don't deal (with dyslexic students) in a regular basis they tend to be a bit rusty in their support. (R3)

Lecturers' views and attitude:

Views and attitude towards dyslexia:

All the interviewees stated that dyslexia was a genuine learning difficulty and, as such, they recognised the need to support students as and when necessary. These members of the academic staff were likely to have a positive view of dyslexia and support to students.

... I don't think it (dyslexia) is an excuse, I think it's a reality for a lot of people... we need to be positive about that. (R1)

...dyslexia exists. (R 2)

...It (dyslexia) is a problem. (R3)

I think it (dyslexia) does exist on a personal level. I think it is there, partly at personal experience, in terms of carrying out certain things, ... it (dyslexia) is not there, there is a perception that there is there. For some people it is real... (R4)

It was also interesting to note that while none of the interviewees had undergone formal training on dyslexia awareness they, nevertheless, seemed to have a basic understanding of the clinical features of dyslexia, drawn upon their personal experiences. Such a finding indicates that lecturers are now being more exposed to students with dyslexia compared to the past in higher education. This is specially so, following wider access to higher education and legislative changes (DDA (1995) and SENDA Report 2003/4). However, dyslexia was featured mainly as a learning deficit in line with other disabilities in higher education.

...it's (dyslexia) like a disability... dyslexia is a learning disability (R1)

I don't know enough because of reading to know whether it (dyslexia) is a sort of chemical imbalance or some physical part of the brain got some deficiency. I do not know. But I believe there is something like that... ..to me, my understanding (of dyslexia) is that when a person (dyslexic) reading a text it doesn't seem the same as to someone like you or me. The text seems differently, they can't understand. The letters might not seem the same or might appear jumbled up and I would imagine that would have a knock-on effect with speech, their ideas and things like that... (R2)

'I have been notified (recommendation for dyslexia support)... disability and that and the other, .. (R3)

...it (dyslexia) does get on the way of learning for some students. (R4)

While two of the interviewees showed a good understanding about the differences in the severity of dyslexia and, hence, the specific needs of dyslexic students by stating, such as

'I think there is different severity. There is a spectrum, from mild to quite severe... (R1)

It (dyslexia syndrome) is rather like a continuum, a spectrum. (R4)'

one interviewee commented that, according to his experience, not all members of the academic staff seemed to know such differences in the severity and manifestations of dyslexia; hence, lecturers' understanding of dyslexia, according to this participant, could be interpreted as merely a set of reading difficulties. This group of the academic staff is likely to treat all dyslexic students with a similarity of needs, regardless of the severity of their dyslexia or the nature of their literacy problems.

... A lot of people are confused about dyslexia....So they think one person with dyslexia is the same as another. Sometimes they think the only help they can give is extra time of reading or that sort of thing. It is an easy strategy to carry out. (R4)

Views and attitude towards dyslexic students:

Although the interviewees interpreted the features of dyslexia mainly from a deficit perspective they, nevertheless, seemed to have difference in views about dyslexic students themselves from both a positive as well as a negative perspective. Three of the interviewees identified common problems dyslexic students usually experienced as a result of dyslexia; hence, the need for special support and guidance. One member of the interviewees who was herself a dyslexic gave a thorough account of the manifestation of dyslexia in general.

...they (dyslexic students) have problems with recall, sometimes problems with concepts.... Some people have problems with words, some have it with numbers. I think it's very much on the individual..... I think it's the way they think... there is certain characteristics they would have that they are dyslexics and sometimes is just that they can't apply themselves and that just they had bad schooling and their application is very poor. R(1)

....they (dyslexic students) might need some more help than the ordinary types (students) who can read books and take notes far more easily..... (R2)

...even now in primary education and secondary schools in which individual students who are perceived as poor students or lacking concentration rather than believing like dyslexia may be involved. ...with others (dyslexic students) who may be in the extreme of the continuum nothing seem to do with them at all or appear to help... (R4)

On the other hand, two interviewees also noticed dyslexic students as often highly motivated and intellectually very able as learners. According to their observations and understanding dyslexia was neither a phenomenon that was linked with the intellectual ability of the dyslexic students

'It does not mean if someone is less intelligent they're dyslexic..... in my family there are a lot of individuals who have dyslexia and you know a lot of us (including the lecturer who was dyslexic) do really well. .. like other things, that they (dyslexic students) do it in a different way.... It's the way their brain is wired differently and see things in a different way and think,... (1)

...we know somebody with dyslexia can be exceptionally bright but just that they see things differently, in a different way, in fact it is that seeing things in a very different way which actually can be their greatest brightness. (R1)

One particular member of the family (dyslexic)She is a very bright person, very intelligent as any one yet she wasn't doing well at school... (R2)'

nor was it related to the general characteristics as individuals. As such, dyslexic students were perceived as someone who may be dependent upon the academic staff for their learning as well as lacking in motivation to learn just as their non-dyslexic counterparts. Morgan (2003) states that it is, often, a challenge to differentiate between dyslexia related syndrome and a student with average ability.

I do think though that we have students (dyslexics and non-dyslexics) who are very lazy and do not apply themselves. Once you discussed it with the students through the pattern of knowing what the dyslexia process is, you can identify if they are not applying themselves enough or whether they have a mixture of problems. (R1)

.... I don't know what they (dyslexic students) mean by being 'supported', they feel we should be doing the work (students' work) with them and get them to pass it (assignments/examinations). that's not, the course is not about that at all.... I feel it's their (dyslexic students) excuse to say, 'I failed it because I'm dyslexic. I need the support to pass it'. So, indirectly they are getting the lecturer to do the work for them really.That's what they expect.(R3)

Impact of lecturers' views of dyslexia and dyslexic students in approach to support:

The interviewees' opinions and attitude towards dyslexia and dyslexic students seemed to have a direct impact upon their approach to support. Depending upon their understanding

of the students' problems and the views they held about dyslexia their approach to support seemed to vary from the need to provide the students with academic related support to that of referring dyslexic students to specialist staff, or both. Some members of the academic staff do not perceive dyslexia support being part of their academic staff but that of support personnel with expertise in the field (Borland and James, 1999). This is further supported by Herrington (2003) that dyslexic students experiencing learning difficulties are supported mainly by support staff of the university rather than members of the academic staff. This is also indicating exclusiveness to education, based on deficit/disability model of support in higher education.

One member of the academic staff who showed a sound basic understanding of dyslexia manifestations gave her views about the likely support lecturers could effectively give to students in order to improve their learning capabilities in the classroom, such as the simple and friendly approach to lecture delivery with provision of extra learning materials. This is in line with the recommendation of dyslexia friendly approach to teaching and learning (Teachability, 2000)

....if staff are aware of it, perhaps when they do the (lecture) presentation they might consider those things, for example. Some people do use acetate, writing on them. Well, if you got dyslexia, you might just not bother. Another thing is, sometimes you might say a terminology that is really quick, example, like TURP quickly. Now, students with dyslexia will have to have to process that, identify the letters that you are using, recall what that meant, then think about it, then relate that to what the lecturer was saying. That is a big process then, if the lecturers gone quickly and they have not given that person time to process that information, then you know, understanding is really difficult. So little things like that. (R1)

...so simple thing that you might do, like change colour of paper....(R4)

On the other hand, interviewees who demonstrated limited understanding of the dyslexia syndrome often interpreted support in the form of material support or university support

provisions as opposed to academic related support; hence, these interviewees preferred to refer dyslexic students to the specialist support staff of the university at central level.

May be, when people first come in (the course) they go to study skills (staff), things like that, the person can then tell them: 'if you're having a particular difficulty in some respect you don't have to tell me now or your group, go to so and so...(R2)

...I tend to pass them to support (staff/provisions) that we got into the school itself. (R3)

The interviewees' attitude towards dyslexia and the dyslexic students also seemed to impact upon their attitude to support. According to two of the interviewees, some lecturers were perceived as 'accepting' of dyslexic students and their specific problems, whereas others were either lacking in tolerance or worried about extra workload, hence referring dyslexic students to specialist staff or colleagues with dyslexia expertise or interest.

....most of them (academic staff) are very accepting...some people (academic staff) are a bit intolerant (1)

...people (members of the academic staff) fundamentally are frightened of difference...(R1)

I think there is a fear here that it will create more work.... They (academic staff) will refer them to 'you' (The Interviewer as the dyslexia support of the school) or University Student Welfare, these sorts of things. (R4)

Regardless of the interviewees' level of dyslexia knowledge and ability to support students the perception of the multi-faceted roles of lecturers also seemed to have a direct impact upon their attitude and approach to dyslexia support. While one of the interviewees was prepared and willing to support dyslexic students within the remit of her given role she, nevertheless, found herself unable to support dyslexic students in a different context of her academic role. In addition, a large number of students within a given course, often, added extra pressure upon the academic staff in dealing with specific needs of individual students.

... from personal tutor point of view, yes, I do think that it will be more my role to support that student. From the module leader's point of view, I don't think that it is the role to give more support to students with dyslexia than they would to any other students ... We have to say 'sorry to students that within the remit of my role, I'm unable to support you...' (R1)

....It could be demanding if you got a group of say 100 plus students and there are even 5 or 6 saying that they can't do this and that... (R3)

To sum up, although the interviewees identified the contribution they felt they ought to have made towards support of dyslexic students, such a support was often interpreted as general support to all students regardless of their specific needs. Hence, they did not wish to treat dyslexic students as different from other students but judge on the basis of individual needs. Moreover, two of the interviewees preferred to see dyslexia support provided by a team of individuals with dyslexia expertise rather than the involvement of every member of the academic staff within the school. Again, such a concept goes in favour of specialist support (Goode, 2007). In this context, dyslexia support was interpreted mainly as university support provisions as opposed to academic support.

... I do feel that we should have a team of individuals who obviously have better experience with dyslexia who have more personal, professional experience, academic experience, whatever. We should have a team of individuals who could offer students more support. (R1)

I think especial staff should be doing this (giving dyslexia related support)... I think there should be especial staff within each school, as individuals....Take it (dyslexia support) back to personnel, keep it central and do it from there rather than people identified in each faculty as taking responsibility for raising awareness. So, I don't think trend like that works, - responsibility given to everybody. ...I do think there should be people with speciality. (R4)

Student's disclosure:

The responses of the interviewees indicated that the lecturers' support of dyslexic students was also influenced by the extent to which they were aware about the problems and needs of individual students in the school. Three interviewees found difficulty in providing adequate support unless students declared their specific learning difficulties to them.

Regardless of whether the students had already declared their dyslexia to the Students Welfare Office of the university there was, nevertheless, an expectation by two interviewees that dyslexic students should still declare their specific learning difficulties to individual lecturers. One of the interviewees, running courses with small groups of students for over 35 years, stated that he had never been approached by any student for dyslexia support; hence, he did not find the need to know about dyslexia or about dyslexia support. Goode (2007) states that an expectation of dyslexic students to repeatedly approach academic staff for support, despite, notifying their dyslexia to the university, undoubtedly put extra strain upon their already existing problems. Moreover, previous studies show that some dyslexic students would prefer their dyslexia to be known by academic staff but did not find the need to inform every member of the academic staff once having declared their dyslexia to the student welfare services that was duly their role to inform academic staff at faculty level (Farmer et al., 2002).

... a lot of these students don't really identify that they have it (dyslexia)... (R1)

It they don't come to me to say they have dyslexia they came to me having problems, I won't sort of think they have dyslexia... no one has ever come and said : 'I have dyslexia, will you give some support and help?' So, I wouldn't know what to do? (Small numbers of students) (R2)

I feel they should (declare) because if they have this need for support right from the beginning they should be given the support right from the beginning... It is a dire importance for them to declare it (R3)

I do think that they (dyslexic students) have that responsibility to inform people to be open about it; because, if they are not open about it and we (academic staff) don't know about it then we can't do anything about it..(R4)

Despite a general lack of dyslexia identification one of the interviewees noticed a recent increase in students declaring dyslexia in higher education. This was mainly due to the encouragement and guidance of staff and the general media

'what I observe recently, if you like, a year or two, students are coming to the fore more with the claim, - 'I think I am dyslexic'.... may be by guidance by personal tutors, guided by lecturers, guided with what they heard, students are more informed these days than before. (R3)'

This response also suggested that although lecturers were willing to support students with learning difficulties they were, often, unable to do so due to a general lack of communication and support system within the institution. General lack of communication within the department and interdepartmentally in higher education remained a protracted problem (Tinklin et al. 2003)

First thing that we need to confirm is that the student got to report to us by the relevant person or body to say that they have certain elements of dyslexia or learning needs related to dyslexia and then we take it from there...there is a need for me to be notified.... (R3)

Despite their lack of awareness about dyslexia and accessibility to information the interviewees, often expressed the need for a shared responsibility about dyslexia identification and support for students in higher education. While two interviewees were aware of the need for students to declare their learning difficulties they also admitted ownership of responsibility on their own part and that of the management in the identification and support of students. The interviewees who was herself a dyslexic admitted a general lack of support to dyslexic students both in terms of academia and identification of dyslexia problems among students

....have lot of mature students who really and truthfully have difficulties in the school and really probably were dyslexics but they haven't found out,....we do not give our students enough support in (R1)

...perhaps students have dyslexia but have not been diagnosed.....I think the test is not available to enough students who need it....I think they (students) are not encouraged to take the test,.... it costs money, it is difficult to take it (R1)

One interviewee, however, acknowledged a limitation in supporting students with dyslexia due to lack of awareness of both dyslexia and of dyslexic students.

...many people (students) for instance come and say 'I'm not good in learning from book,...I can listen to you in class.' Now, I can think back a lot of people said that to me, but I have never tied that (with dyslexia). I wonder if they got dyslexia and I sat down and spoken to them about it. Mainly because we speak to adults so much and I tend to think it (dyslexia) is something to do with children..... (R2)

It is interesting to note that, among the four staff interviewed, dyslexia generally remained a taboo or a sign of weakness, labelled under 'disability' in higher education. As a result, they felt that some students were hesitant to declare their dyslexia or to approach their lecturers for special support. According to these interviewees, some dyslexic students did not want to be seen as weak or incapable to cope with their studies without aid. Indeed, Farmer et al. (2002) state that while disclosure and self-understanding can be viewed positively by some students with new perspectives about their learning difficulties to others such disclosure may have negative impact upon their self-identity and perceive dyslexia as a sign of weakness with a sense of demotivation to pursue studies, once labelled as 'disabled'. Hence, disclosure of disability can have mixed and complex reaction on individual students.

I do really think that people are labelled and people make assumptions about them, like any disability... ...put them in boxesthat's why you find a lot of people who may be dyslexics but keep it to themselves as though it's not appropriate to share because they don't want to be judged for whatever reason... (R1)

...students feel ashamed that they're having this disability) I have a lot of mature students who said they have dyslexia but do not want to be tested because they don't want anyone' to feel sorry for me or don't want to be labelled. (R1)

I keep simple question: 'Why have you left it so late?' and they would say: 'I did not want to be known as somebody with a special need.'.... So my view on stigma is still there, (R3)

On the other hand two of the interviewees felt that some students simply did not want to appear any different from their non-dyslexic peers.

Sometimes, students want to leave it there and you want to respect them... students don't want to go and have a test and I think we got to respect that.. (R1)

...from my discussion with my own personal students, they don't want to declare it.... From my observation, so far I have interviewed so many students, none of them, none of them have declared that they are dyslexics (during the interview)They do not mention even 'dyslexia'. (R3)

Students' self- advocacy:

It is interesting to find that this part of the interview response almost echoed the comments received from the main survey questionnaire about "students' role and responsibility towards dyslexia support". Again, all the four interviewees indicated that they preferred to see their students taking personal responsibility and be an advocate of their own support as mature learners with a capacity to seek support as well as learn independently. Indeed, self-empowerment is encouraged in dyslexic students, as Farmer et al. (2002) state that such an approach to support build confidence on the dyslexic students who are then able to cope better with their personal learning difficulties. One of the factors that influenced lecturers' support of dyslexic students was seen to be a general lack of awareness or personal responsibility on the part of some students in the need to declare their dyslexia or approach academic staff for support.

.....we should be encouraging that culture that students have full responsibility of their learning... ..they (dyslexic students) should take personal responsibility....(R1)

.... certainly, they should try (taking responsibility to seek support). (R2)

To seek the support is their responsibility... .. Again, it's the responsibility of the students because it is they are the one who needs the support (R3)

... Students should have responsibility. They should not get away with that (R4)

However, two of the interviewees also showed sensitivity especially towards those students either lacking in confidence or who had had a bad experience with lost of trust in staff and in the support system in the past. These interviewees were cautious in the need to draw a right balance between giving support to dyslexic students and fostering independence in learning as an essential part of self-directed learning in higher education.

I think especially with some of these people (students) who are dyslexics they have had may be a lot of kicks in their teeth in the past..... They have had teachers telling them right though their ways in the school that there is nothing wrong with them. So they can't fight their own battles to some extent. So But we got to realise, I think these people may be a bit down trodden. So they might need some more help than the ordinary types (of students) who can read books and take notes far more easily,.... (R2).

...a lot of people think that people who come to Higher Education are immediately adults and are sensible and can fight for their own supports. I don't agree with that.. (R2)

But how they actually accept that (responsibility) depends on the experience they have had in the past. So, if they have very nasty experience in the past, they may not trust things like that. (R4)

Hence, the interviewees acknowledged the need to encourage and provide support and guidance, especially to those students struggling with their studies.

If we say that students have more responsibility we need to encourage that some way (R2)

...we need to at certain point tell students: - 'If you have problems and you do feel if you need support then you can go to your personal tutor and can get extra support'. I think, we do that quite well. I think that we need to be a bit more specific and we need to be a bit more spoken that you don't go to your personal tutor just for emotional or personal problems, you also go when you have learning problems. (R1)

However, such an ideal notion of support was often constrained by the interviewees' excessive workload, as one of them put it

'... we are not talking about small number, we're talking about numbers and I do think that students need to be able to approach (academic staff), the circumstances that we got 150 plus students they need to take some responsibility. (R1)'

Supporting the supporter:

Another main factor influencing the interviewees' support of dyslexic students was a general lack of support for the academic staff themselves in the school, through lack of management support and inaccessibility to information about both dyslexia and dyslexic students. This finding has repeatedly arose in the past studies as a factor inhibiting dyslexia support by academic members of staff (Goode, 2007; Mortimore and Crozier, 2006); Tinklin et al., 2003). Support for the academic members of staff, according to the interviewees, was related to three different areas: (a) management support, (b) staff accessibility to information and (c) peer support.

Management support:

Generally, all the four interviewees hardly felt supported by the institution or their school management towards support of dyslexic students. In their views, staff members were required of their management to account for the amount of time spent in teaching and fulfilling other duties but time and effort spent on individualised support of students with or without specific learning difficulties was neither taken into account nor was it seen as an essential part of lecturer's role. This was again a finding identified by a study , seeking lecturers' views about dyslexia support (Mortimore and Crozier, 2006)

...from management point of view, we are not supported as lecturers, ...you have to justify every hour you teach, whatever you're doing you have to justify. (R1)

I think management of the school is severely lacking (about dyslexia support for academic staff) in many respects. (R2)

...To a certain extent there is a lip service paid to equality and diversity (including dyslexia) (R4)

These interviewees also felt that often dyslexia support by the management was limited to meeting legislative requirements towards students with special needs in higher education. This was expressed as having an adverse effect upon staff's incentive to support students with special needs, as three interviewees commented,

'They (management) are taking things seriously in terms of legislation, what we should do, how people may be responsible of that. But in terms of good practice I don't think they go far enough(R4)

.....(school management) think that they are a proactive in their support but I would call it more of a reactive management, reactive culture,.... Obviously, I think that they (management) pay the lip service. They obviously got the rhetoric, the terminology that sound but I don't think it's happening, no. (R1)

I don't think that it (dyslexia) is being looked at as an especial issue (by the management), ...It is just being treated as something need to be done if there is a need for it....(R3)'

Where management support of the lecturer, according to the interviewees, was seen in a positive light this was mainly in the context of dyslexia policy and procedures on standard support provisions rather than on dyslexia awareness and approach to academic support within the inclusiveness of mainstream education. This was especially following legislative act on Disability Discrimination Act (1995 and SENDA Report 2001/2002)

. But certainly, in terms of, may be the policy and the procedure, yes you do get supported. I am not saying it's fantastic, but in terms of just that and more practical level, yes we do get supported. (R1)

That's all they do, as far as dyslexia goes, the only possible thing I can think of is, if they put leaflets out to documents. (R2)

I think here (in this university) they tend to give you booklets because it is self-explanatory and they (Student Welfare) ask you to contact them if there is any specific thing from the university point of view because they feel as lecturers we should be able to support them (dyslexic students) locally (in the school), fitting into the process that the university have. (R3)

You have the policy and things like that, in terms of supporting people (students) raising awareness (R4).

Dyslexia support was seen mainly by a couple of the interviewees as provision of material/resource support such as allowance of extra time during examinations, information technology and financial support to students, rather than in terms of academic support at group or individual level both within and outside the parameter of the course curriculum. As such, one interviewee found the provision of dyslexia leaflets/booklets as adequate enough in terms of support to students with special needs. When asked whether management do support academic staff adequately in order to support dyslexic students, this interviewee put it:

They support staff now.... don't think there is a need to do more. In this school being a professional school (Nurse training) if you like, there is a need to do the same thing as the rest of the university..... I think they are doing enough... I follow that (support policy)...It is implicit into your module/programme requirement or cohort requirement or any student requiring the need should be given the support accordingly, based on the university guidelines. ... if any of your students come to you with requirement, the process is set into motion (R3)

There was a feeling that dyslexia awareness training was insufficient to prepare staff towards academically orientated dyslexia support, as another interviewee put it rather differently from the above interviewee.

... in terms of true understanding (of dyslexia) and where they come from, no, I don't necessarily think so (R1)

Despite a dearth of management support for members of the academic staff, these interviewees thought that some lecturers were voluntarily engaged in supporting dyslexic students for which there was hardly any recognition by the management. According to these interviewees, the lecturers who were supporting dyslexic students out of personal interest, had to do so in their own time. Moreover, they had to do so often without allocation of extra funds and hence leading to a lack of motivation in the continuity or consistency of such a support within the faculty.

....there are lecturers who would be prepared to support students more, naturally (they) do, but they don't get the hours for it . So we are somewhat limited what we can do. (R1)

Am I true to say it's only you (indicating to the Interviewer) and me who deliver support to student?. Not actually management can give us hours, identify that this is actually required... (R1)

There is a level of support in our faculty to carry on but again there is no thanks... Certainly, there are specific individuals doing things (dyslexia support).... (R4)

These interviewees felt that occasionally, although management made some attempt to promote dyslexia support within the faculty as part of a mandatory requirement this was often made obsolete when funds dried out at the end of the term. Promotion of disability support continued to be treated in an ad hoc manner, often entirely dependent upon the provision of one off allocation of funds by external bodies, as one of the interviewees commented after the completion of his fixed term service as the Equal opportunity/Diversity and Disability Support co-ordinator in his school.

In terms of support (including dyslexia) in general for students who may have difficulties.... a pattern of behaviour that at higher level of the university, ... restrict them to what happen at school and faculty level. So, for example, my role as Equal Opportunity co-ordinator, it is not now supportive by management because the funding for it has ran out, funding from HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council of England). They are not funding. They are saying things like, - 'you now done your job.' ... (R4)

In addition, another point made in the interview was that an increasing number of dyslexic students entering higher education continued to put extra strain upon the already stretched services and overworked members of the academic staff with an ever increasing complex academic role. This is an issue clearly identified previously (Dyslexia Working Group, 1998). Coupled with the constraints of financial and other resources these factors had severe impact upon lecturers' support of students with special needs.

They (school management) are looking at certain individuals to carry them (dyslexia support) as an extra part of their job, whereas the area (support commitment) is so huge, things are getting missed. ... (R4)

Accessibility to information:

Two of the interviewees implicitly expressed concern about the lack of information about individual students with dyslexia and the nature of problems dyslexic individuals normally experienced. They wanted to know specific information about the nature of support and the basic facilities that dyslexic students would normally require as well as dyslexia friendly teaching and learning approaches, to enable the dyslexic students cope better with their studies.

It will be interesting like if we have some information for the lecturers about kind of characteristics that students would have with dyslexia, for example they would struggle with their lesson, struggle to think, may be 'why that is', just really information, to inform the staff, so that when they do come across the students with dyslexia they have more understanding and recognise dyslexia. (R1)

...if staff are aware of it, perhaps when they do the presentation they might consider those things, for example. Some people do use acetate, writing on them. Well, if you got dyslexia, you might just not bother. Another thing is, sometimes you might say a terminology that is really quick.... Now, students with dyslexia will have to have to process that, identify the letters that you are using, recall what that meant, then think about it, then relate that to what the lecturer was saying. That is a big process then, if the lecturers gone quickly and they have not given that person time to process that information, then you know, understanding is really difficult. So little things like that. (R1)

Due to a general lack of information about dyslexia support at least one of the interviewees stated that she often relied upon his colleagues with dyslexia expertise or interest in order to support his personal students.

My own experience is sort of email that you send around. So, if something come up like dyslexia, I am busy as well and everything crashes. If I'm fairly comfortable, I got time in my hand, I read briefly what you say ... (R2)

The interviewees felt that often, information about dyslexia support within the institution/faculty was limited to provision of booklets and they were then expected to follow the information as a guide to raise their own awareness of dyslexia and support of students. However, such information in higher education was related mainly to policies and support provisions as opposed to academically related support within inclusiveness of education.

I think here (in this university) they tend to give you booklets because it is self-explanatory and they (Student Welfare) ask you to contact them if there is any specific thing from the university point of view because they feel as lecturers we should be able to support them (dyslexic students) locally (in the school), fitting into the process that the university have. (R3)

Peer support:

As a result of this perceived lack of management support, these interviewees often relied upon colleagues with dyslexia expertise for support and guidance. In addition to their own academic role the staff with especial interest on dyslexia, however, often find themselves supporting large numbers of staff as well as students on their own within the faculty. This is often on a voluntary basis without due recognition of the management, according to pervious studies (McGloughlin et al. 2003). This also indicated a general lack of structured

support for academic staff at both university and faculty level, according to three of the interviewees.

...at my level I do..... I have a very good network of colleagues that are very supportivein terms of, may be the policy and the procedure, yes you do get supported (1)

...I wouldn't know what to do... At the moment, all I need to do is to know where to get help if I really need it ...However, if someone did (disclose and seek dyslexia support) I would come running to you (to Dyslexia support staff) to say 'I have got a dyslexic student, what can I do and tell us about this and about that' (2)

You need that person's opinion in the school to provide and to be identified so that other academic staff can call on their support. So that supporting both staff and students in different ways.... it is necessary to draw upon that specialist knowledge to work through certain extent. (R4)

These interviewees said that as they often failed to receive peer support at the faculty level they had no option but frequently refer students with special needs to the central support services of the university for special guidance and support.

I tend to pass them to support (staff/provisions) that we got into the school itself. 'If you think you got dyslexia, you haven't been notified (diagnosed), go and see the person (Student Support Services) and get the ball set in motion and if that person confirmed that he got dyslexia then they are entitled to all the support that other (dyslexic) students have. (R3)

According to the interviewees, too often, it was the routine practice of the academic staff to use both the local services of their colleague(s) acting as support staff within the faculty as well as the Student Services department at central level for support. Again, it seemed support of the dyslexic students was the responsibility of support staff with expertise into the field whereby academic related dyslexia support was not seen as an essential role of the lecturer.

....So, it is the matter of following them (the support) there to like of your self (Interviewer) or to Students Welfare....Reflecting the knowledge that I have, if I don't feel confident then I can find someone who do know about it and point them (dyslexic students) in the direction. (R4)

Support:

Three interviewees gave suggestions as to how dyslexia support could be provided to the dyslexic students in the faculty. These ranged from provision of flexible approach to support by specific members of the academic staff to team concept of dyslexia support. It was suggested by one interviewee that there should be a group of designated members of the academic staff officially recognised by the faculty management to take specific responsibility to ensure that dyslexic students are appropriately supported, based upon their specific needs. Such a team, according to her, should be knowledgeable and well informed about dyslexia and students' support. This approach to support, again, was comparable to findings identified previously (Goode, 2007).

We should have a team of individuals who could offer students more support (R1)

... I do feel that we should have a team of individuals who obviously have better experience with dyslexia who have more personal, professional experience, academic experience, whatever.... (R1)

As a collective view, it was the expectation of the interviewees that management ought to be proactive as opposed to being reactive in their approach to dyslexia support, as they currently perceived in the school. Moreover, it was the views of the interviewees that faculty management were inadequate in adequate provision of support for lecturers themselves to support dyslexic students. This was often accompanied by lack of policies, procedures and general awareness of dyslexia

I think if they (management) were truly proactive, what they would do, they would set up a group of individuals who could support students who were less able and have these extra problems, and they would allocate them time. (R1)

It may be more useful to be pre-empted, proactive. I think there is a level of confusion about confidentiality and sort of strategies and about dyslexia itself. A lot of people are confused about dyslexia (3)

However, one of the interviewee's views was that to enable such a process there was a need for management to recognise and value the special role of the support staff in terms of both time and availability of resources. This is especially so, in order to undertake such a role, over and above other commitments of the staff.

But we should be valued enough to have time and a recognised team. (1)

One interviewee's opinion was that staff undertaking such a support role were not expected to have expertise into the field of dyslexia but enough awareness to provide basic support as well as an awareness about the importance of referring dyslexic students to specialist staff or other support personnel at the central university for further support as, and if, necessary.

If further support or inquiry should be sort of directed to other people who could make better decisions. (R3)

The most common comments that seemed to repeated surface was the need for management to take a more active role in encouraging staff to raise their awareness of dyslexia and hence students' support. According to these interviewees, management at faculty level seemed to lack good role model about dyslexia support. As such, various suggestions were put forward, for example, application of policies and procedures about dyslexia support, raising staff awareness, detailed support strategies in academic terms, and above all to be more proactive than reactive in their approach to support.

...to start with, we need to sort some policy, in terms of the school, the faculty. I think if we tie down to school that can lead into raising awareness of staff in general. A number of individuals have a lot of knowledge but we still need to educate the staff in general, raise their awareness. so simple thing that you might do, like change colour of paper,... I think we do need to make staff aware of that. (R4)

Higher management have responsibility too to show that they are more proactive. There should be a model of good practice. (R4)

6.8 Conclusion:

This small scale interview survey provided much insight in the findings that emerged from the quantitative survey. While the quantitative survey highlighted lecturers' understanding of dyslexia, their views of dyslexic students and support the final survey, in particular, identified lecturers' attitudes and behaviour towards dyslexia support. The factors underlying their support behaviour appears to be externally orientated. While such an outcome highlights only part of the factors influencing lecturers' behaviour from lecturers' own perspectives this has, however, put much insights into the external causations of their behaviour, such as lack of dyslexia knowledge, students' lack of disclosure of their own specific learning difficulties, dyslexic students' own role and responsibilities in the support strategy as well as the need for support for lecturers themselves in order to support students with dyslexia in their faculty.

Chapter 7

Discussion

7.1 A brief Overview of the Study:

This research about lecturers' conceptualisations of dyslexia, the dyslexic students and support interventions was conducted through four distinct stages through a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach to research. In the initial phase of the study, utilising a theory-driven interview schedule, the aim was to identify lecturers' perceptions of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support, based on Bricman et al. framework of help and coping (see Chapter 2). The findings showed that lecturers were orientated mainly towards two of Bricmam et al.'s four models of help and coping, such as the Medical and Compensatory. Utilising the data obtained from the initial phase of the research, the next task was to compile a research instrument that was capable of exploring the extent to which lecturers associated with the two support modalities from a wider perspectives across three universities within the same region of the U.K. Implicit within the strategy was to identify the extent to which lecturers conceptualised dyslexia, dyslexic students and support, as well as the expectations of their own role and that of dyslexic students, based on the two support modalities. Differences were also explored in relation to the lecturers' level of dyslexia awareness between those who had attended and had not attended dyslexia awareness training, in addition to identifying any significant differences between these two groups of lecturers in their general knowledge of dyslexia and ability to support dyslexic students. Moreover, the research also aimed to identify if there were any significant difference among the lecturers across the three higher education institutions about

their conceptualisations of dyslexia, dyslexic students and approach to support. In the fourth and final stage of the study, utilising a grounded-theory approach to interview, the aim was to further extrapolate lecturers' conceptualisations of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support. The aim was to build on the findings identified from the previous phase. In addition to the above, findings also showed various factors that impinged on lecturers' behaviour, from their own accounts, towards support of dyslexic students in one of the three chosen universities where this study was conducted.

The discussion chapter starts by addressing the findings with particular reference to lecturers' conceptualisations of dyslexic students from a wider perspective, embracing the findings that were further derived through the survey questionnaire and the interview schedule. This is followed by lecturers' general awareness and understanding of dyslexia. Lecturers' conceptualisations of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support, based on a theoretical construct on which this study was underpinned is then discussed separately prior to addressing factors that impinged on lecturers' behaviour towards support of dyslexic students. Finally, the discussion chapter gives a brief critical overview of the entire research with its underlying strengths and limitations. The chapter ends with a brief and concluding remark.

7.2 Lecturers' Views of Dyslexic Students

Quantitative data review:

First, it is worth recapitulating data collected through the initial interview schedule about lecturers' views of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support that formed the basis of the main survey questionnaire. As such, the survey instrument was not to seek

lecturers' views about the characteristics of dyslexic students, per se, but to draw broad conceptualisations of these characteristics derived from the initial interview data as well as to find the extent to which these conceptualisations differed among lecturers across the three universities. The results, as indicated below, showed that although lecturers had limited awareness of dyslexia and ability to support dyslexic students specific to their academic needs they seemed to have an insight about students with dyslexia and their general characteristics, as well as their abilities and limitations as learners.

As discussed earlier, findings showed that lecturers, across the three universities, overwhelmingly rated dyslexic students as able and responsible learners, despite of their many learning difficulties (see Chapter 5, for details). This result seemed to be, somewhat contradictory, often suggested in previous studies that dyslexic students are treated as disabled, lacking in confidence and, often, unable to cope with their studies without support provisions as compared to their non-dyslexic peers in higher education (Chappel et al. 2003; Walker, M. 2003; Palfreman-Kay, J. 2003). While such a claim holds much truth, given the individuality of the learners with unique capabilities as well as their limitations the overall image of dyslexic students is not altogether negative from lecturers' perspectives, as this study shows. It would seem that lecturers' conceptualisations of dyslexic students are akin to both the 'Deficit' and 'Difference model of dyslexia. This seems to indicate that some dyslexic students learn 'differently' rather than persistently experiencing the difficulties to learn, as supported previously by West (1992). Lecturers, according to this research, seemed to value and recognise the capabilities of individual students with dyslexia. This is based, perhaps, on lecturers' personal experiences of them during their normal course

of duties as well as in the role of personal tutor. This research showed a shift in the perceptions of dyslexic students from lecturers' perspectives. This is hardly surprising since a higher proportion of students with dyslexia are entering universities more than ever before, as indicated previously by (HESA Reports, 2004 and 2006). As a result the findings also suggests that lecturers are increasingly encountering students with dyslexia and, therefore, developing better understanding of their general learning and coping strategies. While the current system of dyslexia support is firmly grounded on a Medical model in higher education (DDA, 1995 and SENDA Report, 2001/2) lecturers themselves, according to this research, seemed to have a mixed views of dyslexic students, as often possessing those '*qualities that others need to learn from*', as one respondent put it. Another respondent stating that '*dyslexic students are usually-self starting*', *highly motivated and articulate...*'. Dyslexic students are even perceived by some lecturers of possessing especial qualities and capabilities. For example, dyslexic students' occasional '*giftedness*', put by one respondent, as a result of their very dyslexia as well as their intellectual ability with high academic success made lecturers perceive these students a positive light alongside their specific learning difficulties.

However, lecturers' perspectives of dyslexic students in this research might have been based on insufficient understanding of dyslexia itself and its many characteristics.

This claim is asserted due to the fact that previous studies showed that although many dyslexic students struggle with their studies they, nevertheless, prefer not to seek extra support for one reason or another (McCloughlin, 2003). Moreover, according to previous studies, the support provided does not suit to their individual needs or they find certain members of the academic staff unapproachable (Goode, 2007; Tinklin et

al. 2004). As a result, this group of students may find no point in seeking extra support but prefer to cope on their own. Such an observation, however, may potentially give a misconception about dyslexic students as ‘independent’ or ‘autonomous’ learners, just as this research seems to indicate. On the other hand, according to previous studies, it is also true to say that some dyslexic students do not want to be treated as disabled (Goode, 2007) or any differently from their non-dyslexic peers, despite having learning difficulties (Morgan and Klein, 2000). One interviewee, in this study, showed concern about those dyslexic students disclosing their dyslexia in the university, stating that *‘schools are unlikely to employ them (dyslexic graduates) if they declare themselves a dyslexic..’*. Such a perception about dyslexia problems is, undoubtedly a concern not only for dyslexic students but for the academic staff too, which likely to arise as a result of lack of knowledge of dyslexia or stigma attached to it, according to some comments received in this study.

On the other hand, as indicated earlier, the findings also showed that as much as lecturers perceived dyslexic students as ‘able and responsible’ and ‘independent’ learners they also had a perception of some of them as ‘weak’ and incapable to cope with their studies without extra support. In this context, students who were recognised as ‘weak and disabled’ and with a need for adjustments were perceived akin to the ‘Medical’ model of dyslexia. Moreover, following statistical analysis, results showed a high proportion (89.2%) of the lecturers in this research who also seemed to identify among the weak students the difficulty to cope with their studies (a mean of 10.17 within the range of 0- 15.00 in the score). One hypothetical explanation in support of this finding is that lecturers are increasingly coming in contact with some dyslexic students with specific problems about literacy and writing difficulties to standard required of higher level studies. This idea is further reinforced by some members of

the academic staff in the study. See, for example, one respondent's comments, stating that '*students must have a satisfactory standard of written English...*' and another respondent stating '*some of whom (dyslexic students) were rarely confident and assertive...in need of great deal of support...*'.

Again, lecturers' perceptions of dyslexic students as 'weak and disabled' and 'support dependent' need to be treated with caution. Dyslexia in higher education, today, is regarded as a disability for the purpose of providing extra support; hence, there is too much emphasis on a Medical model of dyslexia support in higher education, which may foster misconception about dyslexic students as 'weak and disabled'. Moreover, support provisions is based on the needs for dyslexic students to cope with their 'difficulties' as opposed to 'different' way of learning in the form of 'level playing field' (see Chapter 2). However, such a conception does not hold true in most instances, as this study seems to show. While there are, perhaps, many factors that potentially influence lecturers' perceptions of dyslexic students it was, however, not the intention of this research to identify their underlying causes. Although there are many anecdotal accounts in this respect, further study is, however, required.

According to the findings, one precondition for lecturers to provide dyslexia support to students was the need for dyslexic students to declare their dyslexia personally to them, regardless of whether dyslexic students have already declared during admission to the university. One such example, put by a respondent is: '*...they (dyslexic students) have the responsibility to inform...if we don't know about it then we can't do anything about it...*'. Similar statements have been reiterated in every phase of the research. Statements such as these are evidence of a lack of interdepartmental support coordination within the university as well as a potential misconception held that

students who declare or seek extra support are mediocre or weak in ability to cope on their own without extra support; whereas, those who do not declare are generally able and autonomous learners. However, previous studies have shown the contrary (see Chapter 2). This is mainly due to the fact that many students who declare their dyslexia do not, necessarily, aim to seek immediate support but they do so rather as a precautionary measure, in case they may require such support at a later date at deeper level studies (McGloughlin et al., 2003; Gilroy, 1995). Moreover, it was interesting to find that this research showed no significant difference between those lecturers who had attended and those who had not attended dyslexia awareness training in their conceptualisations of dyslexic students. The findings suggest that dyslexia awareness training had no or little impact on lecturers' understanding of dyslexic students.

To sum up, the overall results about lecturers' conceptualisations of dyslexic students, based upon the findings of this research, should be regarded with caution due to the fact that they showed little understanding of dyslexia and ability to support dyslexic students. As such, the findings raised fundamental questions, for example: To what an extent lecturers' awareness of dyslexic students were founded on informed knowledge? Moreover, to what an extent lecturers knew about the actual problems and needs of their individual students with dyslexia prior to forming their judgement about dyslexic students' general characteristics? This, again, could not be substantiated within the limitation of this study. On the other hand, it could be hypothesised, however, that lecturers' views were based on their general observations of dyslexic students, as they would normally do towards students in general. Despite the above arguments, the latter phase of the research appears to have added some new perspectives in the field.

As indicated earlier, the survey tool was constructed upon the views of the lecturers who participated in the initial phase of the research study. Given the limitation of this research in terms of resource and time allocation it was not possible to seek the views of more than 12 lecturers at the initial phase. Further study with wider sample population, utilising different models to support would have showed different outcomes or perspectives about lecturers' views of dyslexic students. On the other hand, the initial interview data itself, in larger scale with a more focussed schedule, would have given a more comprehensive understanding of lecturers' understanding of dyslexic students and strategy to support. The above findings, therefore, are best judged in light of the above arguments and limitations.

A comparative Study about Lecturers' Conceptions of Dyslexic Students across the three Universities:

A comparative study across the three universities on lecturers' understanding of dyslexic students showed no significant difference in their characteristics, as 'able and responsible' and 'Independent' learners. This finding further reinforces the general view of lecturers perceiving dyslexic students equally from a positive perspective across all the three universities. However, lecturers in university-J scored significantly lower as compared to the other two universities in their perceptions of dyslexic students as both 'weak and disabled' and 'support dependent' (see details in Chapter 5), indicating a dichotomous view not only among lecturers as earlier findings showed but also among different universities regarding the negative aspects of dyslexic students among lecturers. It is interesting to find that lecturers from university- J, where no dyslexia awareness training was held prior to this study, rated lower in the

negative views of dyslexic students than lecturers in university-E where dyslexia awareness training was, in fact, an ongoing process at the time of the study. This difference was, however, only marginal. Does this finding indicate that, in the university where dyslexia awareness training was held, lecturers perceived dyslexic students as more support dependent as compared to lecturers in the other two universities where no dyslexia awareness training was held? On the other hand could it be that dyslexia awareness training itself is a factor determining such a view among the lecturers? These are issues requiring further exploration. On the other hand, the study showed that university-H that did not hold dyslexia awareness training, however, did not differ significantly from university-E; hence, the finding appears to be refuting the above suggestion. Given the medical model of dyslexia and students' support as it seems to currently prevail in higher education the above possibility, however, is kept open in mind.

Qualitative data review:

Respondents' comments and interview analysis appeared to add further perspectives on dyslexic students' strengths as well as their limitations. These responses seemed to be well founded on lecturers' personal experiences of dyslexic students in general. As this research has indicated, some lecturers were either directly supporting dyslexic students or they were involved with them in one way or another as a result of their dyslexia. Five of the lecturers, according to the main survey, who identified themselves as dyslexics, demonstrated highly positive views of dyslexic students, indicating a greater sensitivity and empathy by this group of lecturers towards dyslexic students, in general. This group of the academic staff, according to previous

studies, represent a rare and invaluable resource towards support of dyslexic students in higher education, see for example (Goode, 2007 and Holloway, 2001).

The findings also showed that, far from labelling, many lecturers preferred to see dyslexic students as 'individuals' with unique problems and needs, who were hardly different from their non-dyslexic counterparts. This is again a finding that no previous studies seem to have addressed fully from lecturers' perspectives. To further support the above arguments, the findings indicate that some lecturers neither wished to stigmatise dyslexic students as weak and disabled nor as very able, for that matter. They rather preferred to treat dyslexic students within the spectrum of the two perspectives as individuals with unique problems and strengths, as one respondent put it: *'dyslexic students are just as diverse as non-dyslexic students...'* and another respondent described dyslexia as *'...rather like a continuum, a spectrum...'*. As such, the study further indicated positive views of dyslexic students from an 'individualist' perspective. Respondents' comments and criticisms about the survey questionnaire (see Appendix H, for details) added further support on the 'individualist' perspective of dyslexic students, with comments such as *'Questionnaire appears to generalise students with dyslexia.'* and other respondent stating, *'...there is no single answer to dyslexia issue...'*. In addition to the above, the fact that some respondents were unsure about their responses in the survey questionnaire on their views of dyslexic students it further indicated that there was either a lack of knowledge about dyslexia, dyslexic students or an indecisiveness about it by some lecturers who were conscious of not stigmatising or labelling dyslexic students. This finding alone is self-evident that there is a gradual move about viewing or attempting to view dyslexic students from a

positive light at grass-root level, more significantly from lecturers' perspective, in higher education.

However, the fact that the 'individualist' perspective of dyslexic students has been supported mainly by the survey comments and, more so, only by a handful of respondents (see Appendix H), especially by those members of the academic staff who were better informed about dyslexia as compared to their colleagues, showed that the findings could not be generalised. This research, however, has brought fresh perspective on lecturers' views of dyslexic students. In addition, it was encouraging to find that the above statements about the 'individualist' perspective of dyslexic students naturally emerged through the comments of some respondents in the survey questionnaire without any deliberate attempt to seek this information by the researcher. As such, it added strengths and further validated the findings.

7.3 Lecturers' awareness and understanding of Dyslexia:

Quantitative data review:

The question asked was whether lecturers had attended dyslexia awareness training. This was based on the assumption that attending dyslexia awareness training naturally increases lecturers' understanding of dyslexia with a better ability to support dyslexic students in higher education. The assumption is supported not only by previous studies in the field (Mortimore and Crozier, 2006; Tinklin et al. 2004) but also by the Dyslexia Working Party in Higher Education (Singleton et al., 1998), stating that lecturers should develop their awareness of dyslexia and, as such, training should be made available to them by their respective institutions. Following the statistical

analysis, the findings indicated that most members of the academic staff showed a willingness to develop their awareness and understanding of dyslexia as a strategy to effective teaching and students' support, mean 11.30 (within the range between 0-15.00). Despite such a promising result, the actual outcome regarding the extent to which lecturers attended dyslexia awareness training in the three universities remained low. Although the overall results showed a high number (40%) 119 lecturers having attended dyslexia awareness training, in effect, this result was hardly representative of the other two universities. University-E that held dyslexia awareness training, during the data collection, scored 55% attendance rate, dramatically skewing the overall result towards a high score and, thus, giving an impression that a high proportion of lecturers had attended dyslexia awareness training. Looking more closely at the detailed results, however, the other two universities, where no dyslexia awareness training was offered, scored only 24% and 34% respectively, showing a massive drop of 76% and 66% of lecturers who had not attended dyslexia awareness training in the two universities, respectively. It is worthy of note, however, that according to the above results university-E that had offered dyslexia awareness training to the members of its academic staff, there, lecturers had more opportunity to attend dyslexia awareness training than the other two universities. Here, a high score of 55% is further validating the benefits of holding dyslexia awareness training by higher education institutions as a way of enhancing dyslexia knowledge and students' support among the members of the academic staff. The above claim also adversely holds that those universities that did not offer such an opportunity to awareness training had least motivated their staff towards self-development with respect to dyslexia and students' support. Looking critically at the findings, it would also seem logical to argue that staff development regarding dyslexia awareness remains at the

discretion of the higher management in the university, an assertion that will be further developed later. Moreover, the fact that different institutions, according to this research, were shown to be at different stages in their development of dyslexia awareness showed the degree of importance or lack of it often being placed by individual institutions about dyslexia awareness and students' support in higher education, at least with reference to the institutions where this study was conducted. However, this finding appears to be a common factor that continues to persist in higher education, according to this and previous studies (see Tinklin et al. 2004).

The above explanations, based on the findings of the research on dyslexia awareness training, though simple on the surface of it have left further questions unanswered. For example, according to the above findings, at least an average of 30% of respondents said that they had attended dyslexia awareness training in the institutions where no such training was, in fact, offered prior to or during the conduct of this research. Inquiries showed that one of the two universities had never had dyslexia awareness training held in any form in recollection. So, where did these members of the academic staff who said to have attended dyslexia awareness training had, indeed, attended such training? This leaves two hypothetical explanations: either these members of the staff had attended training held outside their institutions prior to or during their career or they might have misinterpreted the question asked in the survey questionnaire due to lack of clarity about 'dyslexia training' as different from other 'disability awareness training'. In that, question was asked: 'Have you attended dyslexia awareness training?' However, the question had not made specific distinction between 'dyslexia' as an entity separate from other 'disability' training. To further argue the latter assumption, first dyslexia is normally recognised as a disability in

higher education, through the Disability Discrimination Act (1995), for the purpose of providing dyslexic students with support provisions. As such, it is highly likely that some members of the academic staff, having attended general 'disability' training interpreted such training as 'dyslexia awareness training', which was not the intention of this survey. If the latter assumption is true then even the average 30% scoring mark between the two universities for attending dyslexia awareness training by lecturers remains questionable about its validity. This indicated that there was perhaps a need to clearly delineate the difference between the two overlapping concepts: 'dyslexia' and 'disability' in this study. This argument, though hypothetical, is further taken up in support of another finding into the survey, discussed below.

Apart from the poor attendance of dyslexia awareness training by lecturers, at least with reference to the above two universities (Uni-J and Uni-H) a further question is raised regarding staff's possible misinterpretation of dyslexia awareness training as part of 'general disability' training, especially among those staff with progressively longer duration of service. This argument is particularly raised due to the fact that a higher number (54%) of senior members of the academic staff (over 20 years of service) affirmed that they had attended dyslexia awareness training as compared to their junior colleagues at 41% (between 10- 20 years) and 37% (between 5-10 years). Since dyslexia training only came to be widely known in the late 90s in higher education (Tinklin et al. 2004) any disability training attended by staff prior to this cut off point is unlikely to be related to dyslexia but, instead, to general 'disability' awareness training. Again, however, a distinction was fundamental for a more accurate response to this effect. However, while the above argument remains speculative a high score in lecturers having attended dyslexia awareness training

should take account of the likely limitation of the finding in this research, in light of the above argument. The fundamental point made, however, is the need for a clear explanation of what constitutes dyslexia awareness training as different from other disability trainings.

Moreover, based on the above assertions, the importance of distinguishing differences in types and purposes of disability training offered to members of the academic staff cannot be underestimated due to its likely impact on students' support. This assertion, however, seems to be in some conflicts with previous claims that general awareness of 'disability' and support is beneficial in meeting the needs of dyslexic students, too (Tinklin et al. 2004). In fact, several studies have been conducted in higher education, considering different disabilities together (Goode, 2007, Tinklin et al. 2004), dyslexia being one of them in terms of needs requirement and lecturers' support. While there may well have some justifications in terms of a generalised approach to student support, dyslexia itself, being a literacy problem may require specific academic support as compared to other disabilities.

The earlier assertion regarding management involvement in dyslexia awareness training takes the argument to another finding identified into the study, where result showed that although there was no significant difference in the knowledge of dyslexia between lecturers in management and non-management positions, lecturers in the management position, including Principal lecturers, Directors, Heads of department and a few faculty Deans (total: 22) rated themselves significantly higher ($p = .019$) with an average mean of (3.131) in the ability to support dyslexic students as compared to their non-management counterparts with a mean of (2.830). This finding

showed that despite no significant difference in dyslexia knowledge they, however, significantly differed from their non-manager lecturers in ability to support dyslexic students. However, ability to support dyslexic students remained average in both cases. The results seemed to indicate a likely difference in the perceptions of or difference in views about what constitute dyslexia support between the two groups of lecturers. As such, it would seem to suggest that dyslexia support was, often, left open to individual interpretations, perhaps influenced by staff's specific role and responsibilities in higher education. The above statement, although highly speculative, is nevertheless supported by one lecturer's statement about providing dyslexia support to students, such as: '*...from personal tutor point of view...yes...from module leader's point of view I don't think so...within the remit of my role, I'm unable to support...*'. However, since management appears to be having a very important role to play, according to previous studies and recommendations (Dyslexia Working Party, 1998) in influencing as well as promoting dyslexia profile in the university environment, as this study too purports, this finding is worthy of attention with a need for detailed examination and further studies.

On the other hand, the findings of this research also seem to tentatively show a slight shift in culture in the recent past regarding dyslexia awareness training. This is especially so due to the fact that comparatively a higher proportion of recently recruited members of the academic staff have attended dyslexia awareness training as compared to their more senior colleagues. This is especially following the SENDA Report (2001/2002), almost two years following which data of this study was collected. Result showed that 31% of staff below two years of service attended as compared to their senior colleagues (between 2-5 years of service) at 20 %. Looking

more closely, however, this difference is small with a difference of only (11%). The significance of this result is doubtful, especially, when account is taken in the actual number of lecturers having attended (total: 9) in each of the two above-mentioned groups. This slightly promising result is, nevertheless, worthy of discussion and further studies may well confirm if there was actually a meaningful improvement in the uptake of dyslexia awareness training among the newly qualified members of the academic staff in higher education in the recent past.

In addition to dyslexia awareness the study also attempted to find lecturers' self-rating of their understanding of dyslexia as a specific learning difficulty. Although the study showed a significant difference ($p = .000$) between lecturers who had attended awareness training (mean: 3.18) and those who had not attended (mean: 2.62), the difference was, however, marginal. Similar difference was also found regarding lecturers' ability to support students with dyslexia between these two groups of lecturers (see Chapter 5). Since the difference in the means in both of the above cases was marginal it would seem logical to assume that dyslexia awareness training and its impact upon students' support is questionable. This is even more so due to the fact that in the university-E where dyslexia awareness training was held there lecturers rated equally low with no significant difference in their ability to support dyslexic students as compared to staff in one of the two other universities where no dyslexia awareness training was held. This finding is further validated by the survey comment received from one respondent in the study, stating that whenever such a training was made available it, often, emphasised more on the disability policy and support provisions of the university than on academic related support and lecturers' role, such as: *'I have received in-service training on dyslexia...but it focussed on*

materials/resources... '. Despite the above remarks on the contents and quality of dyslexia awareness training, two encouraging points seem to emerge as a result of the above findings: firstly, attending dyslexia awareness training does, in fact, prove to raise lecturers' understanding of dyslexia as well as better prepare them to support students, however marginal the results of the finding might have been in this study. Secondly, according to the statistical analysis, the fact that there was a positive correlation between dyslexia knowledge and ability to support students ($r = 0.578$, $p < 0.001$), the findings further indicated that there was, indeed, a positive relationship between attending dyslexia awareness training, dyslexia knowledge and staff's ability to support students. What appears highly important though, based upon the findings, is the need to review the quality of the training itself where this is made available to members of the academic staff. Such a proposal, however, is not without several underlying challenges; such as, shortages of leading staff with expertise in the field to run dyslexia awareness training, as previous studies show (see Goode, 2007). The findings in this research showed that there was a mere 7 out of a total of 298 respondents across the three universities, who had undertaken specialist dyslexia support role, either in a voluntary or involuntary basis in their respective faculties. In addition, there was a need for management to actively support these staff in terms of resource and recognition as this study seems to show (see Appendix H). To what an extent these objectives can be achieved in the current climate of higher education with limited funding and general lack of disability support within mainstream education takes the discussion of this study further, examining the qualitative part of the study on lecturers' personal views and understanding of dyslexia.

A Qualitative data review:

In many respects the qualitative results of this study further validated some of the findings identified in the quantitative survey through lecturers' own personal views. While the limitations of isolated personal viewpoints of respondents are duly recognised they are, nevertheless, highly valuable in putting further perspectives on the findings that, otherwise, would not have been possible through the quantitative data collection alone.

Although, according to the qualitative findings, a level of interest was shown among members of the academic staff (see above) in raising their awareness and understanding of dyslexia and students support, the interview data often showed the opposite of the findings. The underlying cause of such conflicting results can be summed up by two main factors deduced from the interview data: (a) accessibility to information and (b) staff's attitude towards dyslexia, dyslexic students and support. These two factors appear to be intertwined, often in a complex way that is hard to differentiate in this study. These factors have also been addressed extensively in previous studies on disability support, mainly from disabled students' perspectives (Holloway, 2001). Here, the same complexity is identified from lecturers' perspectives. First, lecturers' positive view of dyslexia as a genuine condition as well as doubts surrounding it, appears to have still left the concept of dyslexia as a highly controversial issue in higher education to day as much as it has been almost a decade ago as this and other studies show (see Morgan and Klein, 2000). Such evidence shows little progress, if any, in terms of the general profile of dyslexia and support in higher education, at least in academic terms. Moreover, while there appears to be, according to the findings in this research, a willingness among most members of the

academic staff to attend dyslexia awareness training, it seems that there is a lack of time with excessive workload, often, with an increasing complexity of lecturers' role to attend such training. This again appears a rhetoric on the subject of dyslexia awareness and students' support in higher education. It is especially so due to the fact that these findings are also supported by several recent studies, for example see (Holloway, 2001; Goode, 2007). These responses are not detached from staff's attitude about dyslexia and students' support, often, self-evident in terms of what appears to be a priority among the lecturers in their daily academic tasks. This research, at least from anecdotal view point by some members of the academic staff, the support of minority groups of students in higher education seems to be at the bottom of this priority. This is particularly evident by one of the respondents' comments who stated: *'I don't think that there is a great urgency. But if I reached a quiet stage, ...and say something (awareness training) is coming up, I wouldn't have mind spending a morning or afternoon learning something about it (dyslexia)...'*. This is not to say that lecturers, in this study, were unwilling to support students. In fact, supporting students to learn is, arguably, the very task of the lecturer in higher education provided that, according to this research, management recognised such especial needs in terms of both provision of time and allocation of adequate resources.

Moreover, according to the interview and survey comments, some members of the academic staff appeared to be oblivious of their students with dyslexia on their specific courses in the one extreme while , on the other, some staff showing great enthusiasm and willingness to support students. Management's lack of recognition of such a special role, as this study showed, seems to be an issue of much debate in terms of both staff's accessibility to information about dyslexia knowledge, dyslexic

students and approach to support as well as their attitudes towards them as individuals. To illustrate the above two points, highly motivated members of the academic staff, often, themselves being dyslexics (total: 5 self-declared across the three universities) seemed to have been playing a pivoting role in supporting both staff-colleagues and dyslexic students in their respective faculties. However, according to the findings, these members of the academic staff were not only overworked, supporting both students and staff but also experiencing a lack of management's recognition of their especial role. Two fundamental issues seem to arise through this finding: first, that earlier assertion about management's lack of proactive role in raising dyslexia profile, as this study showed, is further reinforced. Secondly, some members of the academic staff in this study, often, did not see dyslexia support as part of their academic role but that of others who had vested interest with expertise in the field. While these findings are highlighted here from lecturers' perspectives they are, nevertheless, not altogether new according to previous studies (Goode, 2001; Mortimore and Crozier, 2006). Again, such a behaviour and attitude indicate not only a continued and protracted problem regarding dyslexia awareness and students support but also a lack of inclusiveness to dyslexia support in the mainstream higher education where this study was conducted. This is mainly through academics' lack of interest into the field. However, lecturers' awareness of dyslexia and students' support could not have been fully understood without an understanding of dyslexic students themselves and their specific problems and needs which this study further explores.

7.4 Lecturers' Orientation towards Support Modalities:

It is recalled that this study, seeking lecturers' views of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support, was underpinned by a theoretical framework that was based on specific support modalities. As such, the overall findings showed that lecturers had a preference for dyslexia support modalities that were typical of Bricman et al.'s framework, specific to Medical and Compensatory strategies to help and coping. One of the underlying factors that seemed to influence this view is the stereotypic-population characteristic of the dyslexic individuals held by lecturers, according to the initial phase of the study. The main findings in this phase of the research were that dyslexic students were perceived not only as able and autonomous learners who had the potential in coping with their studies on their own but they also had a perception of some of them as weak and dependent on support. In other words, in this small sample of interviewees there were some contrasting views across a spectrum of abilities and weaknesses, as shown earlier. However, some of the lecturers who were interviewed also saw dyslexic students as unique individuals between the extreme of the two poles. Why is stereotyping suggested as one of the assumptions underlying the lecturers' perceptions of dyslexic students? First, despite a general lack of awareness of dyslexia as this and other studies showed (Tinklin et al., 2004; Borland and James, 1999; Mortimore and Crozier, 2006; Goode, 2007), lecturers seem to be increasingly coming in contact with dyslexic students entering higher education today more than ever before. This is especially following wider access to university since the late 90s; hence, they are assumed to be developing a better understanding of their general characteristics as learners different from other students. However, such a view is not immune from stereotypic views held of dyslexic students in its broadest sense. Secondly, looking at the situation regarding dyslexia and students' support in

higher education which is driven mainly by an administrative model to support (Cairns and Moss, 1995), under the aegis of university disability policy and procedures, the findings of this research further shows a Medical model of dyslexia support. Such a culture ingrained into higher education, seems to have influenced the lecturers in the first phase of the study. However, this suggestion, though plausible, remains speculative. Moreover, dyslexia experts themselves, backed by legislations (DDA 1995 and SENDA Report, 2001/02) seem to reinforce a Disability model of dyslexia as discussed earlier in the literature chapter. A study by Pollack (2004), seeking the views of dyslexic students showed that, over time, these students seem to learn to perceive themselves in the role of 'patient' (dyslexia as a medical condition), 'hemispherist' (dyslexia as both strengths and weaknesses), 'syndromist' (dyslexia as a neurological deficit) and 'campaigner' (dyslexia as a social phenomenon). These views, based upon the role constructs, are said to be as a result of what the dyslexic individuals have learnt to perceive about themselves. Arguably, lecturers' perceptions of dyslexic students also seem to be influenced by government legislations, society, media, the professionals in the field, parents, educators and peers or the combination of some or all these factors.

Here, the current study, indeed, suggests a similar pattern of the phenomena where lecturers conceived students with dyslexia as both 'able and independent' and 'weak and 'support dependent', dependent upon individuals' general ability and coping strategies as learners. On the other hand, in addition to lecturers' experiences of dyslexic students, their ideals of pedagogic teaching and learning appear to have been another important factor impinging upon lecturers' conceptualisations of dyslexic students, as explained from a Compensatory perspective of support modality in this

research. In that, lecturers did not only tend to perceive dyslexic students as able and independent but had an expectation of them to be an advocacy of their own support as autonomous learners. Moreover, the emphasis, according to this model, has also been on the facilitation of learning as opposed to directive or authoritative approach to teaching; hence, an empowering approach to students' support was also seen as a preferred choice in the study. This again is supported by previous studies (Murphy, 2003; Mortimore and Crozier, 2006). Lecturers' perceptions of dyslexic students from a Medical as well as a Compensatory strategies to Bricman et al.'s modalities calls for a clear and defined support strategy that may suit to the individual needs of all learners and not only dyslexic students.

As indicated earlier, lecturers' understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support interventions appeared to be underpinned by a single overarching assumption; namely, attributing the responsibility of both the cause and the solution to the problem as factors described in the two help modalities (Medical and Compensatory). Hence, each model was examined in the context of (a) lecturers' perceptions of dyslexic students, (b) Lecturer's expectation of dyslexic students' responsibilities as learners, (c) Lecturers' expectation of their own responsibility about dyslexia support (d) Approach to support expected of the self as lecturers. The fact that lecturers in this research were orientated entirely towards the Medical and Compensatory models to Bricman et al.'s four models of help and coping suggested that dyslexic students were not held responsible by lecturers for the '*cause*' of their 'dyslexia' problem. This is hardly surprising since the general view is that dyslexia is a neurological condition (Nicholson and Fawcett, 1997); hence, the individual could not be held personally responsible for the cause of their dyslexia by lecturers in this study. However, this

was not to say that the dyslexic students were not held responsible for '*the outcome*' of the dyslexia problem, such as spelling/writing difficulties or inability to take notes during lectures - a phenomenon described as 'dispositional attribution' as discussed in Chapter 2). In this respect, dyslexic students were, therefore, held responsible for the '*solution*' to the problem according to the Compensatory model but not according to the Medical model.

Medical model to support, perceived by some of the lecturers in this study, is arguably not an entirely undesirable way of supporting dyslexic students. However, such a strategy may require great caution based on many potential risks involved in the model (see Chapter 2). Too often it is the case that a dyslexic student, indeed as any other students with average intellectual ability or poor coping strategies, may require direct form of support until such time that he/she builds up enough confidence to cope on his/her own. Direct form of support is especially desirable when a dyslexic learner feels highly stressed and vulnerable, for example at the induction phase of a course or when the student is undergoing personal crisis or making transition towards a deeper level study (Gilroy, 1995). The argument in favour of a Medical approach to support while sensitively empowering the learner towards self-directed learning from a Compensatory perspective is further addressed in the form of a continuum of the two support modalities.

Looking at the Compensatory model as a strategy to dyslexia support, although participants in this research seemed to have been implicitly placing ownership of the solution to the problem with reference to students who were perceived as more able and autonomous learners they, too, were not clearly held responsible for the cause of

dyslexia as *'the'* problem. As indicated above, such a strategy to support appears to be largely dependent upon the ability of dyslexic individuals as competent learners to cope on their own as opposed to external support. Here, perhaps there is a need to look more critically at to how a Compensatory strategy can be applied effectively in order to support students with dyslexia. Implicit within the Compensatory strategy to support the dyslexic learners, in this study, were regarded more positively with the underlying potential to deal or cope effectively with their own learning difficulties. In that, lecturers seemed to prefer taking a subordinate role as practitioners of support (see Chapter 5). However, the fact also remains that not all dyslexic students can or are able to take control of their own learning at all time; hence, the need for occasionally directing or giving support according to personal needs, as discussed earlier. Evidence on studies of dyslexia states that even the most able dyslexic individual, sometimes, undergoes stress with occasional needs for direct form of support (Morgan and Klein, 2002). Moreover, dyslexia, as a syndrome, is said to fluctuate and, as such, the dyslexic students may require support to cope with their studies (Miles and Miles, 1990; Gilroy, 1996).

While the Compensatory model of dyslexia support appears to be one of the favoured strategies chosen by lecturers in this study, especially towards those dyslexic students who were perceived as able and self-determining this, too, has obvious disadvantages. In that, perhaps there is a risk of putting too high an expectation on the able and independent learners to cope with their studies on their own. This is something that can be easily overlooked by a less astute lecturer. In that, any students, especially dyslexics, regardless of their intellectual capabilities and good coping strategies may,

at times, become vulnerable with the need for sensitive understanding and support, as shown by previous studies (Farmer et al., 2002).

So far, discussion about lecturers' orientation towards Medical and Compensatory models to dyslexia support intervention was based mainly on their conceptualisations of dyslexic students in the help/support modalities. The other factors that have, as yet, not been discussed are lecturers' conceptualisations of dyslexia itself, their approach to support and expectation of dyslexic students' role and that of their own role in the support strategy. Based on the lecturers' rating of the statement - 'Given appropriate support, most dyslexic students had the ability to be as successful as their non-dyslexic peers in their own studies' (mean 4.32 with the range of 0-5) in addition to comments received through the qualitative survey about conceptions of dyslexia (see Chapter 6, for details) findings indicated that dyslexia was predominantly perceived by lecturers from a Social model of disability. In that, dyslexic students were perceived as, often, deprived of external support. This view confirmed that dyslexia, after all, was perceived by lecturers as a disability which had implications on the choice of the support modalities. One of the determining factors of support as a strategy is the view practitioners of support often hold about the nature of the client's problem (Farina, Fisher, Getter, & Fischer, 1978; Fisher and Farina, 1979). In the case of dyslexia, as argued above, lecturers had the view of dyslexia as a disability in line with the general policies and procedures of higher education as well as government legislations (DDA, 1995 and SENDA Report, 2001/2).

Findings in this research also showed that lecturers did not only conceptualise students with dyslexia as both able and weak from the Medical and Compensatory

perspectives to support, as discussed earlier, but they also adopted an approach to support which could be viewed as both Directive (Medical model) and Facilitative (Compensatory model). Findings showed that lecturers agreed with both a Directive (mean 9.0 within the range of 0-15) and Facilitative (mean 12.8 within the range of 0-20) approach to dyslexia support. However, a just above average score in the Facilitative approach to support with respect to the contents of the factor (see Table 8, for details) consisted almost entirely of assessment strategies about which lecturers, in this study, had little control over as strategies to support. To conclude, lecturers' approach to Facilitative and Directive approaches to dyslexia support with both factors scoring just above average in means should be judged in light of the contents of the factors.

The findings further showed that in addition to a high score in lecturers' unwillingness to raise their own awareness of dyslexia, according to the findings of the main study, (mean 11.3 within the range of 0-15) the qualitative data findings showed that generally lecturers were reluctant to actively participate in supporting dyslexic students, believing that any specialised form of extra support is the responsibility of the support personnel rather than that of the academic staff (see Chapter 5 and 6, for detail). Such a view about lecturers' expectations of their own role in the support strategy appears to be more in line with the 'Subordinate' role, meaning, as *'co-ordinators'* of support as opposed to support *'providers'*. These findings further suggest a preference for a Compensatory perspective to support, according to Bricman et al.'s framework of help and coping. In that, it is recalled that the practitioner prefers to take a 'subordinate' role as opposed to developing expertise in the field. While this strategy may well suit the needs of those dyslexic students who

are capable and require little guidance, if any, to cope with their studies this strategy may not be entirely helpful towards those lacking in confidence and in need for a direct form of support from the members of the academic staff. Moreover, findings indicated that lecturers expected dyslexic students, regardless of their general capabilities and coping strategy, to take responsibility and liaise with the appropriate personnel in the support process. Findings showed that out of 298 lecturers 60% (180) were in favour (mean of 3.61 within the range of 0- 5) for dyslexic students to seek their own support provisions as adult learners than lecturers act on their behalves. Moreover, a total of 61% (181) of lecturers were in favour (mean 3.57 within the range of 0- 5) that, primarily, it was the responsibility of dyslexic students to approach lecturers for dyslexia support. In that, 21% (59) of the lecturers were, however, 'unsure' which again showed a degree of uncertainty among lecturers about dyslexia support in higher education. Again, such a response indicated that regardless of students' stage in studies, general ability and coping strategies the lecturers' expectation of dyslexic students remained that they should take responsibility in dealing with their own learning difficulties as adult learners.

However, as indicated earlier, any model based on Bricman et al.'s framework of help and coping is effective only in so far the support strategy is applied (Bricman et al. 1982). From this viewpoint, it would seem fair to assert that both the Medical and the Compensatory models as the preferred choice of lecturers to support students with dyslexia are equally effective, so long that the chosen strategy of help is relevant to the specific needs and presenting problems of the individual. However, Bricman et al. (1982) also advocate for the practitioners of support for a gradual transition from the Medical towards a Compensatory model of support. To this effect, the lecturer is best

advised to mix and match both the Medical and Compensatory models of help/support in order to suit to the actual needs of the learner at any given point in time. By this assumption, it would seem fair to assert that Bricman and colleagues do not advocate the application of the Medical or Compensatory framework to support in any rigid manner; instead, the practitioner should be able to use his/her objective judgement in the application of the chosen model with enough flexibility accordance to the needs and circumstances of the helpee, known as the 'cyclical view' of helping. Such an approach does not only suit to dyslexic student's view of the learning difficulty but also has the advantage of avoiding some of the risks generally associated with any chosen support strategy.

To sum up, based on the earlier findings, while lecturers' views of dyslexia and dyslexic students and support are orientated to some extent towards both the Medical and Compensatory perspectives of help the advantages or disadvantages are rather, in the application of the strategy in a given context than in the choice of a particular model. In other words, the lecturer should be able to exercise flexibility both in taking responsibility in providing support to dyslexic students and, in the other hand, relieving dyslexic students from taking excessive responsibility that has the danger of placing them in undue stress. This claim is further supported by Gilroy (1995).

Holloway (2001) states that disabled students, including those with dyslexia, as a means to cope with their own difficulties, often resort to being excessively assertive with undue responsibility beyond what would be called 'normal' student's characteristics in higher education. Such a responsibility has the risk of over-burdening some dyslexic students, depending upon their coping characteristics.

However, the general aim remains that dyslexic students, as adults, are empowered to take responsibility for their own learning and coping, a strategy that fits into the ethos of a Compensatory perspective of support. Murphy (2003) states that support strategies to students with dyslexia should be within the context of the course that they undertake. This, then, gives the students strategies to cope and acquire independence as early as possible rather than attempting to remediate their longstanding literacy difficulties, especially given their short duration of university life. As such, it is important for the dyslexic learners to develop life skills and independence that goes beyond university life as lifelong learning and coping, advocated by Kohl (1995). To sum up, it is fundamentally important, as this and other studies (see Murphy, 2003; Holloway, 2001), show that support of a dyslexic student is given in a context that fosters as much autonomy and independence in the student as far as possible. However, previous studies show that while it is necessary to empower the dyslexic learner by encouraging them to take responsibility of their own learning through sensitivity and guidance within the inclusiveness of education others may require additional direct form of support, depending upon their individual needs as this and other studies show (see Holloway, 2001).

7.5 Factors Influencing Lecturers' Behaviour towards Dyslexia Support:

Factors influencing lecturers' behaviour towards dyslexia support emerged following interview data analysis of the final phase of the study. The fundamental difference in this from other studies is that while factors influencing support of dyslexic students have previously been conducted mostly from disabled students' perspectives, often, with small sample populations this study put new light into the field from lecturers'

view points. This is especially so on support specific to dyslexia as opposed to disability in general. While some of the findings on lecturers' behaviour towards support of students with especial needs mirrored previous findings (for example, see Mortimore and Crozier, 2006; Tinklin et al. 2004; Goode, 2007) this study reaffirms some of these behaviours while, at the same time, put new light.

It is interesting to note that while factors influencing lecturers' behaviour are classified, in this study, as both intrinsic (arising as part of the lecturers' attitude, understanding of dyslexia and ability to support) as well as extrinsic factors, from the environment (that is, beyond the lecturers' realm of control) lecturers' behaviour, according to their own account, seemed to be influenced by factors 'external' to themselves. The overarching reason for this lack of support is 'inaccessibility to information' not only about dyslexia but also of dyslexic students and about dyslexia related support.

Inaccessibility to Information about Dyslexia:

While the interviewees in the last phase of the study acknowledged that one of the factors influencing their behaviour towards dyslexia support was a limitation in knowledge and awareness of dyslexia this, according to them, was arising as a result of lack of staff development about dyslexia awareness from faculty management that seemed to '*provide only lip service*', put by one respondent; that is, a management who seemed to be '*more reactive than proactive in approach to support*' stated by another. On the other hand, it was not surprising that although these lecturers, in general, were willing to develop their understanding of dyslexia, as indicated earlier, some of them were, however, unwilling to attend such training even if it would have

been made available, unless management provided them with time with lesser workload. Hence, according to the findings, some lecturers, in the interview, seemed to be persistently found themselves in a situation where they had no choice but to set priorities in tasks that, according to them, were more important than spending their valuable time on issues concerning minority groups of students with especial needs. Moreover, large classroom size and lecture form of teaching as opposed to tutorials, dictated by curriculum designs, seemed to be a factor lecturers had little control over in terms of providing effective support to dyslexic students. Such a view, in addition to excessive workload, seemed to be an overriding factor influencing lecturers' lack of support to students with dyslexia. Individual support was perceived as '*extra burden put upon the lecturer*', as stated by one interviewee who was approached by dyslexic students to check upon their grammatical mistakes in draft works. This is expressed often with open resentment to take such responsibilities, what is perceived, to be support staff's role, such as: '*tutors are academics in subjects, not administrations of support*' and another stating '*Why lecturers? Where is the support for lecturers?*'. While such a claim may have some justifications, especially when considering lack of support provided to lecturers in order to support dyslexic students it also highlights many protracted problems underlying dyslexia support in higher education. Moreover, this view also seems to show that that dyslexia support was being perceived by some lecturers more so as university support provision than academic support. This means to say that dyslexia support was being largely viewed by some of these interviewees as an additional form of support designed and driven by the disability policy and procedures of the university than their own direct contribution.

Inaccessibility to Information about Students with Dyslexia:

Another factor that was classified as externally orientated, impinging upon lecturers' behaviour towards dyslexia support, was the need for dyslexic students to declare their dyslexia to them. This has been repeatedly brought forward as a common remark made by respondents in the research. This comment also seems to be arising persistently in previous studies too, as discussed earlier. Such a view does not only create further stress and unnecessary anxieties on dyslexic students in the need to repeatedly declare their personal problems to staff (Holloway, 2001) but also reflects on the a lack of policy and interdepartmental communication about dyslexia support in the institutions where this study was conducted. This problem seems to exist, even, where dyslexia training was being held in one of the universities where this study was conducted. It further reinforces the idea that no amount of dyslexia awareness training can be effectively applied in an institution without, first, having a clear policy and strategy to students' support both at central and faculty level, an idea which is previously supported by Shevlin et al. (1998). Dyslexia awareness training and a co-ordinated policy of support at both central and departmental levels of the university seems to be a unifying part of the whole jigsaw in the support of students with dyslexia.

Moreover, according to this research, lecturers seemed to prefer to perceive university students in general as independent learners with self-advocacy towards their own learning needs, as one lecturer put it, '*...students should have responsibility. They should not get away with that...*' and another stating '*we should be encouraging that culture that (dyslexic) students have full responsibility of their learning...they should take personal responsibility...*'. As such, according to the findings, lecturers seem to

favour the idea of a dyslexic student who can participate actively in the support strategy, not only by declaring their dyslexia to the lecturer but also by expressing their own problems and how best they could be supported by appropriate personnel, including academic staff. While such an expectation seems to be logical and realistic in terms of students' empowerment it is, however, not without some underlying problems. This is especially so if some dyslexic students are unable to assert themselves as a result of their poor educational background or experiences, as previous studies show (see Morgan & Klein, 2000, Gilroy & Miles, 1996). One interviewee commented, *'But how they actually accept that (responsibility) depends on the experience they have had in the past.'* This is especially so at the early stage of university studies with the plethora of all other tasks that students need to familiarise themselves with in their new learning environment. Some lecturers acknowledged such difficulties experienced by dyslexic students and expressed the need for flexibility in students' support.

Suggestions for Support:

As a result, lack of dyslexia awareness seemed to lead some lecturers to either pass over the responsibility to their fellow colleagues with expertise in the field or, where such a member of the staff was unavailable, to refer dyslexic students to the university Student Welfare department for support provision. Often, the overworked support staff, in addition to lack of management's recognition of their role seemed to demotivate them to continue offering their support, as this and other studies, showed (Goode, 2007), - see Appendix H. This is further evidence to indicate that dyslexia support was not necessarily perceived to be one among the many roles of the lecturer but a responsibility belonging to those with special knowledge in the field or that of

the Student Welfare department of the university. As such, dyslexia continued to be seen from a medical perspective by some members of the academic staff.

These factors are not only reflecting on lecturers' negative attitude to dyslexia support, despite their positive views of dyslexic students according to the earlier findings, but also a management who has been lacking towards promotion of dyslexia awareness and students' support.

7.6 The Key Applications of the Research:

Much has already been discussed, where relevant, about the implications of the findings of this research. Here, only the main points are highlighted regarding lecturers' understanding of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support. These are explored with reference to disability theory and dyslexia, teaching, learning and assessment strategies; policies within departments as well as across universities; and lastly, dyslexia support and its implication to the role of the support personnel as well as the members of the academic staff.

(1) Although there appears a significant improvement in university support provisions for students with general disability in higher education, especially following legislative changes (DDA, 1995 and SENDA Report 2001/2002) findings showed that dyslexia awareness itself has remained little known among the academic staff; hence, a lack of students' support in academic terms. Three important issues seemed to emerge in which university management has an important role to play in terms of raising dyslexia awareness. First, there is a need for the central management to play a

valuable role in promoting dyslexia awareness and students' support university-wide. Such strategy would require the development of a process which is less dependent on legislative policies and guidelines and more proactive. This is especially in terms of promoting a system of support which is inclusive, meaning a system that is beneficial not only to a few with specific learning needs but all students as unique individuals. This is, however, not to say that needs of a student with specific learning difficulties are denied, but rather an exclusive support within an inclusive environment of support. Second, findings showed that although there was a severe limitation of dyslexia support personnel with expertise in the field there were, nevertheless, some members of the academic staff in each institution who showed sensitivity to the needs of dyslexic students. These members of the academic staff who were few and far apart often within the institution were engaged in supporting dyslexic students on a voluntary basis without due recognition of their personal effort by the management. These members of the academic staff have an invaluable contribution to make in undertaking this especial role, not only at local but at central level of the university in the development of support strategies as well as awareness raising. Although such a strategy to support is a desirable one, especially in the institutions where there is limitation of dyslexia awareness and students' support, there is a need for a gradual shift towards the development of a strategy that raises the general awareness of all members of the academic staff who equally have an important role towards the academic support of dyslexic students. Third, there is a need for an urgent improvement in communication and coordination of students' support at both departmental and inter-departmental levels in both raising staff's awareness about dyslexic students who declare their dyslexia to the university on admission as well as working in close liaison with support personnel at central level of the university.

(2) Findings indicated that the universities where this research was conducted were at different stages in raising dyslexia awareness among the members of the academic staff. However, where such awareness training was held findings showed that it had little impact in raising staff awareness and staff's ability to support dyslexic students as compared to those staff who did not attend awareness training. Where such awareness training was held this appeared to be orientated mainly towards support provisions and university support policy as opposed to academic related support of students. It is, therefore, important for a change in emphasis in dyslexia awareness training not only towards an academically orientated approach to support but also a need to raise staff's awareness about dyslexia manifestations and ways that they impact upon students' learning.

(3) Based on the findings, dyslexia as a concept appeared to be grounded on medical model to support at central level of the university, based on financial and other support provisions and less in terms of academically related support. Such a model of dyslexia support is either related to medical or social model of disability and less in terms of individual or 'difference' model of dyslexia. Difference model indicates whereby the student is treated as unique individual who learns differently, as a result of their dyslexia and, as such, the individuality of the learner is respected. This calls for a change in the conception of dyslexia and students' support in higher education. As such, there is a need for emphasising in the empowerment model as opposed to disability model of support.

(4) The study showed a protracted problem in attitude among the members of the academic staff about the concept of dyslexia and students' support. In that, while dyslexia is little known lecturers themselves showed very limited understanding of their students with dyslexia and strategy to support. As a result dyslexia support was perceived among the academic staff to be mainly the role of support personnel with expertise in the field. This showed two important concerns. First dyslexia appears to be perceived among the academic staff as a disability that requires support provisions as opposed to academic support and students' empowerment. Secondly, dyslexia support is not perceived as a priority among the other important role of the lecturer. Moreover, there appears to be a management, at institutional level, who seem to put little emphasis about dyslexia support as an important role of the lecturer. Findings showed a lack of organisation about staff's workload and a need for a clearer definition of what constitutes lecturers' role in meeting the needs of students with specific learning difficulties as well as prioritisation of workload. Perhaps there is a need for an urgent review of a course curriculum that embraces needs of students with specific learning needs, not only in terms of teaching and learning but assessment strategies too. What seems, at present, is an approach to support that is exclusive to mainstream education; in that the dyslexic students are provided, for example, with extra support provisions in examinations rather than creating an innovative approach to assessment strategies that are dyslexia-friendly. Finally, the findings showed that lecturers' lack of dyslexia knowledge and students' support were externally orientated with an attempt to justify the causes of these factors as something external to themselves. As a result, lecturers seemed to have little or no control over the lack of students' support. Such an outcome calls for immediate change in attitude towards a more positive approach to dyslexia support on the part of the academic staff.

(5) Lecturers seem to have differing views of dyslexic students as both able/independent and weak/support dependent, depending upon their individual capabilities and coping strategies. However, findings showed that lecturers overwhelmingly expected dyslexic students to take personal responsibility. Such an approach to support has both positive and negative impact upon the individual learner. While the approach may empower the more able and independent learner to wards self-support this may prove counterproductive to those dyslexic students who may struggle to cope with the extra burden of responsibility especially when they need extra support the most. Hence, there is a need for a clearer strategy to support of dyslexic students by members of the academic staff, based on individual needs of the learner.

7.7 Suggestions for future Research:

Based upon the findings, in addition to some recommendations already indicated above, this study also suggests further research. While these suggestions are based upon the various limitations identified in the research it also put new perspectives as to how this study can be taken further to add upon body to knowledge about dyslexia support of students especially from lecturers' perspectives in higher education.

First, although the study was conducted in three separate institutions in order to seek lecturers' views and understanding of dyslexia, the dyslexic students and their approach to support the second phase of the study was, nevertheless, conducted within a chosen faculty as a convenient purposeful sample population, seeking the views of a small group of academic staff. Such a sample, although helped achieved the

objectives of the study limitation is, however, recognised. This is particularly so when in addition to obtaining lecturers' views about dyslexia, dyslexic students and support there also emerged several factors impacting on lecturers' support of dyslexic students. The emergence of this data, following thematic data analysis, was rather unexpected. While the findings are not new they are, however, studied mainly from the disabled students' perspective and very little emphasis put, if any, from lecturers' view point. As such, although it added new perspective this study recommends further research in the area, with the need to seek factors impacting on lecturers' support of the dyslexic students specifically from lecturers' perspectives. This is relevant more so if conducted, utilising larger sample population and from different subject disciplines within or across different institutions in the U.K.

Second, while this study looked at lecturers' general views about dyslexia support, their approaches towards it and whether they had a strategy towards such a support, the study put very little emphasis, if any, upon the academic related support itself, an area much neglected in terms of dyslexia support in higher education, as repeatedly highlighted in recent studies. As such, the study recommends further research about lecturers' views and practices about dyslexia support specific to teaching and learning both within and outside the classroom environment, effective students' learning, learning support, assessment strategies and other academic related issues, including all aspects to teaching and learning from the time of students' recruitment, through induction programme, course curriculum up to the end of course completion; especially extent to which such a strategy to teaching and learning embraces inclusiveness to mainstream education within lecturers' respective faculties.

Third, the findings of this study showed that senior lecturers in management position, although equally limited in their awareness of dyslexia as lecturers were, nevertheless, perceived themselves better in ability to support dyslexic students as compared to their counterparts in the non-management positions. The study was, however, limited in identifying the reason behind this difference; hence, further studies may help identify the likely causations of such differences between these two groups of teaching members of the staff. This study is particularly important since many findings of this and previous studies indicate a lack of support by senior members of the management both in staff's recognition and in raising dyslexia profile in higher education at central as well at departmental levels. Moreover, previous studies showed that university support provisions influenced by policy and decision-making have continued to be seen as a priority in support agenda for the dyslexic students as opposed to academic related support and lecturers' involvement in support.

Fourth, this study assumed that for any support to be effectively applied there is a need for a clear strategy or framework to support, especially in a professional setting such as higher education. As such, the study attempted to find whether lecturers had a strategy to support dyslexic students as professionals in higher education. The justification to utilise a therapeutic-orientated framework such as Bricman et al.'s conceptual strategy to help and coping was particularly relevant due to the fact that it consisted of two models which appeared to be directly comparable to the 'medical' and 'difference' models of dyslexia as argued by professional into the field. However, the fact that the study was conducted in a higher education set up further studies may be suggested through the utilisation of a framework to support that is consistent with academic context in terms of individual support of students in higher education. As

such, utilisation of different support frameworks or tools may not only identify needs for a strategy in terms of students support specific to dyslexia but may also put new perspectives to support as integral to mainstream education as opposed to exclusiveness to support.

Fifth, several comments received by the respondents on the format of the main survey questionnaire indicated the difficulties experienced in deciding upon some of the questionnaire items for fear of labelling or stereotyping dyslexic students as different or peculiar from other students. Although the purpose of this study was to identify broad views or conceptualisations of dyslexic students as opposed to suggesting categorisation as either weak or strong these respondents' views are, nevertheless highly respected. Taking into account of the sensitivity about the subject of dyslexia as an unseen disability, surrounded by various controversies about its genuineness as a specific learning difficulty, alternative approaches to data collection other than the one utilised in this study may put new light into the field. This is especially so as an effort to eliminate the limitation identified into the chosen approach. This study was, however, particularly challenging when the data of this study was collected across three different institutions within a large sample population of a group of participants who are said to, often, work under extreme time constraints and workload. Hence, utilising approaches to data collection that may add further strain upon lecturers' existing workload may yield adverse result in terms if data collection. Hence, for more reliable findings, creative approaches to data collection that may take account of staff's time and workload is paramount in higher education.

7.8 Concluding remarks:

By way of offering a final conclusion to this research, the main aim was to explore lecturers' conceptualisations of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support. First, this is not to say that this is an uncharted area altogether. Indeed there are many studies supporting findings that this study has identified. However, the focus of this study was to explore from lecturers' perspectives and their unique position in the field of academia and students' needs. Furthermore, while lecturers' conceptualisations of dyslexia, dyslexic students and support are addressed somewhat separately in the research as an attempt to give a clearer focus they are however integral to each other. To sum up, while lecturers, in this study, were generally limited in both their awareness of dyslexia and in providing students' support they nevertheless demonstrated a good understanding about both the strengths and limitations of their students with dyslexia, however broad these views might have been. While realising supporting students with and without dyslexia is fundamentally what appears to be the very role of the lecturer the study highlights an urgent need for not only a change in lecturers' attitudes and behaviour towards effective support strategies in higher education but also the need to support lecturers themselves by both raising their awareness and highlighting this very important part of their academic role.

Furthermore, it is acknowledged that the research attempted to highlight the increasing need to support students with specific learning difficulties in higher education, particularly from lecturers' perspectives. This is not to say that other forms of both seen and unseen disabilities that students experience in higher education are of any lesser importance. In fact dyslexia itself has many sub-types which is beyond the scope of this study to capture in any detail. However, as one of the many as well as

being the most common among the disabilities in higher education dyslexia is chosen in this study representative to all other disabilities that is beyond the scope of this study to even mention. The research particularly makes reference to lecturers' role and their unique contribution into this vital area since without their direct support to this group of students at the point of teaching delivery it is hard to imagine how a comprehensive support can be achieved in academic terms. While it is acknowledged that there is increasing awareness in the area of support provisions and legislative policies for students with disabilities, in many ways this was perhaps the right time to address the issue from the lecturers' viewpoints.

As a researcher with an attempt to make a small gesture of contribution into this very important area I hope that, at least, this effort will help draw attention of the academics with a renewed effort as to how this minority group of students' learning experiences can be made more enjoyable and successful with a vision of future and innovative education in mind. I believe that there is a dire need for a move away from 'level playing field' towards an ethos of individuality of needs incorporated into the mainstream education where every student with or without especial needs are perceived as an equal with the uniqueness of learning needs. I hope that dyslexia or, indeed, any other disabilities, far from seeing it as a learning barrier is treated as a 'difference' or more so as a 'uniqueness' to learning. This should be a starting point from where the learners' needs are identified by taking account of not only their limitations but strengths, too; from thereon build-on towards developing the maximum potential of the individual in preparation of life beyond university. This research does not deny that there is no disability or individuals with especial needs. Far from it, these needs, however, ought not to be seen as segregative element in the

learning environment. The purpose here is for the lecturer to recognise these differences among his or her students and, in doing so, accepts the challenges underlying the uniqueness of needs of his or her students in the most productive way possible.

On a personal tone, by doing this research I learnt that I have so much more to learn about the 'uniqueness' of an individual in the learning environment. As an able bodied person I may, perhaps, never know what 'disability' or 'specific learning difficulties' really means to a person but I have seen and experienced in my students over many years as a lecturer. However, by paying a focussed attention onto this interesting and elusive topic I begun to realise or, at least, prepared to humbly share something very worthy with my fellow academics about what is meant when we say 'meeting the individual needs' of each and every student, regardless of whether it is at individual or collective levels in the learning environment.

References

- Adams, M. & Brown, P. (2000) 'The times they are changing': developing disability provision in U.K higher education, paper presented to *Pathways 4 conference*, Canberra, Australia, 6-8 December.
- Alsop, A. (2000) *Continuing Professional Development: A guide for therapists*. Oxford: Blackwell Sciences
- Aronson, E., Wilson, T.D. & Akert, R.M. (2003) *Social psychology*. Upper Saddle River, NY: Prentice Hall
- Ashcroft, L. (1997) Defusing 'empowerment': The what and the why. *Language Arts*, Vol. 64, pp142-156
- Barnes, C. (1991) *Disabled people in Britain & discrimination* (London, Hurst & Calgary).
- Baron, C., Phillips, R., & Stalker, K. (1996) Barriers to training for disabled social work students, *Disability and society*, 11, pp.361-377.
- Barbour, R. and Kitzinger, J. (1999) *Developing Focus Group Research: Politics, Theory and Practice*. London: Sage
- Batson, C.D. et al. (1979) Attributional bias in counsellor's diagnoses: The effects of resources on perception of need. *Journal of applied social psychology*, 9, 377- 393
- Batson, C.D. Attribution as a mediator of bias in helping. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 1975, 72, 455-466

- Beaton, A. McDougall, S. and Singleton, C. (1997) Humpty Dumpty grows up? Diagnosing dyslexia in adulthood. *Journal of Research in Reading*, Special Issue: *Dyslexia in Literate Adults*, Vol. 20, No.1, pp.1-6
- Beilke, J. & Yssel, N. (1999) The chilly climate for students with disabilities in higher education, *College Student Journal*, 33(3), 364-371.
- Benton, D.C & Cormack, D.F. (1996) *Reviewing and Evaluating the Literature*. In Cormack D.F. (ed.) 1996 *The Research Process in Nursing*. Oxford: Blackwell Science.
- Bichenbach, J., Chatterji, S., Bdaly, E. and Usten, J. (1999) Models of disablement, universalism and ICIDH, *Social sciences and medicine*, Vol. 48 pp 1173-1187
- Bird, C.M. (2005) How I stopped dreading and learned to love transcription. *Qualitative Inquiry*. Vol. 11, pp 226-248
- Blankfield, S. (2002) *Think, problematic and costly? The dyslexic students in work placement*. Edgehill college of higher education.
- Bloor, M., Frankland., Robson, K.,and Thomas, M. (2001) *Focus Groups in Social Research*, London: Sage
- Boomer, G. (1982) Turning on the learning power: Introductory notes. In G. Boomer (Ed), *Negotiating the curriculum: A teacher-student partnership* (pp. 2-7). NSW, Australia: Ashton Scholastic.
- Booth, T. & Ainscough, M. (2002) *The index for inclusion* (2nd edn) (Bristol, Centre for Studies on Inclusive education).

- Borland, J. and James, S. (1999) The learning experience of students with disabilities In Higher education. A case study of a UK university, *Disability & Society*, Vol. 14, No.1, pp. 85-101
- Boxall, K. , Carson, I. & Docherty , D. (2004) Room at the academy ? People with learning difficulties and higher education, *Disability & society*, 19(2) , 99-112.
- Boyatzis, R.E. (1998) Transforming qualitative information: *thematic analysis and code development*. Sage
- Brannen, J. (1992a)' *Combining Qualitative and Quantitative approaches: an overview* ' in J. Brannen (ed) *Mixing Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Research*, Aldershot: Avebury
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*. Vol. 3, pp 177-101
Also [www.QualResearchPsych.com]
- Bricman, P., Linsenmeir, J.A. W., & McCareins, D. (1976) Performance enhancement by relevant success and irrelevant failure. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 33, 149-160.
- Bricman, P., Rabinowitz, V.C., Karuza, J., Jr., Cpates, D., Cohn, E., & Kidder, L. Models of helping and coping. *American Psychologist*, 1982, 37, 368-384.
- British Dyslexia association (2000) *Reading*.

- Brown, S., Duffield, J., Sutherland., Phillips, R., Riddell, S., Cox, A. & Amery, P.
(1997) *Scottish Higher Education Funding Council initiatives in support of students with disabilities : evaluation report*, Unpublished (Stirling, Education Department, University of Stirling).
- Bryman, A. (1988) *Quantity and Quality in social research*. Routledge.
- Bryman, A. (2001) *Social Research Methods*, Oxford; Oxford University Press
- Bulmer, M. (1982) *The uses of Social Research; Social investigations in Public Policy Making*, London: George Allen & Unwin
- Burgess, R.G. (1982) 'The unstructured interview as a conversation' in R.G. Burgess (ed) *Field Research: A source book and Field Manual* , London: Allen & Unwin
- Cairns, T. and Moss, W. (1995) *Students with Specific Learning Difficulties in Higher Education. A Research Report* (London, Goldsmith College of University of London)
- Caplan, W. and Nelson, S. On being useful: The nature and consequence of psychological research on social problems. *American psychologist*, 28, 199-211.
- Chamberlayne, P., Bormat, J. and Wengraf, T. (2000) *The Turn to Biographical Methods in Social Science: Comparative issues and examples*, London: Routledge
- Chappell, D. & Walker, M. (2003) Chappell, D. & Walker, M. in *Dyslexia and effective learning in secondary and tertiary education* by Hunter-Carsch & Herrington, M., 2003. Whurr Publishers Ltd.

- Chard, G. and Couch, R. (1998) Access to higher education for the disabled student: a building survey at the university of Liverpool, *Disability and Society*, Vol. 13, No.4 , pp. 603-623
- Collins, B. (2000) *Perceiving Success? An investigation into disabled students' and academic staffs' perceptions of the factors that inhibit disabled students' occupational performance in Trinity College, Dublin*. Unpublished undergraduate thesis, University of Dublin.
- Cooke, A. (1993) *Tackling Dyslexia the Bangor Way*. London: Whurr.
- Cottrell, S.G. (2003) in *Dyslexia and effective learning in secondary and tertiary education* by Hunter-Carsch & Herrington, M., 2003. Whurr Publishers Ltd.
- Cresswell, J. (1994) *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage
- Crithchley, 1970 Specific developmental dyslexia, in E.H. Lenneberg & E. Lenneberg (Eds) *Foundations of language development: a multidisciplinary approach* (vol. 2) New Yrk, Academic Press)
- Crooks, D.L. (2001) The importance of symbolic interaction in grounded theory research on women's health. *Health Care for Women International*. Vol. 22, pp. 11-27
- Daly, D. (1996) *Attribution Theory and Glass Ceilings: Career Development Among Federal Employees*. Public Administration & Management: An interactive Journal
[<http://www.hbg.psu.edu/facultyjxr11/glass1sp.html>]

- Davis, C.A. and Jenkins, R. (1997) She has different fits to me; how people with learning difficulties see themselves, *Disability & Society*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 95-109
- Davis, L. (1995) *Enforcing normalcy: disability, deafness and the body* (New York, Verso)
- DeFries, J.C. (1991) Genetics and Dyslexia: an overview. In Snowling MJ, Thomson, ME, , eds, *Dyslexia: Integrating theory and practice*. London: Whurr Publishers: pages.
- DeFries, J.C. , Gillis, J.J. and Wadsworth, S.J. (1990) Genes and genders: A twin study of reading disability, In: Galabarda AM, ed. *The Extraordinary Brain: Neurologic issues in developmental dyslexia*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Denzin, N.K. (1989) *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods*, 3rd edition, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall
- Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (1998) *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*, Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage
- Descartes, R.(1637) in Ritchie, J. & Lewis, J. (2004) *Qualitative Research Practice: A guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. Sage Publications Ltd.London.
- Dilthey, W. (1860) in Ritchie, J. & Lewis, J. (2004) *Qualitative Research Practice: A guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. Sage Publications Ltd.London.

- Dilthey, Wilhelm. (In 1860) in *Qualitative Research Practice, A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers* by Ritchie, J & Lewis, J. (2004) (2nd ed.), London: Sage
- Douglas, J. (1985) *Creative interviewing*, Beverley Hills, CA:Sage
- Douglas, J. and Moustakas, C (1985) 'Heuristic inquiry: the internal search to know', *Journal of Humanistic psychology*, 25 (3 summer): p39-55
- Ercikan, K. and Roth, W-M., (2006) What Good is Polarizing Research Into Qualitative and Quantitative? *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 35, No. 5, pp.14-23
- Everatt, J., Steffart, B., and Smythe, I. (1999) An eye for an unusual: creative thinking in dyslexic adults. *Dyslexia*. Vol. 5, No.1, pp. 28-47
- Farmer et al., (2002) *In Dyslexia and inclusion. assessment and support in higher education* (2002). 1st Edition. Whurr Publishers.
- Farrar, V. (2004) *Access to research, Institutional issues for disabled post-graduate research students* (Newcastle upon Tyne, University of Newcastle upon Tyne). Available online at:
<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/disability.services/postgradresearch/> (accessed January 2006).
- Finch, J. (1984) 'It's great to have someone to talk to: the ethics of interviewing women' in C. Bell and H. Roberts (eds) *Social Researching: politics, Problems, Practice*, London: Routledg & Keegan Paul
- Fisher, S.E., Marlow, A.J., and Lamb, J. (1999) A quantitative-trait locus on chromosome 6p influence different aspects of developmental dyslexia. *Am J human genet*, 64: 146- 56

- Fontana, A. and Frey, J.H. (2000) 'The interview: from structured questions to negotiated text' in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (eds) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition, thousands Oaks, CA:Sage
- Freewood, M. and Spriggs, L. (2003) Striving for genuine inclusion – academic assessment and disabled students, in C. Rust (Ed.) *Improving students learning theory and practice - 10 years on.: proceedings of the 2002 10th Improving Student Learning Symposium* (Oxford, UK, Oxford Brookes University), pp. 353-362
- Frith, U. (1997) Paradoxes in the definition of dyslexia. *Dyslexia*, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 192-214
- Fuller, M., Bradley, A. and Healey, M. (2004) Incorporating disabled students within an inclusive higher education environment. *Disability & Society*, 1.19, No.5, p.455-468
- Fuller, M., Healey, M. Bradley, A. and Hall, T. (June, 2004) Barriers to learning: a systematic study of the experience of disabled students in one university, *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol. 29, No. 3, 2004.
- Gerber, P., Gisnberg, R. and Reiff, H. (1992) Identifying alterable patterns in employment for highly successful adults with learning disabilities, *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, Vol. 25, No. 8, pp. 475- 87
- Gill, C. J. (2001) The social experience of disability , in :G. L. Albrecht, K.D. Seelman & M. Bury (Eds) *Handbook of disability studies* (London, Sage).
- Gilroy, D. (1995) *Stress factors in the college student*. In Miles, T.R., Verma, V. (Eds) *Dyslexia and Stress*, London: Whurr Publishers.

- Gilroy, D.E. & Miles, T.R. (1996) *Dyslexia at college* (2nd edn) (London, Whurr).
- Glaser, B.G. and Strauss, A.L. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*, Chicago: Adline de Gruyter
- Glaser, B.G. and Strauss, A.L. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory; Strategies for Qualitative Research*, Chicago: Aldine de Gruyter
- Glaser, B. (1992) *Basics of grounded theory analysis*. Sociology press.
- Gleick, J. (1987) *Chaos: Making a New Science*, London: Heinemann
- Goffman, E.(1961) *Asylum: Essays on the social situations of mental patients and other inmates*. Garden city, New York: Doubleday.
- Goode, J. (2007) 'Managing' disability: Early experiences of university students with disabilities. *Disability & Society*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 2007, pp. 35-48
- Goulandris, N & Snowling, M. (2001) *Dyslexia in adolescence: a five-year follow-up study*. In Hunter-Garsch & Herrington, (eds.) (2001) *Dyslexia & Effective learning in secondary and tertiary education*. London: Whurr
- Hakim, C. (2000) *Research Design: Successful Research Designs For Social And Economic Research*, 2nd edition, London: Routledge
- Hall, J. & Tinklin, T. (1998) Hall, J. & Tinklin, T. (1998) *Students First: The Experiences of Disabled Students in Higher Education. Report No 85 (Edinburgh, Scottish Council for Research in Education)* .Available online at: <http://www.scr.ac.uk/resrport/rr85/index.html> (accessed December, 2006)

- Hall, J. & Tinklin, T. (1998) *Students first: the experience of disabled students in higher education*. Report No. 85 (Edinburgh, Scottish Council for Research in Education). Available online at: www.scrc.ac.uk/resreport/rr85/index.html
- Halleck, S.L. (1971) *The politics of therapy*. New York. Harper.
- Hammersley, M. (1992) *What's wrong with ethnography?*, London: Routledge
- Hammersley, M. (1992) *What's wrong with Ethnography?* London: Routledge
- Harvey, J.H. and Weary, G. (1985) *Attribution: Basic Issues and Applications*, Academic Press, San Diego.
- Harvey, L., (2004) Analytic quality glossary, Quality research international, <http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/>
- Healey, M. , Roberts, C., Jenkins, A. & Leach, J. (2001) *Issues in providing learning support for disabled students undertaking fieldwork and related activities* (Cheltenham, Geography Discipline Network, University of Gloucestershire).
- Heider, F. (1958) *The psychology of interpersonal relations*. New York: Wiley.
- Herrington, M. (2003) Herrington, M. in *Dyslexia and effective learning in secondary and tertiary education* by Hunter-Carsch & Herrington, M., 2003. Whurr Publishers Ltd.
- Herrington, M. (2003) in *Dyslexia and effective learning in secondary and tertiary education* by Hunter-Carsch & Herrington, M., 2003. Whurr Publishers Ltd.

- Hetherington, J. (1996) Approaches to the Development of Self-esteem in the dyslexic students. *In: Conference Proceedings: Dyslexic students in higher education, Practical responses to students and Institutional needs.* Skill/University of Huddersfield, 57-61
- Hinshelwood, J. (1900) Congenital ord blindness. *Lancet* i: 1506-08
- Higher Education Funding Council for England for England (2002) *Performance indicators in higher education: 1999-2000 and 2000-2001.* Available online at: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pi>
- Higher Education Funding Council for England for England (21999) Improving provision for disabled students : invitation to bid for funds for 1999- 2000 to 2001- 02, *Invitation 99/08* (Bristol, HEFCE)
- Holloway, S. (2001) The experience of higher education from the perspective of disabled students, *Disability & Society*, 16(4) , 597-615.
- Hughes, B (2002) Medicine and the aesthetic invalidation of disabled people, *Disability & Society*, Vol. 15, N0.3 pp. 555-568
- Hughes, B (2002) Disability and the Body, in.: C. Barnes, L. Barton & M. Oliver (Eds) *Disability Studies to-day* (Cambridge, UK, Policy Press), pp. 58-76
- Hughes, B (2007) Being Disabled: towards a critical social ontology for disability studies. *Disability & Society*. Vol. 22, No.7, pp. 673-684
- Hughes, B and Paterson, K. (1997) The Social Models of Disability and the Disappearing Body: towards a sociology of impairment. *Disability & Society*, Vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 325-340

- Hughes, J. and Sharrock, W. (1997) *The Philosophy of Social Research*, London: Longman
- Hughes and Sharrock (1997) *The Philosophy of Social Research*, London: Longman
- Hunter-Carsch, M. & Herrington, M. (2001) *Dyslexia and effective learning in secondary and tertiary education* (London, Whurr).
- Hurst, A. (1993) *Steps towards Graduation: access to higher education for people with disabilities* (Aldershot, Avery)
- Hurst, A. (1996) Reflecting on research disability and higher education , in: L. Barton (Ed.) *Disability and society : emerging issues and insights* (London, Longman).
- Hurst, A. (Ed.) (1998) *Higher education and disabilities: international approaches* (Aldershot, UK, Aldgate)
- Johnson, M., Peer, L. and Lee, R. (2001) Pre-school children and dyslexia: Policy, Identification and Intervention. Cited in A. Fawcett (2001) *Dyslexia: Theory & Good Practice*. London: Whurr Publishers Ltd.
- Jones, E.E. & Nisbett, R.E. (1972) The actor and the observer: divergent perceptions of the causes of behaviour . In E.E. Jones , D.E. Kanouse, H.H. Kelley, R.E. Nisbett, S.Valins & B. Weiner (Eds.) *Attribution: Perceiving the causes of behaviour*. Morristown,N.J.: General Learning Press.
- Jones, E.E. and Davis, K.E. (1965) From acts to dispositions : The attribution process in person perception. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.) *Advances in experimental social psychology* (vol. 2). New York: Academic Press

- Jones, E.E., Kannouse, D.E, Kelley, H.H., Nisbett, R.E., Valins, Weiner, B., Eds
(1972) *Attribution: Perceiving the Causes of Behaviour*, Morristown, NJ:
General Learning Press
- Kant, E. (1781) in *Qualitative Research Practice, A Guide for Social Science Students
and Researchers* by Ritchie, J & Lewis, J. (2004) (2nd
Ed.), London: Sage
- Kant, E. (1781) in Ritchie, J. & Lewis, J. (2004) *Qualitative Research Practice: A
guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. Sage Publications
Ltd.London.
- Kaswan, J. (1981) Manifest and latent functions of psychological services. *American
psychologist*, 36, 290-299
- Kelle, U. (2004) Computer-facilitated analysis of qualitative data. In Flick, U., von
Kardorff, E. and Steinke, L., editors, *A Companion to qualitative
research*. Sage, 276-83
- Kelley, H.H. (1967) Attribution theory in social psychology. In D. Levine (Ed.)
Nebraska symposium on Motivation (Vol. 15). Lincoln: University of
New Alaska Press.
- Kelly, G.A. (1955) *The Psychology of Personal Constructs*, New York: Norton
- Kelly, G.A. (1955) *The Psychology of Personal Constructs*, New York: Norton
- Kitzinger, J. and Barbour, R. (1999) 'Introduction: the challenge and promise of focus
groups' in R. Barbour and Kitzinger (eds) *Developing Focus Group
Research: Politics, Theory and Practice*, London: Sage
- Klein, C. (1993) *Diagnosing dyslexia*. London, Avanti.

- Klein, C. (2003) Klein, C. (2003) in *Dyslexia and effective learning in secondary and tertiary education* by Hunter-Carsch & Herrington, M., 2003. Whurr Publishers Ltd.
- Kreisberg, S. (1992) *Transforming power: Domination, empowerment and education*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Kusmaul, A. in 1887 in *Qualitative Research Practice, A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers* by Ritchie, J & Lewis, J. (2004) (2nd ed.), London: Sage
- Kvale, S. (1996) *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Interviewing*, Thousand Oaks; CA: Sage
- Langer, E.J. and Abelson, R.P. (1974) A patient by any other name....clinician group differences in labelling bias. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology*, 42, 4-9
- Lewin, R. (1993) *Complexity*, London: Phoenix
- Leicester, M. & Lovell, T. (1994) Race, gender and disability: a comparative perspective, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 18, 52-56.
- Lewis, F.M. and Daltroy, L.H. (1990) 'How causal Explanations Influence Health Behaviour: Attribution Theory.' In Glanz, K., Lewis, F.M. and Rimer, B.K. (eds) *Health Education and Health Behaviour: Theory, Research and Practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, Inc.
- Lincoln, Y.S. and Guba, G.E. (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry*, Beverley Hills, CA: Sage.

- Leyser, Y., Vogel, S., Wyland, S., Brulle, A., Sharoni, V. & Vogel, G. (2000)
Students with disabilities in higher education : perspectives of American
and Israeli faculty members, *International Education*, 29(2) , 47-67.
- Lofland, J. and Lofland, L.H. (1995) *Analysing Social Settings*, 3rd edition, Belmont,
CA: Wadsworth
- Maclean, D. & Gannon, P.M. (1997) The emotionally affected university student:
support from the university community, *International journal of
Disability , Development and Education*, 44(3) , 217-228.
- Madriaga, M. (2007) Enduring Disablism: students with dyslexia and their pathways
into UK higher education and beyond. *Disability and Society*, Vol. 22,
No. 4, pp.399- 412
- Marsh , P., Rosser, E. and Harre, R. (1978) *The Rules of Disorder*, London:
Routledge
- Marshal, C. and Rossman, G.B. (1999) *Designing Qualitative Research*, 3rd edition,
Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage
- Marshall, C. and Rossman, G.B. (1999) *Designing Qualitative Research*, 3rd edition,
Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage
- Mason, J. (2002) *Qualitative researching*, end edition, London: Sage
- May, T. (2001) *Social Research issues , Methods and Process*, 3rd edition,
Buckingham: open University Press
- McGloughlin, D. (2004) Dyslexia and the workplace –policy for an inclusive society.
Cited in: *Dyslexia in Context: Research, policy and practice*, 2004.
London: Whurr Publishers Ltd.

- McGloughlin, D., Fitzgibbon, G., & Young, V. (1994) *Adult dyslexia: assessment, counselling and training* (London, Whurr).
- McGloughlin, D. (2003) McGloughlin, D. in *Dyslexia and effective learning in secondary and tertiary education* by Hunter-Carsch & Herrington, M., 2003. Whurr Publishers Ltd.
- McGloughlin, D. Leather, C. and Springer, P. ((2003) *The Adult Dyslexic: Interventions and Outcomes*. London, Whurr: Publisher.
- Meichenbaum, D. & Genest, M. (1978) *Cognitive behaviour modification: An integration of cognitive and behavioural methods*. In F.H. Kanfer & A.P. Goldstein (Eds.), *Helping people change*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Miles, R.R and Miles, E. (1992) *Dyslexia: A Hundred Years On*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press
- Miles, T.R. and Varma, V. (1995) *Dyslexia and Stress*. London. Whurr Publishers.
- Miles, M. & Huberman, A.M. (1994) *Qualitative Data Analysis: an expanded sourcebook*. (eds) Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage
- Miller, R.L. (2000) *Researching Life Stories and family Histories*, London: Sage
- Morgan, D.L. (1997) *Focus groups as Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition, Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage
- Morgan, E. (2001) Staff development in higher education: a student centers approach. In Hunter-Garsch & Herrington, (eds.) (2001) *Dyslexia & Effective learning in secondary and tertiary education*. London: Whurr

- Morgan, E. (2003) in *Dyslexia and effective learning in secondary and tertiary education* by Hunter-Carsch & Herrington, M., 2003. Whurr Publishers Ltd.
- Morgan, E. & Klein, C. (2000) *The dyslexic Adult in a Non-dyslexic world*, Whurr Publishers.
- Morris, D. and Turnbull, P. (2006) Issues and Innovations in Nursing Education: Clinical experience of students with dyslexia. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. Blackwell Publishers.
- Morse et al. (2001) *The nature of qualitative evidence*, Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage
- Morse, J.M. (1992) *Qualitative Health Research*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications
- Morse, J.M., Kuzel, A.J. and Swanson, J.M. (eds)(2001) *The Nature of Qualitative Evidence*, Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage
- Mortimore, T. & Crozier, R.W. (2006) Dyslexia and Difficulties with study skills in *Higher Education Studies in Higher Education*, Vol. 31, No. 2, April, 2006, pp.235-251
- Murphy, J. (2003) *Dyslexia and effective learning in secondary and tertiary education* by Hunter-Carsch & Herrington, M., 2003. Whurr Publishers Ltd
- National Working Party on Dyslexia in Higher Education (1999) *Dyslexia in Higher education : policy, provision and practice* (Hull, University of Hull)
- Newell, C. and Wilkinson, R.(2003) Tasmania together: a disability critique of a social plan. *Disability & Society*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp457-470

- Nicolson, R.I. & Fawcett, A.J (1990) *Automaticity, a new framework for dyslexia research? Cognition*, 35, 159-182.
- Nicolson, R.I. & Fawcett, A.J. (1999) Developmental dyslexia: the role of the cerebellum. *Dyslexia*, 5(3):155-177
- Nielson, J.M. (eds) (1990) *Feminist Research Methods: Exemplary Readings in the Social Sciences*, Boulder, CO: Westview
- Nisbett, R.E. and Borgida, E. (1975) attribution and the psychology of prediction, *Journal of Personality and Psychology*, Vol. 32,. Pp.932-943
- Norton, L., Richardson, J., Hartley, J., Newstead, S., & Mayes, J. (2005) Teachers' beliefs and intentions concerning teaching in higher education. *Higher Education*, 50: 537-571.
- Oakley, A. (1981) 'Interviewing Women – a contradiction in terms' in H. Roberts (ed.) *Doing Feminist research*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul
- Oliver, M. (1990) *The individual and social models of disability*. Paper presented at Joint workshop of the Living Options Group and the Research Unit of the Royal College of Physicians on 'People with Established Locomotor Disabilities in Hospitals.
- Oliver, M. (1996) A sociology of disability or a disablist sociology, in L. Barton (Ed.) *Disability & Society: emerging issues and insights*, pp. 18-42 (London, Longman)
- O'Shea, J. (2003) How might the current literature assist higher education occupational therapy departments and fieldwork educators to support occupational therapy students with dyslexia whilst on clinical placements. *Sheffield Hallam University, U.K.*

- Ott, P. (1997) *How to Detect and Manage Dyslexia. A Referencing and Resource Manual*. Oxford: Heinamn Educational.
- Palfreman-Kay, J. (2003) in *Dyslexia and effective learning in secondary and tertiary education*_by Hunter-Carsch & Herrington, M., 2003. Whurr Publishers Ltd.
- Panitz, T. and Panitz, P., (2004) '*Encouraging the Use of Collaborative learning in Higher Education*',
www://home.capecod.net/~tpantz/tedsarticles/encouragingcl.htm
Accessed Nov. 2004
- Parahoo, K. (1997) *Nursing Research: Principles, Process & Issues*. London, Macmillan.
- Patton, M. (1990) *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (eds). Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Patton, M.Q. (2002) *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*, second edition. Sage.
- Patton, M.Q. (2002) *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 3rd edition. Thousands Oak, CA: Sage.
- Pennington, B.F. (1991) (ed) *Reading Disabilities: Genetic and Neurological Influences*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Pollack, D. (2004) *Dyslexia, the self and higher education: Learning life histories of students identified as dyslexics*. Proceedings from the Sixth British Dyslexia Association International Conference.
- [Http://bdainternationalconference.org/2004/presentations/sun_s5-d-7.shtml](http://bdainternationalconference.org/2004/presentations/sun_s5-d-7.shtml). Accessed on 10.01.07

- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (1999) *Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education: students with disabilities*. Available online at:
[http://www/qaa.ac.uk/public/copCopswd_textonly.htm]
- Rabinowitz V.C. et al (1978) psychotherapy as help: *An attributional analysis*. In L. Abramson (ed.), *Attributional process in clinical psychology*. New York. Guildford press, in press.
- Reid, G., Kirk, J. (2000) *Adult Dyslexia for Employment, Practice ad Training (ADEPT) Project Report, Employment Service*.
- Reid, G and Fawcett, A. (2004) *Dyslexia in Context: Research, Policy and Practice*. London: Whurr Publishers Ltd.
- Reiff, H.B., Gerber, P. and Gisenberg, R. (1997) *Exceeding expectations: Successful adults with learning disabilities*. Austin, Texas: Pro-Ed.
- Reinharz, S. (1992) *Feminist Methods in Social Research*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Rene Descartes (1637) in *Qualitative Research Practice, A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers* by Ritchie, J & Lewis, J. (2004) (2nd Ed.), London: Sage
- Richardson, J. (ed.) (1996) *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for Psychology and the Social Sciences*, Leicester: BPS Books
- Richardson, J. T. E. & Wydell, T.N. (2003) The representation and attainment of students with dyslexia in U.K. higher education, *Reading and writing*, 16, 475-503.

- Riddell, S., Tinklin, T. & Wilson, A. (2005) *Disabled students in higher education: perspectives on widening access and changing policy* (London, Routledge).
- Riddick, B., Farmer, M. & sterling, C. (1997) *Students and dyslexia: growing up a with specific learning difficulty* (London, Whurr).
- Ritchie, J. & Lewis, J. (2004) *Qualitative Research Practice: A guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. Sage Publications Ltd. London.
- Robson, C. (2002) *Real World Research*. 2nd Edition, Oxford. Blackwell.
- Rocco, Bliss, Gallagher and Perez-Prado (2003) Taking the next step; Mixed Methods Research in Organisational Systems. In *Information Technology, Learning and Performance Journal*, 21, 1, 19-29.
- Rocco, T., Bliss., Gallagher, S. and Perez-Prado, A. (2003) Taking the next step: Mixed Methods Research in Organisational Systems. In *information Technology, Learning and Performance Journal*, 21, 1, 19-29
- Rodin, J. and Janis, I.L. (1979) The social power of health-care practitioners as agents of change. *Journal of social issues*, 35(1), 60-81
- Rossi, R.H. and Lyall, K.c. (1978) ' An interview of the NIT experiment' in Del Rosario, K.A. Hernigan, M.M. Markand W.M.K. Trochin (eds) *Evaluation Studies Review Annual* (vol, 3: 412-28, Beverley Hills, CA: Sage
- Rubin, H.J. and Rubin, I.S. (1995) *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*, Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage
- Rutter, M., Tizard, J. and Whitmore, K. (1970) *Education, Health and Behaviour*. London: Longman

- Seale, C. (1999) *The Quality of qualitative research*. Sage.
- Seale, C. (2000) Using computers to analyse qualitative data. In Silverman, D., *Doing qualitative research: a practical handbook*. Sage, 155- 74
- Seligman, (1975) *Learned helplessness: Depression, development and death*. W.H. Freeman: New York.
- Shakespeare, T. (1994) Cultural representations of disabled people: dustbins for disavowal? *Disability & Society*, Vol. 9, No.3, pp 283-299
- Shakespeare, T. and Watson, N. (2002) Defending the Social Model. *Disability & Society*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp.293-300
- Shevlin, M., Kenny, M., & McNeela, E. (2004) Participation in higher education for students with disabilities: an Irish perspective. *Disability & Society*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 2001, p.15 – 30
- Silverman, D. (1993) *Interpreting Qualitative Data for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction*. 2nd edition: Sage
- Singleton et al. (1999) *Dyslexia in Higher Education: policy, provision and practice. Report of the National Working Party on Dyslexia in Higher Education*. The University of Hull
- Skilbeck, M.& Connell, H. (2000) *Access and equity in higher education: an international perspectives on issues and strategies*_(Dublin, Higher Education Authority).
- Sloman (1976) 'What are the aims of science', *Radical philosophy*, Spring: 7-17
- Sloman, A. (1976) 'What are the aims of science', *Radical philosophy*, Spring:7-17
- Snowling, M.J. (2000) *Dyslexia* (2nd edn) (Oxford, Blackwell)

- Snowling, M., Nation, K., Moxham, P., Gallagher, A. and Frith, U. (1997) Phonological processing skills of dyslexic students in higher education: a preliminary report. *Journal of Research in reading* (Special Issue: Dyslexia in Litearte Adults). Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 31-41
- Spekman, N.J., Goldberg, R.J. and Herman, K.L. (1992) Learning disabled children grow up: a search for factors related to success in young adult years. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*. 7:161-170
- Steffert, B. (1996) Signs minds and designs minds: the trade-off between visual-spatial skills and linguistic skills. In: *Dyslexia in Higher Education, Learning Along the Continuum, 2nd International Conference. Conference proceedings*. University of Plymouth, 53-69
- Steele-Smith, S. & Armstrong, M. (2001) 'I would take more tudents but....'. Student Supervision Strategies. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 2001, 64 (11) pp. 549- 51
- Stein, J. (2001) The magnocellular theory of developmental dyslexia. *Dyslexia*, 7:12-36
- Stein, J. and Talcott, J. (1999) Impairment neuronal timing in developmental dyslexia – the magnocellular hypothesis. *Dyslexia*, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 59-78
- Stern, P. (1980) Grounded theory methodology: its uses and processes. *Images*. Vol. 12 (1), pp. 20-23.
- Stewart, D.W. and Shamdasi, P.M. (1990) *Focus Groups: Theory and Practice*, Newbury Park, CA: Press
- Storms, J. (1973) Video-tape and attribution process: Reversing actors and

observers' points of view. *Journal of personality and psychology*, Vol. 27, pp165-170

Sullivan, A.M. *Pursuit of goals in partnerships: Empowerment in practice.*

<http://www.aare.edu.au/02pap/sul02098.htm>

Tashakkori, A. Teddlie, C. (1998) *Mixed Methodology: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. (Applied Social Research Methods, No. 46).

Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage

Taylor, S.E. (1979) *Hospital patient behaviour: Reactance, helplessness or control?*

Journal of social issues, 35 (1), 156-184.

Teachability (2000) *Creating an accessible curriculum for students with disabilities*

(Glasgow, University of Strathclyde). Available online at:

www.jspn.gcal.ac.uk/teachability/

Thomas, K. and Velthouse, B. (1990) Cognitive elements of Empowerment: An

'Interpretive' Model of Intrinsic task Motivation. *Academy of*

Management Review. Vol 15, No.4. pp666-681

Thompson, M. (2001) *The psychology of dyslexia: A Handbook for teachers*,

London: Whurr Publishers Ltd.

Thompson, P. (2000) *The voice of the past: Oral History*, 2nd edition, Oxford: Oxford

University press

Tinklin, T. & Hall, J. (1999) Getting Round Obstacles: Disabled students' experience in higher education in Scotland. *Students in Higher Education*, Vol. 24,

No. 2, 1999.

- Tinklin, T., Riddell, S. and Wilson, A (2004) Policy and provision for disable students in higher education in Scotland and England: the current state of play, *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol. 29, No. 5, 2004
- Tinklin, T., Riddell, S., Wilson, (2003) A. *Disabled students and multiple policy innovations in higher education: report of the questionnaire survey of institutions* (Edinburgh, University of Edinburgh). Available online at: www.ed.ac.uk/ces/disability/Papers/QuestRep.pdf
- Trochim, W. (2006) *The Research knowledge Base: The Quantitative debate*. Accessed 9.9.06; <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qualdeb.htm>.
- Trochim, W. (2006) The Research Methods Knowledge Base: The Qualitative debate. Accessed 9.9.06; <http://www.sociolresearchmethods.net/kb/qualdeb.htm>
- Tuckett, A.G. (2005) Applying thematic analysis theory to practice: a researcher's experience. *Contemporary Nurse*. Vol.19, pp75-87
- Turner, B.S. (2001) Disability and the psychology of the body, in: G. Albrecht, K. Seelman and M. Bury (Eds) *The handbook of disability studies*, pp252-266 (London, Sage)
- Turner, B.S. (2003) Biology, vulnerability and politics, in: S. Williams, L. Birke and G. Bendelow (Eds) *Debating Biology: Sociological reflections on health, medicine and society*, (London, Routledge), pp271-282
- Turner, M. (1997) *Psychological assessment of Dyslexia*. London: Whurr Publishers
- Walker, R. (1985) *Applied Qualitative Research*, Aldershot: Gower
- Walker, R. (ed.) (1985) *Applied Qualitative Research*. Aldershot: Gower

- Walker, E.M. (1999) Learning Contracts in Practice: Their role in Continuing Professional Development. *British Journal of Therapy and rehabilitation*, 1999, (2) pp. 91-96
- Wareing, D. and Newell, C. (2002) Responsible choice: the choice between no choice, *Disability & Society*, Vol. 17, No. 4, pp. 419-434
- Warnock Report (1978) *Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the education of handicapped children and young people*.
www.dg.dial.pipex.com/documents/docs3/warnock.shtml
- Weber, M. (1920) in Qualitative Research Practice, *A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers* by Ritchie, J & Lewis, J. (2004) (2nd Ed.), London: Sage
- Weber, M. (1920) in Ritchie, J. & Lewis, J. (2004) *Qualitative Research Practice: A guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. Sage Publications Ltd. London.
- Weiner, B. (1974) *Achievement Motivation and Attribution Theory*. Morristown, N.J: General Learning Press.
- Weiner, B. (1980) *Human Motivation*. NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston
- Weiner, B. (1986) *An Attribution theory of motivation and emotion*, New York: Springer-Verlag
- West, T.(1992) A future of reversals: dyslexia talents in a world of computer visualisation. *Annals of Dyslexia*, Vol. 42
- West, T. (1997) *In the mind's Eye*. New York: Prometheus Books

- Whitcombe, S.W. (2001) Using learning contracts in fieldwork education: The views of Occupational Health Therapy Students and those responsible for their supervision. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, Nov. 20001, 64 (11) pp. 552-58
- Wilkinson, A. (1998) Empowerment: theory and practice. Personal Review. [on line]. Vol.27, No.1, 40-56. Available from: Emerald on the world wide web: <http://hermia.emeraldinsight.com/vl=2601464/cl=84/nw=1/fm=docpdf/rpsv/cw/mcb/00483486/v27n>] Accessed 24/04/08
- Williams, M. (2000) *Science and Social Science: An Introduction*, London: Routledge
- Wills, T.A. Perceptions of clients by professional helpers. *Psychological Bulletin*, 85, 968- 1000
- Wilson, J. (2000) 'Learning Difficulties', 'Disability' and 'Special Needs': some problems of partisan conceptualisation. *Disability & Society*, Vol. 15, No. 5, pp.817-824
- Wolfendale, S and Corbett, J. (Eds) (1996) *Opening doors: learning support in higher education* (London, Cassell)
- Zdzienski, D. (2003) Zdzienski, D. (2003) in *Dyslexia and effective learning in secondary and tertiary education* by Hunter-Carsch & Herrington, M., 2003. Whurr Publishers Ltd.
- Yull, W., Rutter, M., Berger, M. and Thompson, M. (1974) Over and under achievement in reading: distribution in the general population. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*. Vol. 44, pp. 1-12
- Zola, I.K. (2005) Towards the Necessary Universalising of a Disability Policy. *The Milbank Quarterly*. Vol. 83, No. 4. (pp. 1-27)

Views of lecturers concerning dyslexia, dyslexic students and academic support in higher education

Phase 1 Study

Methodology: Semi- structured interview schedule

No. of respondents: 12 Lecturers

Prompts:

- Lecturer's views of dyslexia
- Lecturer's conceptualisations of dyslexic students
- Lecturer's expectation of dyslexic students' responsibilities
- Lecturer's expectations of his/her own responsibilities on dyslexia support.
- Approach to support expected of the self as a lecturer (Lecturer's approach to support)

(Codings)

Respondent:1

- ...(dyslexia) protected by the disability policy of the university..
- They (dyslexic students) need to take advantage of these facilities.
- they are quite serious and hard working students,...
- ...few of those who can wrongly take advantage of the (support) system.
- When she found out she was, indeed, dyslexic she pretended that she was no more able to contribute in the class.
- Most of them (dyslexic students) are quite responsible...
- Thus I will give lecture notes before sessions to anyone.
- I have never seen a report and can only go on what students choose to reveal.
- Also, students often do not inform me until well into the module when they are focussing on their assignments.
- ... can hardly differentiate them from their colleagues (non-dyslexic students) ...
- ...unless we know their problems somehow we can't do much about it (dyslexia problem).

- ...sought guidance from colleagues who knew a bit about dyslexia.
- staff teaching these students (dyslexics) should have some responsibility of understanding their problems... duty towards them in meeting their needs.
- ...lecturers still seem to believe these problems (dyslexia problems) don't exist...

Respondent: 2

- I must admit that I have not come across very many dyslexic students in my school...
- you just don't know who is and is not dyslexic... there is no way of knowing it, unless the students themselves come and tell you.
- ...you have to depend on the (the students) to reveal their problems and tell you what they want from you.... I expect them (dyslexic students) to come forward with their problems.
- the students need to come forward first....
- ...these students (dyslexics) are quite able and motivated.
- ...want their works checked for any obvious problems.
- Often they don't trust themselves
- ...for most of the time their works can be very good indeed...
- ...my argument is that staff need to know their problems.
- We can't help them if we don't know what's wrong with them.
- ...I don't think it's fair to treat them differently or less able or something like that....
- they can show you that they are very capable students and with a lot of enthusiasm.
- dyslexic students should be able to claim for their rights...
- they are adult and have responsibility towards themselves
- ...if you treat them as adult they can recognise their own responsibilitiesthey do sometimes....
- ...occasionally they need some prompting...I mean not only dyslexics but other students too.
- we encourage students to go and find out through the intranet...they only have to access these information to know what is and is not available in the university.
- ... during induction all students are given information on these (university support provisions) matters...
- my role is to support them... that's why I'm here for...but if they (dyslexic and non-dyslexic students) don't ask for help they simply can't get them....
- ...you can't spoon-feed adults.

- From my experience some dyslexic students may 'use' their disability to avoid some tasks.

Respondent: 3

- ...students with dyslexia... more and more coming forward, declaring their problems...means you can help them better.
-I would like to see them responsible as adults.... Many are....
- I have seen some marvellous piece of work from some students who say they are dyslexic.
- It baffles me when they say they have certain problem and yet doing better than some of their colleagues...
- They can contribute in the class just like any one else....
- I have noticed them getting on well with their works without the help of academic staff...
- ...one thing I have remarked, though, that they always want their works seen by staff....
- ... I suppose they are anxious or afraid of doing badly.
- Often they only need some reassuring words and there they go...
- I don't think that in our school we are too fussy about spelling, etc...so long ideas are there in a coherent manner put together.
- ...I don't think that I'm expected to know their (dyslexic students') problems inside-out.
-it is the responsibility of the staff knowing and trained about dyslexia? It's better they are helped by those who know about these things (dyslexia problems) than the one who don't...
- I must admit that I hardly have any significant amount of knowledge about dyslexia ...
- I'm willing to help them provided they come forward for my help. I can always do something about it
- ...at least refer them to more expert people in the field.
- I don't think it's fair on me... to expect me to know about dyslexia...I have never had any training on it nor it (dyslexia awareness) has been introduced to me during my teacher training.
- Are we as lecturers expected to know about dyslexia, I mean every bit of the problems? I 'm not too sure ...

Respondent: 4

- I would never say dyslexic students are necessarily weak in their studies or do less well than their colleagues (non-dyslexics peers)...
- I would say though that sometimes they aren't sure of themselves...
- ...perhaps, it is a way of saying 'I'm dyslexic, please be a bit lenient in marking my work'

- ...cry for help?... or drawing your attention
- One good thing though... at least this student was knowing about her problem
- If they don't know their own problems they won't know what they want,
- I am always here to guide and give support whenever they need my help....
- ...for that they (dyslexic students) need to approach me. It is nice to know from themselves first what they need and what's their problem.
- Perhaps problem is not the right word...perhaps I should say 'need'. ...they have different needs depending upon their strengths...
- Surely, like any other students they are intelligent... they have real ability. It is that part of a student that lecturers need to focus on.
- I like to see them in control of their own learningknowing what's available for them.
- With the right help there is no doubt they'll excel.

Respondent: 5

- ...we teach them (dyslexics) just like any other students.
- special support is there if they require them...for that they have to go to the right place....they have to go and get it.
- I'm always willing to offer my support, if they need me. They just need asking.
- ...most (dyslexic students) don't bother, I assume they don't always need your help.... I cannot tell you the underlying reason for that. I suppose they can manage by themselves.
- As regard to their (dyslexic students) general ability, ... I can't see....any apparent difference from their colleagues...
- ...sometimes they do say they have certain problems with their writing and want their work checked before submitting for marking.
- As I said, support is always there should they need them.
- ...we don't have a system that we necessarily have to treat them differently from other students.
- We also mark their works just like other students.
- I don't think it will be fair to treat them special.
- If they have a problem then they need to go and get the right support...
- ... when it comes to marking then it has to be fair according to school policy.
- ...just like any other students every dyslexic student is his or her own individual and they have their individual problems and strengths... They all behave differently somewhat... we ought to treat them likewise.
- so you see that some of them (dyslexic students) get on with their works quietly whereas...

- others (dyslexic students) will want your help....
- at time they can be a bit of a 'worrier' ... They can be a little anxious about their writing and want you to look at their work...
- ...unless they tell me what they really want in terms of support.
- ...if I can't help them myself I can always refer them to people who know about dyslexia.
- We have support staff in the university who have these kinds of responsibilities.
- You just can't be knowing everything about needs of every student in the university. As lecturers our job is to teach and teach in the best possible way we can.
- To be honest, I know very little, if any, about dyslexia. I'm not trained in this field nor there is that I have learnt how to teach dyslexic students
- We don't have a separate guidelines to mark works of dyslexic students differently...

Respondent: 6

- Unless I am teaching a group from my own programmes then I do not know if a student has learning difficulties or not.
- I have had no training on learning difficulties ...
- ...advised students to seek the advice of the staff with special responsibilities of learning difficulties.
- ...I have come across different students with different abilities... some require support....
- Some may be getting by alright by themselves...
- ...they should be able to come forward with their needs and tell the staff.
- ...If I can help, fair enough, if I can't then as I say I advise them to go to the right person in the university.
- I think they do need guidance...
- ...gradually, I would expect them to find their own way and know what is there for them. ...This is how they learn to be responsible, we want them to be this way....
- I do not know much about it (dyslexia). So my only option is to pass this responsibility to the one who can help.
- I wish I had known more (about dyslexia).... it's always nice to know problems of students...

Respondent: 7

- Little attempt that I am aware of within the school to identify and support dyslexic students.
- No training in this kind of (dyslexia) support is, as yet offered, to lecturers here.

- These are hard working kids...they always seem to go an extra mile to achieve what they set out to achieve...
- ...they (dyslexic students) have some real qualities...highly motivated kids...
- one can be sure they can depend on themselves.
- ... I never had (dyslexia) training as a teacher...
- ...we are teachers, not expert in this field...
- ... if dyslexic students need special support, this is possible and there is always people out there (in the university)....
- ...most of them (dyslexic students) really need that little bit of understanding, a bit of guidance...
- ... we ought to see what good qualities they have. ...what they can offer in terms of strengths ...little we need to think about their weaknesses ...
- They are often not too sure of themselves...
-we all would like to know more about problems of dyslexia

Respondent: 8

- they are very clever individuals...
- They have qualities that often others don't have them...
- ...they are concerned and always serious in their tasks.
- I know that justice is not done sometimes to these students due to lack of support...concern.
- If they're treated according to needs they have the ability to do even better.
- the onus is on the particular students to approach the lecturer ...
- ...and let them (lecturers) know what problems they have and how we best optimise learning and enjoyment of the experience.
- ...there is the problem over giving... lecture notes prior to the lecture as it may label them. I personally don't give out lecture notes until the session is over as I like to set work for them during the lecture and the answers are within these notes...
- we have to consider the level of their dyslexia – they have to be able to carry out the job of nursing...
- ... some potential employers may feel that e.g. if they cannot write reports, read drug prescriptions, etc. that they cannot fit their 'Job Description'

Respondent: 9

1. ... everything should be done to assist and protect the dyslexic person...

2. If they have a particular problem they better say so at the outset...
3. ...reading and writing problem...sometimes this comes across in their works...I hope that they don't do mistakes on the ward with drugs and the like.
4. ...it's always a fear...that's all.
5. If they have a particular problem then they need to be seen.
6. ...with proper support hopefully they may not do mistake on the ward.
7. Thankfully we have support in place and so far they have done as well as those who are non-dyslexic...
8. ...teaching staff should be duty bound to know the needs of their students,...
9. specially those in nursing...they (lecturers) should have a sound understanding (of dyslexia)..
10. dyslexia according to this or other university is a disability and to be treated as such...
11. where are we standing legally if there is a mistake? ...
12.nursing students with dyslexia need to follow the school policy ...
13. ... follow the advice of the teaching staff...
14. ...they (dyslexic students) may well need to shape themselves up with extra tuition if necessary....
15. Not only dyslexic students but all students need to keep abreast with the university policy...their rights...support available.
16. Although I may be willing to provide additional support students often do not take this opportunity.
17. willing to help all students regardless of their disability status if they approach me for support....

Respondent:10

- ...need to be seen according to their needs or problems they have...
- ...I'm not too sure though how one can deal with students with certain special problem,
- ...it is our duty to look after them and if necessary refer them to get support to remedy their problems. We have counselling services and study skills in the university.
- We know that we have to develop their full potential, ...I mean what they are good at and do best...
- these students are not to say they do not know their needs and they should...
- ... they need to know what is and is not available for them in the university...we have all sorts of support in the university these days...
- All those with apparent difficulties who have never undergone assessment are directed to the service for advice....

- I personally prefer to provide lecture notes and reference material to all students routinely in advance of lectures in order to prevent students with specific learning needs from being singled out.
- All dyslexic students are given additional time to complete assessments and examinations.
- ... with support this need not hamper their achievement.
- A recent graduate from the BN (Hons) achieved a first classification....this means...that they have some real qualities one can admire.
- Students do not always make teachers and staff aware of their dyslexia which makes it difficult to make allowances and provisions in teaching and learning terms.

Respondent: 11

- I am concerned that adult dyslexic students should take the lead responsibility in letting lecturers know (repeatedly if necessary) of their individual problems/requirements.
- Dyslexia is such a wide range disability, that it is insufficient for any lecturer to respond appropriately.
- they (lecturers) should be made more aware by the dyslexia person themselves.
- If students approach me I am more than willing to provide additional support to meet their needs..
- ... in practice they (dyslexic students) rarely let you know.
-most of them don't approach for help.
- ... I think that dyslexic students need to play an active role and know what they need from lecturers...support personnel in the university as well as those who have expertise in this area.
- This (support) is helpful especially to those who need to be supported...I mean those who have severe type of dyslexia.
- Dyslexia is only one type of disability lecturers encounter...there are others...we as lecturers cannot be expected to be expert at every type of students' problems...if we can't help then they can ...
- I am not trained in dyslexia...

Respondent: 12

- I have very little knowledge of dyslexia, if any.
- I never had any training or anything like that in my career, I mean about dyslexia.
-students with dyslexia..... need our help....
-I have noticed (dyslexic students needing help) especially when it comes to their assignments, exams and the like.

- I suppose they get a bit panicky during this phase (assignment submission/examinations) of their studies and look for help...
- ...I also understand that those students who badly need of help there is always help provided in the university
- ...they (dyslexic students) need to find it (help)....
- ...if they don't (find help) then they need to be advised how to get help,
- As lecturers we can only be limited in special support to students,...there are so many different needs and one just can't be knowing every special need of every student with these kind of needs...
- There is very little emphasis, if any , is place about special needs...
- ...on issue of disability and special needs of students such as dyslexia and they are also well protected by the disability policy of the university.
- I am willing to find out more provided that there are such ...

Appendix B

**Pre-validated Questionnaire items
(Based on the Interview Codes)**

<p>1 Dyslexia awareness training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No training in this kind of (dyslexia) support is, as yet offered, to lecturers here. • ... I never had (dyslexia) training as a teacher... • I am not trained in dyslexia... • I never had any training or anything like that in my career, I mean about dyslexia. • There is very little emphasis, if any, is place about special needs... • I am willing to find out more provided that there are such (training)... 	<p style="text-align: center;">Item 1</p> <p>Have you attended dyslexia training?</p>
<p>2 knowledge of dyslexia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •lecturers still seem to believe these problems (dyslexia problems) don't exist... • I must admit that I have not come across very many dyslexic students in my school.... • I must admit that I hardly have any significant amount of knowledge about dyslexia ... • You just can't be knowing everything about needs of every student in the university. As lecturers our job is to teach and teach in the best possible way we can. • To be honest, I know very little, if any, about dyslexia. I'm not trained in this field nor there is that I have learnt how to teach dyslexic students • Unless I am teaching a group from my own programmes then I do not know if a student has learning difficulties or not. • I have had no training on learning difficulties ... 	<p style="text-align: center;">Item 2</p> <p>Rate your knowledge of dyslexia.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I wish I had known more (about dyslexia).... it's always nice to know problems of students... • Little attempt that I am aware of within the school to identify and support dyslexic students. • I have never seen a report and can only go on what students choose to reveal. • I have very little knowledge of dyslexia, if any. • As lecturers we can only be limited in special support to students,...there are so many different needs and one just can't be knowing every special need of every student with these kind of needs... 	
<p>3 Ability to provide dyslexia support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...sought guidance from colleagues who knew a bit about dyslexia. • ...I'm not too sure though how one can deal with students with certain special problem, 	<p>Item 3</p> <p>Rate your ability to provide dyslexia support.</p>
<p>4 (a) Dyslexia as a disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...protected by the disability policy of the university. • ...don't know what's wrong with them (dyslexic students)... • dyslexia according to this or other university is a disability and to be treated as such... • ...on issue of disability and special needs of students such as dyslexia and they are also well protected by the disability policy of the university. 	<p>Item 4</p> <p>Since dyslexia is protected by the disability policy of higher education dyslexic students should, normally, be treated as disable.</p>
<p>4(b) Dyslexia as a disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... everything should be done to assist and protect the dyslexic person both in and outside the classroom. • If they have a particular problem then they need to be seen. • Dyslexia is such a wide range disability, that it is insufficient for any lecturer to respond 	<p>Item 5</p> <p>Due to their particular styles of learning dyslexic students should, often, be treated differently from other students during a teaching session.</p>

<p>appropriately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •students with dyslexia..... need our help.... 	
<p>5 (a) Non-Disability (Deprived)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know that justice is not done sometimes to these students due to lack of support...concern. • If they're treated according to needs they have the ability to do even better. 	<p>Item 6</p> <p>Given appropriate support, most dyslexic students should experience minimal learning difficulties in higher education.</p>
<p>5 (b) Non-Disability (Deprived)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...with proper support hopefully they may not do mistake on the (hospital) ward. • ... with support this need not hamper their achievement. 	<p>Item 7</p> <p>Given appropriate support, most dyslexic students have the ability to be as effective as their non-dyslexic peers in their own studies</p>
<p>6 (a) Weak (Lacking in confidence)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often they don't trust themselves. • ...occasionally they need some prompting...I mean not only dyslexics but other students too. • ... I suppose they are anxious or afraid of doing badly. • Often they only need some reassuring words and there they go... • I would say though that sometimes they aren't sure of themselves... • ...perhaps, it is a way of saying 'I'm dyslexic, please be a bit lenient in marking my work' . • at time they can be a bit of a 'worrier' ... They can be a little anxious about their writing and want you to look at their work... • They are often not too sure of themselves... • From my experience some dyslexic students may 'use' their disability to avoid some tasks. • I suppose they get a bit panicky during this phase (assignment submission/examinations) of their studies and look for help... 	<p>Item 8</p> <p>Dyslexic students appear to be, generally, less confident in their studies as compared to their non-dyslexic peers</p>

<p>6 (b) Weak (Lacking in capability)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we have to consider the level of their dyslexia – they have to be able to carry out the job of nursing... • - some potential employers may feel that e.g. if they cannot write reports, read drug prescriptions, etc. that they cannot fit their 'Job Description' • ...it's always a fear...that's all. • where are we standing legally if there is a mistake? ... • ...reading and writing problem...sometimes this comes across in their works...I hope that they don't do mistakes on the ward with drugs and the like. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Item 9</p> <p>Dyslexic students appear to be, generally, less capable in coping with their studies as compared to their non-dyslexic peers.</p>
<p>7 (a) Strong (hard working)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they are quite serious and hard working students, • ...these students (dyslexics) are quite able and motivated. • ...for most of the time their works can be very good indeed... • they can show you that they are very capable students and with a lot of enthusiasm. • I have seen some marvellous piece of work from some students who say they are dyslexic. • These are hard working kids...they always seem to go an extra mile to achieve what they set out to achieve... • ...they (dyslexic students) have some real qualities...highly motivated kids... • they are very clever individuals... • .they are concerned and always serious in their tasks. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Item 10</p> <p>Dyslexic students, often, work, harder than their non-dyslexic peers in producing their written works.</p>

<p>7 (b) Strong (special strengths)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It baffles me when they say they have certain problem and yet doing better than some of their colleagues... • ... we ought to see what good qualities they have. ...what they can offer in terms of strengths ...little we need to think about their weaknesses ... • They have qualities that often others don't have them... • A recent graduate from the BA (Hons) achieved a first classification....this means...that they have some real qualities one can admire. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Item 11</p> <p>Dyslexic students often show special strengths in their ability to learn.</p>
<p>8 (a) Dependent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • few of those who can wrongly take advantage of the (support) system. • When she found out she was, indeed, dyslexic she pretended that she was no more able to contribute in the class. • ...cry for help?... or drawing your attention • With the right help there is no doubt they'll excel. • others (dyslexic students) will want your help.... 	<p style="text-align: center;">Item 12</p> <p>Generally, most dyslexic students depend on support provisions of the university in order to cope as effectively as other students with their studies</p>
<p>8 (b) Dependent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...want their works checked for any obvious problems. • ...one thing I have remarked, though, that they always want their works seen by staff.... • ...sometimes they do say they have certain problems with their writing and want their work checked before submitting for marking. • Also, students often do not inform me until well into the module when they are focussing on their assignments. • ...I have noticed (dyslexic students needing help) especially when it comes to their assignments, exams and the like. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Item 13</p> <p>Dyslexic students usually seek support of their lecturers more often as compared to their non-dyslexic peers.</p>

<p>9 (a) Independent (self-determining)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... can hardly differentiate them from their colleagues (non-dyslexic students) ... • you just don't know who is and is not dyslexic... there is no way of knowing it, unless the students themselves come and tell you. • they can show you that they are very capable students and with a lot of enthusiasm. (13) • ...they (dyslexic students) can contribute in the class just like any one else.... • I would never say dyslexic students are necessarily weak in their studies or do less well than their colleagues... • As regard to their (dyslexic students) general ability, ... I can't see....any apparent difference from their colleagues... <p>1. Thankfully we have support in place and so far they have done as well as those who are non-dyslexic...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...I don't think it's fair to treat them differently or less able or something like that.... 	<p style="text-align: center;">Item 14</p> <p>Dyslexic students are as autonomous in their learning as their non-dyslexic peers.</p>
<p>9 (b) Independent (autonomous)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of them (dyslexic students) are quite responsible... • Some may be getting by alright by themselves... • they are adult and have responsibility towards themselves • ...if you treat them as adult they can recognise their own responsibilitiesthey do sometimes.... •I would like to see them responsible as adults.... many are.... • I have noticed them getting on well with their works without the help of academic staff... 	<p style="text-align: center;">Item 15</p> <p>Dyslexic students are, generally, as independent in their approach to learning as their non-dyslexic peers.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like to see them in control of their own learningknowing what's available for them. • ...most (dyslexic students) don't bother, I assume they don't always need your help.... I cannot tell you the underlying reason for that. I suppose they can manage by themselves. • so you see that some of them (dyslexic students) get on with their works quietly whereas... • one can be sure they can depend on themselves. • Although I may be willing to provide additional support students often do not take this opportunity. • ... in practice they (dyslexic students) rarely let you know. • ... most of them (dyslexic students) don't approach for help. 	
<p>10 (a) Expert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...at least refer them to more expert people in the field. (46) • ... I think that dyslexic students need to play an active role and know what they need from lecturers...support personnel in the university as well as those who have expertise in this area. (36) • Dyslexia is only one type of disability lecturers encounter...there are others...we as lecturers cannot be expected to be expert at every type of students' problems...if we can't help then they (support staff) can 	<p style="text-align: center;">Item 16</p> <p>It is fundamental that lecturers, teaching dyslexic students, have a good knowledge of dyslexia.</p>
<p>10 (b) Expert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...unless we know their problems somehow we can't do much about it (dyslexia problem). • staff teaching these students (dyslexics) should have some responsibility of understanding their problems... duty towards them in meeting their needs. • ...my argument is that staff need to know 	<p style="text-align: center;">Item 17</p> <p>For effective teaching, it is fundamental for lecturers to have a good understanding of the specific learning difficulties of their individual students</p>

<p>their problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We can't help them if we don't know what's wrong with them. • ...teaching staff should be duty bound to know the needs of their students,... <p>2. specially those in nursing...they (lecturers) should have a sound understanding (of dyslexia)..</p> <p>3. As lecturers we can only be limited in special support to students,...there are so many different needs and one just can't be knowing every special need of every student with these kind of needs...</p>	
<p>11 (a) Subordinate (Facilitator)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...if I can't help them myself I can always refer them to people who know about dyslexia. • ...advised students to seek the advice of the staff with special responsibilities of learning difficulties. • ...If I can help, fair enough, if I can't then as I say I advise them to go to the right person in the university. • I think they do need guidance... 	<p style="text-align: center;">Item 18</p> <p>Lecturers should hardly be expected to be knowledgeable about specific disabilities of individual students in higher education.</p>
<p>11 (b) Subordinate (Facilitator)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...I don't think that I'm expected to know their (dyslexic students') problems inside-out. • I don't think it's fair on me... to expect me to know about dyslexia...I have never had any training on it nor it (dyslexia awareness) has been introduced to me during my teacher training. • Are we as lecturers expected to know about dyslexia, I mean every bit of the problems? I 'm not too sure ... • ...we are teachers, not expert in this field... • ...most of them (dyslexic students) really need that little bit of understanding, a bit of guidance... 	<p style="text-align: center;">Item 19</p> <p>Dyslexic students, often, prefer guidance in their studies more than a need for lecturers to be concerned about their dyslexia related problems.</p>

<p>12 (a) Acceptance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They (dyslexic students) need to take advantage of these facilities. 	<p>Item 20</p> <p>It is important that dyslexic students utilise every support provision available to them in the university.</p>
<p>12 (b) Acceptance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... follow the advice of the teaching staff... • All those with apparent difficulties who have never undergone assessment are directed to the service for advice.... • ...advised students to seek the advice of the staff with special responsibilities of learning difficulties. (25) • ...if they don't (find help) then they need to be advised how to get help, ... 	<p>Item 21</p> <p>It is important that students, declaring their dyslexia, follow as much advice of the support/academic staff as they can towards their own learning needs</p>
<p>13 (a) Assertive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dyslexic students should be able to claim for their rights... • special support is there if they require them...for that they have to go to the right place....they have to go and get it. 	<p>Item 22</p> <p>It is, often, important for dyslexic students to assert their rights in order to gain special support in the university.</p>
<p>13 (b) Assertive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... they need to know what is and is not available for them in the university...we have all sorts of support in the university these days... 	<p>Item 23</p> <p>It is preferable that dyslexic students seek their own support provisions than lecturers act on their behalves.</p>
<p>14 (a) Treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...need to be seen according to their needs or problems they have... • If they have a particular problem then they need to be seen. 	<p>Item 24</p> <p>Providing good academic support to dyslexic students is for lecturers to focus more upon their specific weaknesses rather than underlying strengths.</p>
<p>14 (b) Treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...it is our duty to look after them and if necessary refer them to get support to remedy their problems. We have counselling services and study skills in the university. 	<p>Item 25</p> <p>Dyslexic students should seek the help of dyslexia experts more than the support of their lecturers towards their own learning needs.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This (support) is helpful especially to those who need to be supported...I mean those who have severe type of dyslexia. • ...I also understand that those students who badly need of help there is always help provided in the university 	
<p>15 (a) Mobilisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perhaps problem is not the right word...perhaps I should say 'need'. ...they have different needs depending upon their strengths... • Surely, like any other students they are intelligent... they have real ability. It is that part of a student that lecturers need to focus on. • ...just like any other students every dyslexic student is his or her own individual and they have their individual problems and strengths... They all behave differently somewhat... we ought to treat them likewise. • ...I have come across different students with different abilities... some require support.... 	<p>Item 26</p> <p>An effective way for lecturers to develop the learning potentials of dyslexic students is by emphasising more upon their strengths rather than their weaknesses.</p>
<p>15 (b) Mobilisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We know that we have to develop their full potential, ...I mean what they are good at and do best... 	<p>Item 27</p> <p>An effective way to deal with the learning difficulties of a student is first to identify special strengths he/she may possess.</p>
<p>16 (a) Student Responsible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One good thing though... at least this student was knowing about her problem. • If they don't know their own problems they won't know what they want, • ...unless they tell me what they really want in terms of support. • ...they should be able to come forward with their needs and tell the staff. • If they have a particular problem they better say so at the outset... • these students are not to say they do not know 	<p>Item 28</p> <p>Dyslexic students should be aware of their own needs before seeking lecturers' support.</p>

<p>their needs and they should...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is nice to know from themselves first what they need and what's their problem. • ... I think that dyslexic students need to play an active role and know what they need from lecturers...support personnel in the university as well as those who have expertise in this area. 	
<p>16 (b) Student Responsible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...you have to depend on the (the students) to reveal their problems and tell you what they want from you.... I expect them to come forward with their problems. • ...the students need to come forward first.... •my role is to support them... that's why I'm here for...but if they (dyslexic and non-dyslexic students) don't ask for help they simply can't get them.... • ...students with dyslexia... more and more coming forward, declaring their problems...means you can help them better. • I'm willing to help them provided they come forward for my help. I can always do something about it... • ...for that they (dyslexic students) need to approach me. • I'm always willing to offer my support, if they need me. They just need asking. • the onus is on the particular students to approach the lecturer ... • ...and let them (lecturers) know what problems they have and how we best optimise learning and enjoyment of the experience. • Students do not always make teachers and staff aware of their dyslexia which makes it difficult to make allowances and provisions in teaching and learning terms. • willing to help all students regardless of their disability status if they approach me for support.... • I am concerned that adult dyslexic students should take the lead responsibility in letting 	<p>Item 29</p> <p>Primarily, it is the responsibility of the dyslexic students to approach lecturers for dyslexia support.</p>

<p>lecturers know (repeatedly if necessary) of their individual problems/requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> they (lecturers) should be made more aware by the dyslexia person themselves. <p>.... If students approach me I am more than willing to provide additional support to meet their needs.</p>	
<p>16 (c) Student Responsible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As I said, support is always there should they need them. If they have a problem then they need to go and get the right support... ...they (dyslexic students) may well need to shape themselves up with extra tuition if necessary.... ...they (dyslexic students) need to find it (help).... 	<p>Item 30</p> <p>Dyslexic students should be aware of their personal problem/needs prior to claiming for support provisions in the university.</p>
<p>16 (d) Student Responsible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">nursing students with dyslexia need to follow the school policy ... Not only dyslexic students but all students need to keep abreast with the university policy...their rights...support available. 3 ...gradually, I would expect them to find their own way and know what is there for them. ...This is how they learn to be responsible, we want them to be this way.... 	<p>Item 31</p> <p>An effective way for dyslexic students to secure support provisions is by familiarising themselves with the dyslexia policy of the university.</p>
<p>17 Student Not Responsible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">it is the responsibility of the staff knowing and trained about dyslexia? It's better they are helped by those who know about these things (dyslexia problems) than the one who don't... ...at least refer them to more expert people in the field. We have support staff in the university who have these kinds of responsibilities. I do not know much about it (dyslexia). So 	<p>Item 32</p> <p>It is the personal tutors who should arrange for dyslexia support rather than the dyslexic students approaching every member of the teaching staff in the school.</p>

<p>my only option is to pass this responsibility to the one who can help.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... if dyslexic students need special support, this is possible and there is always people out there (in the university).... 	
<p>18 (a) Directive approach to support</p> <p>(Supported by literature)</p>	<p>Item 33</p> <p>A good lecturer is one who puts priority on the whole class in preference to the individual needs of students.</p>
<p>18 (b) Directive approach to support</p> <p>(Supported by literature)</p>	<p>Item 34</p> <p>Dyslexic students, experiencing difficulties in searching for their own reading materials, should be given extra copies on request.</p>
<p>18 (c) Directive approach to support</p> <p>(Supported by literature)</p>	<p>Item 35</p> <p>Dyslexic students should not be allowed to use special electronic learning facilities that may distract other students in the class.</p>
<p>18 (d) Directive approach to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...we teach them (dyslexics) just like any other students. 	<p>Item 36</p> <p>Dyslexic students are expected to participate as much as their non-dyslexic peers in class activities.</p>
<p>18 (e) Directive approach to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...we don't have a system that we necessarily have to treat them differently from other students. • I don't think it will be fair to treat them special. 	<p>Item 37</p> <p>Allowing dyslexic students to take alternative forms of assessments is unfair to their non-dyslexic peers.</p>
<p>18 (f) Directive approach to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We also mark their works just like other students. • ... when it comes to marking then it has to be fair according to school policy. • We don't have a separate guidelines to mark works of dyslexic students differently... 	<p>Item 38</p> <p>Marking the scripts of dyslexic students differently from that of their non-dyslexic peers compromises academic standard.</p>

<p>18 (g) Directive approach to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thus I will give lecture notes before sessions to anyone. • I personally prefer to provide lecture notes and reference material to all students routinely in advance of lectures in order to prevent students with specific learning needs from being singled out. 	<p>Item 39</p> <p>Giving lecture notes to students prior to a teaching session promotes effective learning</p>
<p>18 (h) Directive approach to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... during induction all students are given information on these (university support provisions) matters... 	<p>Item 40</p> <p>It is preferable that lecturers provide dyslexic students with relevant information on university support provisions than letting them search for themselves</p>
<p>19 (a) Facilitative approach to support</p> <p>(Supported by literature)</p>	<p>Item 41</p> <p>A good lecturer is one who puts priority on the individual students in preference to the whole class needs</p>
<p>19 (b) Facilitative approach to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...you can't spoon-feed adults. 	<p>Item 42</p> <p>It is preferable that dyslexic students face the challenges of searching their own reading materials than lecturers giving copies to them as and when they request.</p>
<p>19 (c) Facilitative approach to support</p> <p>(Supported by literature)</p>	<p>Item 43</p> <p>Dyslexic students should be allowed to use electronic learning facilities that may, often, be different from those used by their non-dyslexic peers in the class.</p>
<p>19 (d) Facilitative approach to support</p> <p>(Supported by literature)</p>	<p>Item 44</p> <p>A dyslexic student, experiencing specific learning difficulties during a class activity, should be allowed to opt out on request.</p>
<p>20 (e) Facilitative approach to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dyslexic students are given additional time to complete assessments and examinations. 	<p>Item 45</p> <p>Higher education should allow dyslexic students to take alternative forms of assessments, on request.</p>

<p>19 (f) Facilitative approach to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't think that in our school we are too fussy about spelling, etc...so long ideas are there in a coherent manner put together. 	<p>Item 46</p> <p>Written works of dyslexic students should be marked flexibly by making allowances for their reading and writing difficulties</p>
<p>19 (g) Facilitative approach to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...there is the problem over giving... lecture notes prior to the lecture as it may label them. I personally don't give out lecture notes until the session is over as I like to set work for them during the lecture and the answers are within these notes... 	<p>Item 47</p> <p>It is preferable that dyslexic students learn the skills of taking their own lecture notes than lecturers give teaching materials to them, on request.</p>
<p>20 (h) Facilitative approach to support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> we encourage students to go and find out through the intranet...they only have to access these information to know what is and is not available in the university. 44 I am always here to guide and give support whenever they need my help.... 	<p>Item 48</p> <p>Lecturers should guide dyslexic students to seek rather than give information on support provisions available to them in the university.</p>

PREVALIDATED QUESTIONNAIRE**Dyslexic students and academic support in higher education
'A survey on the views of lecturers'**

As part of an MPhil/ PhD research programme you are kindly asked to spend a few minutes of your time to complete this questionnaire. It is designed to establish the views of lecturers concerning (a) teaching and learning and (b) academic support of students with dyslexia in higher education. The questionnaire is presented in three sections.

Any information you give will not be identifiable as coming from you and anonymity is assured in any dissemination of this research.

Please kindly complete and return the questionnaire in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope, as applicable.
Your contribution in this study is most appreciated.

Section -A**Personal details**

Please enter your personal details and where necessary place a tick or 'X' in the box as appropriate.

1. The name of your:

(a) Institution

(b) Faculty

(c) School/subject area

2. Your occupational status.

(a) Lecturer

(b) Senior lecturer

(c) Other (Please specify)

3. Please indicate whether you are full or part time employed. (a) Full time (b) Part time

4. Approximate number of years you have been teaching.

(a) Less than 2 years

(b) 2 - 5

(c) 6- 10

(d) 11-20

(e) More than 20 years

5. Type of students you currently teach.

(a) Undergraduate

(b) Post-graduate

(c) Both

(d) Other (please specify)

6. Do you teach students with dyslexia in your school?

(a) Yes

No

Do not know

(If your answer is 'No/Do not know', please still proceed with the questionnaire as far as you can)

7. Have you attended dyslexia awareness training as part of your academic role?

(a) Yes

(b) No

8. Please rate your knowledge of dyslexia in the scale provided below:

Very good 5 4 3 2 1 Not good at all.

9. Please rate your ability to provide dyslexia related academic support to students.

Very good Not good at all.

Section B

Questionnaire

The abbreviations above each statement on this 5- points scale are from 'Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree' as indicated below:

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

Please indicate extent to which you agree or disagree by placing a tick in the box that most closely represents your views.

		SA	A	U	D	SD
10	Since dyslexia is protected by the disability policy of higher education it should be treated strictly as a disability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Dyslexic students are generally as independent in their coping as their non-dyslexic peers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Given appropriate support, most dyslexic students should experience minimal learning difficulties in higher education .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Dyslexic students often work harder than their non-dyslexic peers in producing their written works.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	It is important for dyslexic students to assert their rights in order to gain individualised support in the university.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	An effective way for lecturers to develop the learning potentials of dyslexic students is by stressing more on their strengths than their learning difficulties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Dyslexic students often depend on dyslexia support provisions of the university in order to cope with their own learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	It is preferable that dyslexic students seek their own support provisions than lecturers act on their behalves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	It is important that lecturers, teaching dyslexic students, have a good knowledge of dyslexia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	Dyslexic students should take every advantage of university support provisions given to them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	Dyslexic students are as autonomous in their learning as their non-dyslexic peers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	Dyslexia is a different way that dyslexic students often learn.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	Lecturers should act as a guide than be knowledgeable practitioners of dyslexia support.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

23	Dyslexic students should seek the help of dyslexia experts more than the support of their lecturers.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
24	For effective teaching, it is important that lecturers have a good understanding of the specific learning difficulties of their individual students.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
		SA	A	U	D	SD
25	Lecturers, as academics, should hardly be expected to be highly knowledgeable about specific disabilities of individual students in higher education.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
26	Given appropriate support, most dyslexic students have the ability to be as successful as their non-dyslexic peers in their own studies.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
27	Dyslexic students seek support of their lecturers more often as compared to their non-dyslexic peers.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
28	Dyslexic students often show special strengths in their ability to learn.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
29	Dyslexic students often appear to be generally less confident as compared to their non-dyslexic peers.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
30	It is important that students, declaring their dyslexia, follow every advice and instruction given to them in the university	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
31	An effective way for lecturers to develop the learning potentials of dyslexic students is by emphasising more upon their strengths rather than their weaknesses.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
32	Dyslexic students often appear to be generally less capable in coping with their studies as compared to their non-dyslexic peers	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
33	Providing good academic support to dyslexic students is for lecturers to focus more upon their specific weaknesses rather than underlying strengths.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
34	An effective way for dyslexic students to secure support provisions is by familiarising themselves with the dyslexia policy of the university.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
35	Dyslexic students, experiencing difficulties in searching for their own reading materials, should be given extra copies on request.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
36	An effective way for dyslexic students to deal with the learning difficulties is by, first, acknowledging their own strengths they often possess.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
37	Marking the scripts of dyslexic students differently from that of their non-dyslexic peers compromises academic standard.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
38	A dyslexic student, experiencing specific learning difficulties during a class activity, should be allowed to opt out on request.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
39	A good lecturer is one who puts priority on the whole class in preference to the individual needs of students.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
40	Higher education should allow dyslexic students to take alternative forms of assessments, on request.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
41	Dyslexic students should be aware of their personal problem/needs prior to claiming for support provisions in the university.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف

42	Primarily, it is the responsibility of the dyslexic students to approach lecturers for dyslexia support.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
43	Dyslexic students should be allowed to use electronic learning facilities that may, often, be different from those used by their non-dyslexic peers in the class.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
44	Lecturers should guide dyslexic students to seek information on support provisions for themselves than given to them, on request.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
		SA	A	U	D	SD
45	Dyslexic students are expected to participate as much as their non-dyslexic peers in classroom activities.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
46	It is the personal tutor who should arrange for dyslexia support on behalf of the student than the student approaching every lecturer for personal support.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
47	It is preferable that lecturers provide dyslexic students with relevant information on university support provisions than letting them search for themselves.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
48	Written works of dyslexic students should be marked flexibly by making allowances for their reading and writing difficulties.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
49	It is preferable that dyslexic students learn the skills of taking their own lecture notes rather than lecturers giving teaching materials to them, on request.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
50	. It is preferable that dyslexic students face the challenges of searching their own reading sources than lecturers giving extra reading materials to them as and when they request.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
51	Allowing dyslexic students to take alternative forms of assessments is unfair to their non-dyslexic peers.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
52	A good lecturer is one who puts priority on the individual students in preference to the whole class needs.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
53	Dyslexic students should not be allowed to use special electronic learning facilities that may distract other students in the class.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
54	Giving lecture notes to students prior to a teaching session promotes effective learning.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف

Section - C

Please use this space for general comments or to clarify any of your answers.

Thank you for taking time to be part of this study

For further enquiry please address to: J.Busgeet, xxxx

Tel: xxx. E-mail: T.Busgeet@xxxx

Appendix D**Reminder of research questionnaire**

Dear colleague,

In June' 2004 I sent a research questionnaire entitled 'Dyslexia in Higher education' for your kind attention. However, due to a limitation in the return of the completed questionnaires I am sending a reminder to all colleagues. If you have already sent me the completed questionnaire please kindly accept my apology as I have no record of those respondents who have already sent me one. May I seize the opportunity in thanking you again for your kind contribution in this study.

However, have you had no opportunity to look upon it may I kindly urge you to spare a few minutes of your time to complete the attached questionnaire and return it to me in the self-addressed envelop.

May I assure you that any information you give will not be identifiable as coming from you and anonymity is assured in any dissemination of this research.

The name and address of my research supervisor is:

XXX

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

Busgeet (Mr)

Address: XXX

Appendix E**Letter of request to directors seeking permission to conduct research in their respective departments**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am conducting an Mphil/Phd research study on academic support of dyslexic students in higher education. As such, the study aims to explore the views of the academic members of the staff about their preferred approach to teaching and learning and relationship this may have towards specific support of dyslexic students with special needs.

I shall be grateful if you would kindly allow me to approach members of your teaching staff within the faculty, inviting them to complete a validated questionnaire and return them to me through the post.

May I assure you that the study is totally unobtrusive and as such it does not seek personal details of either staff or students with/without special needs. I also pledge to assure you that any information received will not be identifiable, as coming from your institution and anonymity will be maintained in any dissemination of this research.

Please find attached a copy of the questionnaire with supporting letter addressed to the participants of the study.

I endeavour to complete the collection of all data from your institution within two months from the time I obtain permission.

The name and address of my research supervisor who can be contacted, if necessary, is:

XXX

Thanking you in anticipation of your kind support in this study.

Yours sincerely,

XXX

Appendix F**Letter of request to participants to complete questionnaire**

Dear colleague,

I am conducting an Mphil/Phd research study on academic support of students with dyslexia in higher education. As such, I am seeking the views and practices of lecturers.

I shall be grateful if you would kindly complete the attached validated questionnaire and send it back to me in the enclosed self-addressed envelop.

May I assure you that any information you give will not be identifiable as coming from you and anonymity is assured in any dissemination of this research.

The name and address of my research supervisor is:

XXX

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

J.Busgeet (Mr)

Address: XXX

The main questionnaire
Dyslexic students and academic support in higher education
'A survey on the views of lecturers'

As part of an MPhil/ PhD research programme you are kindly asked to spend a few minutes of your time to complete this questionnaire. It is designed to establish the views of lecturers concerning (a) teaching and learning and (b) academic support of students with dyslexia in higher education. The questionnaire is presented in three sections.

Any information you give will not be identifiable as coming from you and anonymity is assured in any dissemination of this research.

Please kindly complete and return the questionnaire in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope, as applicable.
Your contribution in this study is most appreciated.

Section -A

Personal details

Please enter your personal details and where necessary place a tick or 'X' in the box as appropriate.

1. The name of your:

(a) Institution (b) Faculty (c) School/subject area

2. Your occupational status.

(a) Lecturer (b) Senior lecturer (c) Other (Please specify)

3. Please indicate whether you are full or part time employed.

(a) Full (b) Part

4. Approximate number of years you have been teaching.

(a) Less than 2 years (b) 2 - 5 (c) 6- 10 (d) 11-20 (e) More than 20 years

5. Type of students you currently teach.

(a) Undergraduate (b) Post-graduate (c) Both (d) Other (please specify)

6. Do you teach students with dyslexia in your school?

(a) Yes No Do not know (If your answer is 'No/Do not know', please still proceed with the questionnaire as far as you can)

7. Have you attended dyslexia awareness training as part of your academic role?

(a) Yes (b) No

8. Please rate your knowledge of dyslexia in the scale provided below:

5 4 3 2 1

Very good Not good at all.

9. Please rate your ability to provide dyslexia related academic support to students.

Very good Not good at all.

Section B

Questionnaire

The abbreviations above each statement on this 5- points scale are from 'Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree' as indicated below:

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

Please indicate extent to which you agree or disagree by placing a tick in the box that most closely represents your views.

10	Dyslexic students are generally as independent in their coping as their non-dyslexic peers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Given appropriate support, most dyslexic students should experience minimal learning difficulties in higher education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	It is important for dyslexic students to assert their rights in order to gain individualised support in the university.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	An effective way for dyslexic students to deal with the learning difficulties is by, first, acknowledging their own strengths they often possess.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Dyslexic students often depend on dyslexia support provisions of the university in order to cope with their own learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Dyslexic students should be aware of their personal problem/needs prior to claiming for support provisions in the university.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	It is important that lecturers, teaching dyslexic students, have a good knowledge of dyslexia.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Dyslexic students should take every advantage of university support provisions given to them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Dyslexia is a different way that dyslexic students often learn.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	Dyslexic students should seek the help of dyslexia experts more than the support of their lecturers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	For effective teaching, it is important that lecturers have a good understanding of the specific learning difficulties of their individual students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	Lecturers, as academics, should hardly be expected to be highly knowledgeable about specific disabilities of individual students in higher education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	Given appropriate support, most dyslexic students have the ability to be as successful as their non-dyslexic peers in their own studies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	Dyslexic students usually seek support of their lecturers more often as compared to their non-dyslexic peers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	SA	A	U	D	SD
24 Dyslexic students often appear to be generally less confident as compared to their non-dyslexic peers.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
25 It is important that students, declaring their dyslexia, follow every advice and instruction given to them in the university.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
26 An effective way for lecturers to develop the learning potentials of dyslexic students is by first stressing more on their strengths rather than their learning difficulties.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
27 Dyslexic students often appear to be generally less capable in coping with their studies as compared to their non-dyslexic peers.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
28 Dyslexic students, experiencing difficulties in searching for their own reading materials, should be given extra copies on request.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
29 A dyslexic student, experiencing specific learning difficulties during a class activity, should be allowed to opt out on request.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
30 A good lecturer is one who puts priority on the whole class in preference to the individual needs of students.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
31 Higher education should allow dyslexic students to take alternative forms of assessments, on request.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
32 It is preferable that dyslexic students seek their own support provisions than lecturers act on their behalves.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
33 Primarily, it is the responsibility of the dyslexic students to approach lecturers for dyslexia support.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
34 Dyslexic students should be allowed to use electronic learning facilities that may, often, be different from those used by their non-dyslexic peers in the class.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
35 It is the personal tutor who should arrange for dyslexia support on behalf of the student than the student approaching every lecturer for personal support.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
36 It is preferable that lecturers provide dyslexic students with relevant information on university support provisions than letting them search for themselves.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
37 Written works of dyslexic students should be marked flexibly by making allowances for their reading and writing difficulties.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
38 It is preferable that dyslexic students learn the skills of taking their own lecture notes rather than lecturers giving teaching materials to them, on request.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف
39 Dyslexic students often work harder than their non-dyslexic peers in producing their written works.	ف	ف	ف	ف	ف

Section - C

Please use this space for general comments or to clarify any of your answers.

Thank you for taking time to be part of this study

For further enquiry please address to: J.Busgeet, xxx Tel:xxx. E-mail: xxx

Appendix H

The survey comments – Main questionnaire

Lecturers' views and Understanding of Dyslexia, the Dyslexic students and Support

Lecturers' views and understanding of Dyslexia

Lecturers' awareness of dyslexia:

Lecturers' views of dyslexia as a specific learning difficulty in Higher Education were further developed through the thematic analysis of data derived from respondents' comments into the survey questionnaire (see details in section ...). In that, two broad conceptions emerged: (a) Lecturers' understanding and knowledge of dyslexia and (b) lecturers' attitude towards dyslexia as a specific learning difficulty.

Generally, lecturers acknowledged a limitation of dyslexia awareness and the ability to support students. Implicit into their statements, lecturers acknowledged a need to develop their understanding of dyslexia.

Although I have taught in school I feel I have limited knowledge of dyslexia. (R13)

Feel generally the need myself to know more about dyslexia. (R256)

...I don't know enough about dyslexia ... (267)

One lecturer, having attended dyslexia awareness training this was, nevertheless, focussed mainly on support provisions rather than raising dyslexia awareness and problems dyslexic students often experience.

I have received in-service training on dyslexia whilst teaching in an FE/HE collegeI. But it focussed on materials/resources (R265)

Among those lecturers who never attended awareness training some of them stated that they had, nevertheless, some knowledge of dyslexia as a result of having contact with dyslexic students during the course of their work.

Within my limited first hand experience,... (R290)

.....as a lecturer my knowledge and ability to support these students has not developed much, except via experience. (R218)

Five members of the academic staff, however, declared personal experience and knowledge of dyslexia either being themselves dyslexics or someone in the family. Some of these lecturers appeared to have had developed their own knowledge of dyslexia through personal interest as dyslexics and, as a result, gained a better understanding of dyslexia and sensitivity to support dyslexic students compared to their non-dyslexic counterparts.

I may have more awareness than other lecturers regarding dyslexia as I am dyslexic myself. (R13)

I am dyslexic myself. Dyslexia is not a disease and does not make me cripple. I have it, I live with it.... Dyslexics should get real & in the real world.... The last thing I want us to be cured. (33)

My experience of dyslexia comes mainly from my family, my father and brothers both being dyslexics. (R47)

Have dyslexia myself + now crossed over to teach.... (243)

I am dyslexic but did not realise it until I started researching the topic and consulted the British Dyslexia Association. (296)

Some lecturers expressed a willingness to support their students but were frustrated for lack of support and guidance to do so in their respective schools.

I've had some students in class with dyslexia, and have been unable to get advice about how to mark & support their studies.... (R252)

However, respondents expressed a lack of opportunity in the utilisation of dyslexia and related expertise currently existed among members of the academic staff, as one lecturer put it,

...we do not make the most of the expertise we have (R283)

Nonetheless, there was a general acknowledgement about the importance of dyslexia awareness training for the academic staff in order to better support students with special needs in their respective schools.

It is an area I note that I personally need to develop (lack at understanding of issues and help often I can give dyslexic students). (R218)

Tutors need more awareness of dyslexic difficulties and students' needs.(R266)

Lecturers should be aware of different disabilities and how that may affect a student's learning,(R295)

Lecturers' views and attitudes towards dyslexia:

Among the lecturers who commented some of them expressed variety of views and attitude towards dyslexia that could potentially have both a positive and a negative impact upon the academic support of dyslexic students in higher education. While one lecturer stated,

...dyslexia is not a disease nor curable ... (R19)

another, herself being a dyslexic, stated that

Dyslexia is not a disease and does not make me cripple..... There are some things we can do and some we can't. Most things we do better think differently. The last thing I want us to be cured.(R33)

If we treat as inadequate cripples we dehumanise them (dyslexic students). (R 225)

Dyslexia was often viewed as an obstacle to studies in certain courses, depending upon the academic demand put upon the students. Often, some dyslexic students developed a different way of coping as a result of such difficulties,

...a hindrance to studies that required higher level of writing skills, whereas, courses requiring little writing skills such as (Theatre, Art and Design studies) were viewed favourably by the dyslexic population. (??R)

....different way of coping by some dyslexic students (??R19)

It is interesting to find that while dyslexia was generally viewed as a genuine learning difficulty some lecturers expressed doubt about it, depending upon their past experiences and knowledge of dyslexia as a hidden disability.

While one lecturer stated the genuineness of dyslexia as

a 'real' problem among students. (R296)

another wondered whether dyslexia was a socially manipulated phenomenon, rooted into child education as political correctness.

... I do sometimes wonder if working class kids with reading/writing problems are seen as 'thick', whereas middle class ones 'dyslexics' ! (R286)

A few members of the academic staff were uncertain and, therefore, had doubt about the genuineness of dyslexia as a specific learning difficulty among the adult population, such as:

.... I am unconvinced that they do have these difficulties.....some 'dyslexics' are able to convince LEAs/HEIs and receive lucrative support packages.(240)

.... I wonder if some students use it (dyslexia) as an excuse.dyslexia to be a wide ranging spectrum.(R256).

Some people/tutors are still resistant to change...(R266)

The case for dyslexia as our actual condition has yet to be fully made. - controversial.(R272)

Declaring dyslexia by students was also seen as a disadvantage to some dyslexic individuals in securing certain types of employment such as teaching in the primary schools, as one lecturer put it

... schools are unlikely to employ them if they declare themselves a dyslexic.(R291)

Also 3 lecturers showed concern about the risk of lowering academic standard as a result of dyslexia and support of students. This concern was raised, particularly, with relevance to some of the courses requiring a higher standard of literacy and writing ability, such as language and teaching courses; whereas uptake of courses such as Art and Designs were viewed as more popular among the dyslexic students..

Academic standard must be paramount.....(R128)

... thus sometimes standards in literacy cannot be waived.(R298)

It is also interesting to find that higher education studies with reference to some courses was, perhaps, still being viewed from an elitist perspective that belonged to those few with higher intellectual ability. Or, perhaps, students with special needs being categorised among individuals with lower than average intellectual ability or those with behavioural problems.

We don't make special allowances for people with ADHD, substance abuse problems or low I.Q. on degrees..... (R225)

Lecturers' views about students with dyslexia

The strengths of the dyslexic students:

The thematic analysis put further insight in support of the 'Individual' perspective of dyslexia and the dyslexic students, alongside a Medical and Difference models. In that, three themes appeared to emerge about lecturers' conceptions of the dyslexic students (see details in section -): (a) The dyslexic students with strengths (b) The dyslexic students with weaknesses or limitations and (c) The dyslexic students as individuals with personal needs and problems. The 'Individual' perspective views the dyslexic student as someone unique and, hence, having unique problems and needs that could not be compared with any other student with or without specific learning difficulties.

'The dyslexic students with strengths' was seen akin to the 'Different' model of dyslexia and, hence, consistent with Bricman's Compensatory model to Help and Coping. In that, some lecturers viewed the dyslexic students as someone possessing, often, specific strengths as a result of their 'different' way of learning. They are often perceived as highly motivated individuals, thorough, conscientious and hard working individuals, often leading to high academic and career success.

.... In practical work they do as well strengths and confidence They must be able to reach that standard..... (150)

.... differences between dyslexic students in their ability to cope & adapt....(R194)

.... dyslexic students are usually 'self-starting', highly motivated and articulate.(R239)

Some of these students were seen to have developed their own coping strategies, often without being aware of their specific learning difficulties

... questioned thoroughly, her written work was immaculategained a 1st class Honours degree..... (R144)

..... dyslexia which they did not know they had. They have achieved despite their learning difficulties... very successful business woman...(R296)

Some dyslexic students were able to cope with their studies independently without the need for extra support. Their strengths were related to their personal characteristics and level of confidence they often developed as a coping strategy.

Many dyslexic students do not seek help, others are very assertive. (R283)

Some lecturers noticed that dyslexic students, often, possessed special attributes, typical to dyslexia characteristics, such as:

able to communicate much better if allowed to use new technologies. (R124)

Many students with dyslexia produce better work than non-dyslexic students because they take responsibility for themselves. (R225)

A dyslexic that has got to HE probably has strategies we should be learning from!....(R259)

The limitations of the dyslexic students:

As well as some of the special strengths that dyslexic students appeared to demonstrate some lecturers also picked upon the limitations that some dyslexic students were likely to show as learners during the course of their studies. The dyslexic students with weaknesses were seen akin to Bricman's Medical model of help and coping. In that, lecturers commented broadly in two specific areas: the specific characteristics of students with dyslexia and, secondly, in relation to the need for specific support for effective coping. Some dyslexic students were found lacking in confidence and assertiveness to cope with their studies. While some dyslexic students were often found coping well in the practical parts of their studies, as some lecturers suggested earlier, they were found to be lacking in confidence and often struggled, particularly, in the area of literacy such as reading and writing.

.... Some do struggle(R271)

.... some of whom were rarely confident and assertive,.... in need of great deal of support.....(R238)

.... of text can be a fertile ground for students with less confidence in their written skills(R223)

....struggle with logical sequencing;.... it is essential that they employ all available strategies for effective & accurate communication. (R144)

One lecturer with dyslexia put the manifestations of dyslexia as a mixture of both weaknesses and strengths as a result of dyslexia.

There are some things we can do and some we can't. Most things we do better because we think differently. (33)

As a result of specific difficulties, coupled with high literacy demand imposed upon the dyslexic students in higher education, some of these students were perceived as demanding of the lecturers' time and support. These members of the academic staff often felt overstretched with workload.

Dyslexic individuals are often demanding 'unrealistic concern' in behaviour.(R 256)

....too heavy a teaching load, etc. (R224)

Although lecturers found each dyslexic student as individuals with different severity of dyslexia and needs, they also found that as much as some dyslexic students were highly motivated others were lacking in the willingness to learn. Research showed that dyslexic students can lose interest in the areas of reading and writing due to their specific learning difficulties ().

.....dyslexia to be a wide ranging spectrum.(R256).

.... differences between dyslexic students in their ability to cope & adapt....(R194)

..... Dyslexic students can be lazy just like their non-dyslexic counterparts....(R263)

Often some dyslexic students were perceived with suspicion regarding claim for support, as one lecturer put it

Dyslexia is used as an excuse by some students to obtain support benefits.

While some dyslexic students coped effectively without the need for extra support some lecturers also acknowledged that some dyslexic students, nevertheless, required support as they often seemed to struggle with their studies. Although seeking of support by students is not to be perceived as a sign of weakness there is a need on the part of some dyslexic students for support as a level playing field, especially in an exclusive system of education.

...others (dyslexic students) were in need of great deal of support (R238)

The individuality of the dyslexic students:

Lecturers' views of the dyslexic students were not only based upon their strengths and weaknesses but were also perceived as individuals with unique problems and needs.

Some lecturers commented that:

...dyslexic students are just as 'diverse' as non-dyslexic students.....(R47)

It is impossible to generalise about the differences between dyslexic + non-dyslexic students....Each student is different. (R263)

Students with dyslexia are very variable in their specific needs and responses to learning...(R268)

However, while lecturers held the individuality of the dyslexic students they also stated that some dyslexic students were unaware of their problems and, as such, retained their individuality without the need for support

..... often the case, that students are not aware that they have dyslexia (R140).

Interestingly, however, it is worth noting that the 'Individual' model of the dyslexic students seems to emerge as a, somewhat, separate concept from that of the 'Medical' and the 'Different' model of dyslexia. In that, lecturers seemed to view the dyslexic student as unique individuals with individual learning needs as opposed to specific strengths or weaknesses.

Lecturers' views of the dyslexic students' role and responsibilities

In the survey comments lecturers identified four areas where they had an expectation of the dyslexic students to take shared responsibility towards their own learning needs. These are (a) the students' awareness of their own strengths and limitations and the development of own coping strategies, (b) the need to learn independently, (c) taking shared responsibility towards seeking dyslexia related support and (d) the need to declare their dyslexia in order to access support.

The need for the dyslexic students to be aware of their own strengths/limitations and coping strategies:

Here, especially the post-graduate students with dyslexia were perceived as mature adults, ready to be able to take some responsibility of their own learning needs and coping in higher education.

... trainees, by the time they reach the PGCE have a good understanding of their own learning needs, whether dyslexics or not.....trainees with dyslexia have a range of self-generated support methods,(R290)

Graduates should be independent + aware of own strengths + how to allow for their weaknesses (R225)

Often, lecturers were faced with dilemma between supporting the dyslexic students and fostering independence and self-reliance upon their own learning, a skills that draws a fine balance between the role of the lecturer towards the students in higher education and student's responsibility towards the self.

....to walk a fine line between empowering dyslexic students by providing special facilities and disempowering them by emphasising their differences and reliance on these facilities. (245)

The need for the dyslexic students to learn independently:

Lecturers preferred to see the students with or without specific learning difficulties to take personal responsibility and actions as self-regulating autonomous learners.

However, some of the lecturers acknowledged the need to develop such a skill into the students in higher education.

It is an extremely hard challenge balancing the (specific) needs of the student against the personal development that all students need to go through as part of their academic development. (276)

..... it is important for any student (dyslexic or otherwise) to be proactive in seeking assistance needed.

It is important for success that all students avoid a dependency "learned helplessness" culture. (257)

Students should be encouraged to help themselves rather than expecting tutors to do everything for them. (R266)

Students should do some learning themselves.. (273)

.....in HE it is the student's responsibility to develop their own learning. (R295)

.....If we are to prepare students for 'life and jobs' they need to take responsibility (R13)

As regard to providing extra support to students with special needs, again lecturers expressed caution where to draw balance between supporting and fostering autonomous learning

.... given extra support but only for as long as their capacity to study independently is not affected. (R43)

The need for the dyslexic students to take shared responsibility towards access to dyslexia support:

Lecturers preferred the dyslexic students to take some responsibility to seek dyslexia related support and viewed this aspect of student's responsibility as an important life-skill beyond university life as future employees and personal coping strategies. Here, the lecturer preferred to guide the dyslexic students to seek support provisions in the university as opposed to acting on their behalves.

Dyslexic students should learn to seek the specialist support they need from the university - they will need to look after their own needs afterwards (in employment).(R110)

...the onus must be on the student to ensure they are getting the appropriate support....(R228)

...have suggested to some (dyslexic students) that they should seek support...(240)

Students should be encouraged to help themselves rather than expecting tutors to do everything for them.(R266)

The need for the dyslexic students to declare their specific needs:

As part of students' responsibility, lecturers also expressed the need for the students to declare their specific needs to them should they require their support.

...A statemented dyslexic needs to ensure that they (dyslexic students) make their institution aware of their individual needs rather than the institution - crystal ball gaze.) (R45)

...the student should provide documentation(R25)

Lecturers stated that support could be more effective and specific provided students came forward and declare their dyslexia to the academic staff.

..... when students approach me directly & outline their needs the support can be more effective.....(R122).

.... has excellent support systems for ITT trainees who declare their learning needs.(R132)

Students with particular needs are asked to place a statement to this effect on assignments to alert tutors.... (174)

However, lecturers also acknowledged the importance to encourage students with special needs to come forward, as one lecturer stated

In my experience, dyslexic students should be encouraged from the start to identify themselves to their lecturers privately..... (120)

Lecturers are aware of the sensitivity of students declaring their specific problems and the need to ensure privacy and trust.

.... there is a climate of trust, where students can discuss their needs (R92)

Lecturers' views of own role and responsibilities

A total of 21 respondents identified the perceptions of their own role and responsibilities towards meeting the needs of the dyslexic students requiring support. Here, dyslexia support is viewed in two broadly perspectives: (a) the role and responsibility of the lecturer (b) the role and responsibility of the support staff.

The role and responsibility of the academic staff:

Out of a total of 21 members of the academic staff only four of them stated that they had a significant role towards support of students with special needs. These lecturers, some of them being themselves dyslexics, acknowledged the importance of developing awareness of the specific needs of students with special needs.

Lecturers should be aware of different disabilities and how that may affect a student's learning, though expert knowledge about the whole range of learning disabilities is not necessarily a lecturer's responsibility (R295)

One lecturer stated that while it was important that students take personal responsibility in seeking support lecturers, too, have a duty to encourage students to seek support.

.....vital that teachers encourage students and.....any specific learning difficulties can be overcome and that they are willing to assist.(R257)

Lecturers should enable students with specific learning needs to access material relevant to their course...(R295)

One lecturer, being a dyslexia support staff, stated that she had the expertise to support students with special needs but unable to do so due to lack of opportunities/organisations within the school.

...we do not make the most of the expertise we haveThere are several staff such as myself who would be happy to provide inset.(R283)

The role and responsibility of the support staff:

However, 21 members of the academic staff did not find supporting students with special needs as their role but that of support staff in the university or individuals assigned into their own faculties. Often these views were strongly put, questioning the legitimacy of the researcher to seek lecturers' views about their role towards special needs of students whence that ought to have been perceived as the role of the support staff in higher education. The response appeared to indicate that some lecturers seemed to view support of dyslexic students as special support separate from that of their academic role. However, this view appeared to differ among the faculties.

Specialist tutors are in place within own institution to pick up early signs of dyslexia. – mainly...(R36)

Institutions vary in their aspirations i.e. information to lecturers re. students with special needs/requirements comes centrally and then is 'reported?' to lecturers.(R186)

I think that the main query for me is whether it is lecturer who should provide information etc or well-founded central learning support services. A good central service is likely to do a better job.(R190)

I don't think every lecturer should have to provide students with info (information) on dyslexia support. (R263)

Lot (of) emphasis on what lecturers should/should not do - we do have able support services. (R112)

...questions ... focus on the 'lecturer' versus the 'dyslexic' student in terms of responsibility - in reality this is mediated /supported by learning support. Lecturers are often dumped on in HE e.g. referred to as 'their' responsibility (R224)

However, even personal support that was academic related was potentially viewed to be more that of the role of the 'personal tutor' than lecturers in general.

Dyslexia support is, primarily, the role and responsibility of the 'personal tutor'. (R23, R36)

Personal tutors are key link in the pedagogic chain within universities.....(R23)

...support is given throughout learning services - Personal Tutors & PDP Tutors when students request further help. (R36)

One of the main and most common reasons for the reluctance of academic staff to involve into the special needs of the dyslexic students was extra workload placed upon them under the duress and constraints of time.

...but time constraints limit the amount of additional support that could be given. (R24)

...the current level of clerical/admin support for lecturers makes it difficult to meet the demands.the lack of hours to provide a properly functional personal tutor service isn't possible. (R180)

SEN in HE wide lecturers do not have the time to develop cognisance of all (students with special needs). (R150)

Generally, the difficulties faced by staff relate almost entirely to a lack of time to prepare 3 or 4 different sets of materials for students with different needs. (R223)

... To throw yet greater time expenditure onto lecturers is now pointless. (R226)

Moreover, lecturers appeared to perceive their main role more as subject experts and facilitators of learning than dealing with the personal problems and needs of individual students with or without specific difficulties.

Personally, I see my role as both a learning facilitator and lecturer.... (R41)

...tutors are academics in subjects, not administrations of support.. (R226)

...I signed up to teach - lecture in, rather , - literature, not basic skills. (R239)

As stated above, I want to deal with English literature - and more so than at present. (R239)

One lecturer, although willing to provide academic support as and when necessary, preferred not to get too heavily involved with dyslexia related issues per se. As indicated above, the lecturer perceived her role as subject facilitator.

... Other than my implementing certain aspects of learning support plans, I would not wish to be involved any more closely with the 'mechanics' of dyslexia. (R239)

Some lecturers also indicated the need for support and awareness for academic staff to enable them to support students with special needs. This view was often expressed with frustrations about lack of support to undertake such a role within their institutions, as one lecturer questioned,

...why lecturers? Where is the support for lecturers?(R226)

The university should provide specialist facilities & support staff to assist - lecturers should have some knowledge of dyslexia but their primary tasks must be to meet the needs of the whole class...(R110)

Issues related to lack of technical support in production of dyslexia friendly materials (i.e. large font/ coloured paper) very time consuming...(R292)

Often, concern was raised about a lack of policy and decision making from higher management about support of students with special needs.

The university should provide details on uni support, not the lecturer.(R228)

There should be a structure in place within the institution through which that information is made available. (R263)

The constraints of resources such as time and financial support were often the causations for lack of management incentives to support students with special needs. This was further amplified by the current culture of university education towards a generalist (group) perspective for teaching approaches as opposed to individual perspective to teaching and learning and support.

Time and money should follow dyslexic students to support lecturers(R273)

The reality of contemporary HE does not allow for the sort of individual attention needed.(R286)

Issues related to lack of technical support in production of dyslexia friendly materials (i.e. large font/ coloured paper) very time consuming....(R292)

Lecturers' views about the nature and approach to dyslexia support

As well as expressing views about dyslexia and the dyslexic students, out of a total of 298 members of the academic staff 37 staff commented about their approach to dyslexia related academic support. These were divided into four broad categorised: (a) support of the dyslexic students during teaching sessions, (b) support in assessment strategies, (c) provision of general support and (d) Challenges posed to support dyslexic students with special needs.

Support of the dyslexic students during teaching:

It is encouraging to find that despite the limitations of dyslexia knowledge few members of the academic staff demonstrated awareness of a multi-sensory approach to teaching and learning for the dyslexic students, that could also benefit other students. However, these staff also showed a greater awareness of dyslexia and interest to support dyslexic students.

...all students.... individual and their needs catered for where & when possible. I believe it is possible to make resources available that cater for a range of abilities and learning styles... (R23)

Good teaching will provide a varied learning experience that attracts and stimulates the whole range of teaching styles preferences. (R128)

I'd do things differently (and expect students to do things differently) in lectures, as opposed to seminars, as opposed to field work, visits, labs, etc.) (R267)

Effective teaching provides learners with different ways of engaging with the content of the sessions taught. (R104)

Few lecturers commented on dyslexia friendly learning environment such as realistic class size in addition to large lecture rooms and approaches to teaching and learning where all students could actively participate in their own learning, an approach that dyslexic students learn better.

There has to be a system in place to ensure that all students benefit from resources not only Spld's. Big lectures are o.k. but there should be provision for in-depth discussions within smaller groups. (R23)

...and where group sizes permit (I) base modules on a 'workshop' format so that students take part in 'active' learning. (R41)

However, some lecturers, although realised the needs of the dyslexic students they, nevertheless, stated that effective learning environment especially for students with dyslexia had not always been possible in the current economic and political climate of higher education.

*When answering your questionnaire I was thinking about 'lectures' (i.e. me, with 100+ students)
(R267)*

The reality of contemporary HE does not allow for the sort of individual attention needed...(R286).

Few lecturers appreciated the specific problems of the students with dyslexia and the need to support during teaching, such as provision of lecture notes, allowing the tape-recording of teaching sessions and the provision of personal supervision.

They (dyslexic students) need close supervision that encourages them to do well. My most important insight came from a dyslexic student who had to tape record his lesson notes for school experience before writing them out....(R120)

Most lecturers supply their notes anyway, all they need to do is to supplement them. (R150)

Should do both - provide with copies then student can add own notes.(R251)

The provision of general support:

A couple of lecturers stated that they had given special academic support to their students with dyslexia, on request.

I have supported dyslexic students through dissertation...that involved huge amount of proof-reading, correction and re-reading and correction....-Facilitates - helps to enable.....What is important is to find out the needs of and accommodate those with their work...flexibly mark undergraduate work, unable to meet the standard for QTS?Additional time is given for examination at E'ts and special arrangements ... made....(R150)

students make different requests (one prefers me to point out grammatical errors when marking, another prefers me to put handouts on the H-drive to access in advance of class, while not receiving a large print version (R252)

However, several members of the academic staff commented on the importance of an inclusive approach to teaching and learning that might benefit all students with and without special needs.

The tutor should have designed & differentiates task which all could be involved with.(R216)

I do think though that all curriculum(s) should aim to include all learners & so dyslexics shouldn't have to ask for further support. It should be built in. (R256)

I think that lecturers should plan their teaching and learning activities so that they do not exclude any student with any learning difficulties.....lecturers should discuss with individual what works for them.(R241)

....attempted to meet their needs by providing varied learning opportunities. All student(s) have different learning styles and therefore different needs, not just dyslexic students. (R249)

If all lecturers presented in accessible ways taking account of diff (erent) ways of learning this should be supportive of dyslexic students....Good teaching for dyslexic people is good teaching for all. (R283)

Effective learning is relevant for all students and considering any special needs of individuals should be addressed through a range of teaching and learning strategies. Active learning is beneficial to all students but particularly helpful for dyslexic students in gaining and developing understanding. (R104)

Support of the dyslexic students in assessment strategies:

In addition to support in relation to teaching and learning some lecturers commented on support of the dyslexic students in assessment strategies and the challenges often this has posed against academic expectations and course requirements in higher education.

The nature of support to dyslexic students in relation to assessment strategies took various forms, such as: Offering of additional time to dyslexic students in examination and written works; offering special support provisions during an examination; allowing to stick 'label' about learning difficulties on assignments as notification of learning difficulties to markers; and offering attendance forms to the dyslexic students for assessments purposes.

..... we do offer attendance forms of assessment...(R25)

More time is needed for dyslexic students to fully engage with learning (particularly written work). Practical work usually has no specific problems. 25% extra time is appropriate for exams/written work. (R248)

I have supported dyslexic students through dissertation...that involved huge amount of proof-reading, correction and re-reading and correction....-Facilitates - helps to enable.....What is important is to find out the needs of and accommodate those with their work....(R150)

....Students with particular needs are asked to place a statement to this effect on assignments to alert tutors who may not know of the situation. (R174)

There was difference of views, however, among the academic staff about provision of alternative forms of assessment for students with dyslexia. Depending upon the nature of the course, such as Performing Arts with lesser demand for academic writing and curricular requirements some lecturers showed a preference towards alternative assessment strategies for their students with dyslexia.

We are considering another form of assessment for dyslexic students. (R248)

Performing Arts often attracts dyslexic students and can find it easier, perhaps, than some other subject areas to create alternative forms of assessment . (223)

However, some lecturers were against the idea of alternative forms of assessment.

..... we do offer attendance forms of assessment....however for the sake of equity, this cannot be 'on request' (R25)

We don't make special allowances for people with ADHD, substance abuse problems or low I.Q. on degrees....(R225)

....alternative assessment is not always appropriate. If however learning outcomes can be met by alternative assessment, then acceptable. (R250)

Similarly, lecturers were also divided in their views about the flexibility in the marking of students' work as a result of dyslexia. While one lecturer demonstrated sensitivity to the written works of students with dyslexia she was, however, unsure about how this could be applied given to the nature of the course requirement, such as Humanity studies and Teacher Training course. In these courses, academic writing have been perceived as one of the most important element for success.

...But we are, so often unsure how this can operate in the humanities where good writing is part of the point of assessment/learning. (R216)

I find that dyslexic students tend to be at a disadvantage more with regard to conventional reading and writing modes.....(R124)

Several other members of the academic staff showed strong disapproval for flexible marking due to the demand for a high standard of writing into their course by students with or without specific learning difficulties. Ability to express in writing remained as one of the core requirements for 'graduateness'.

....I teach 'writing'. In order to pass the course students must be able to write with clarity. (R7)

...flexibly mark undergraduate work, unable to meet the standard for QTS?.....Additional time is given for examination at E'ts and special arrangements ... made....(R150)

QTS students must have a satisfactory standard of written English - no allowance for gaps in marking + strategies must be effective in supporting work in school . (R292)

Part of the discipline of degree -level education is the production of competent essays. If this isn't a possibility for the student I'm not in favour of dropping standards (R286)

BAQTS students have to pass standards of TTA, thus sometimes standards in literacy cannot be waived.(R298)

Challenges posed to lecturers to support students with dyslexia:

Few members of the academic staff commented on the lack of availability of assessment of needs for dyslexic students who had posed lecturers a challenge to

provide support to students. One lecturer commented on the problems of identification of dyslexia for students in order that appropriate support could be put in place early in time. Some lecturers referred students to the Student Welfare for diagnostic tests.

With the university policy of widening access, early diagnosis, particularly in mature students, is an issue.(R92)

... we have sent students to the welfare services of our university to be assessed for dyslexia....(R140)

Hence, one lecturer acknowledged the need for an established system of interdepartmental communication that could improve the effective dyslexia support to students not currently present in their faculties.

...an improved service of information is needed.(R122)

However, not all the faculties had such an experience as one lecturer put it,

Central support services at my institution are very helpful to both staff & student. (R194)

Often concern was raised about lack of facilities in the university with regard to information technology in order to support students in their writing and spelling problems. Even, if such a facility were available they were, often, functionless following breakdown with great adverse effect on the performance of students with dyslexia.

...written works without having used either spell - or grammar checking tools are not helping their cause.(R144)

Where errors result in say a computer programme which does not work, no allowances can be made.(R228)

Several other challenges lecturers experienced towards support of the dyslexic students. One lecturer commented on difficulties dyslexic students often faced to access complex software for which they required specialist support.

We have had problems with students whose needs were too complex to enable them to access specialist software - eg an inability to sequence. (R223)

One lecturer raised the problems of providing special support to dyslexic students due to lack of facilities within her faculty,

...responsibility to provide blown up copies of roles, etc. which are sometimes not easy to provide...(R224)

Lecturers' comments on the survey questionnaire

Out of a total of 298, 17 members of the academic staff commented on the main survey questionnaire.

Themes

Respondent values the study which is focusing on 'lecturers' with the hope this may reveal a need to raise dyslexia awareness among the lecturers.

I value this research in lecturers' views, and hope it reveals the need for training, though I'm new to lecturing.(R252)

Response to questionnaire is influenced due to:

- subject area taught, i.e. 'writing' (7)
- difference in course requirement.(R292)
- needs of the individual student.(R122)

My response may seem inconsistent. This is because I teach 'writing'.....My response would be different if I was teaching a different subject.(R7)

-Responses to questions are complicated by difference in BAC + QTS requirements (final year QTS ... (R292)

-Much depends upon the individual student & the answer may change from student to student. (R122)

-Some questions perceived as difficult to answer due to lecturer teaching in different teaching environment, such as differences in class size.

(R136)

-Sometimes difficult to answer because the term 'lecturer' is used - a lecturer in front of 250 students is in a rather different situation to a personal tutor or even a lecturer in a tutorial with 3 or 4 students.(R136)

Language in questionnaire perceived difficult to respond due to the fact that respondent's institution provide good support to dyslexic students.

(R150)

28 - Difficult to make a generalisation (No 28) - yes, give confidence re strengths but on a 36 weeks PGCE course with 24 weeks in school, 4 major assignments to complete, etc. time is at the essence...(R150)

Language of the question (No 27) is inappropriate in my institution where once identified support is superb.(R150)

Respondent finds some questions difficult to define due to lack of clarity.

(R150, R242)

-Some Q's were not clearly defined & answers were difficult to give definitely, when other factors so often come into play. Also it caused some contradiction in responses, eg. Q's 47, 48 & 49.(R242)

-Some questions unclear and capable of defective answers depending upon the meaning/context.(R150)

Respondent finds one item No. 11 on teaching and learning undermining practice in secondary schools. (R259)

-.....Some questions could imply 'general' treatment of them.(259)

Respondent appears to disagree with wording 'good' as quality of the academic staff.

Some of these appear to be 'trick' questions. (That's bad faith - if 'good' academic psychology) (R239)

Questionnaire appears to generalise students with dyslexia.

(R150, 194, 238, 259, 286)

-Some of your statements above have too many clauses - not always possible to generalise dyslexic students are only 1 (one) of the problems met by lecturers teaching large groups of students with diverse needs.(R194)

-The main problem with answering the above questions was that I have taught a wide variety of ... (R238)

Q11 - is either deliberately controversial or undermines your practice in secondary schools. I hope it's the former. (R259)

-.....Some questions could imply 'general' treatment of them.(259)

Respondent unable to give accurate response to questionnaire items as s/he does not feel there is single answer to dyslexia issues.

- My responses to the questions reflect this because I don't think there is a single answer to many questions about teaching dyslexic students.(268)

Respondent finds difficult to generalise students with dyslexia (due to the manifestation of 'different types of dyslexia').

-In view of the differing types of dyslexia (and associated severity) it was sometimes difficult to make generalisations.(R250)

Respondent opted for 'Unsure' in response to questionnaire due to the fact that s/he does not know enough about dyslexia.

(R267)

- I have opted for 'unsure' frequently, because I don't know enough about dyslexia to be able to make firm conclusions.(R267)

Respondent opted for 'Unsure' in response to questionnaire items since it indicates word 'fundamental' - perceived as a strong word.

-I marked 'unsure' on some because they used the word 'fundamental', which is a strong word. 'Important' or 'unimportant' I would have agreed/disagreed.(R288)

Respondent interprets 'Unsure' in response to questions as 'unable to provide appropriate support'. Although s/he feels confident to give support but is unable to do so due to current constraint in support strategy.

(R180)

-In most of the 'unsure' answers above, I think I know the 'correct' or most supportive answer. However, in reality,.... Unsure' therefore often represents 'unable within current constraints'.(R180)

**The Interview schedule
(Phase 4 study)**

1. Have you attended dyslexia awareness training as part of your academic role?

If yes, - please give some ideas about the training you have attended.

- to what extent has it helped you to fulfil your role towards students with dyslexia in your school?

If no, - would you like to raise your awareness of dyslexia and support of dyslexic students?

- How this is going to help you in your academic role?

2. What are your views about support of dyslexic students, in general, in the school?

Prompts: - Staff development regarding support to students with special needs.

- System of support at school level.

- Resources made available to students with learning difficulties.

- How the dyslexic students are supported?

3. What are your views about the extent to which the managements support students with dyslexia in the school?

4. Academic staff often have personal views about dyslexia in H.E. Please feel free to share your personal views.

Prompts: - Dyslexia is officially recognised as a learning disability through government legislation and students protected by the disability Act in the university.

- University support policy in place.

- Your understanding of dyslexia as a learning difficulty.

5. Do you personally come across students with dyslexia?

If so, - how often?

- how you happen to come across?

- what do you normally do when you are approached by a dyslexic student declaring his/her problem and/or asking for your support?

- what is the nature of support do dyslexic students normally require from you as a lecturer?

6. (a) How confident do you feel in giving support to dyslexic students who require

your support?

- (b) What do you normally do when you feel unable to help a dyslexic student beyond the boundary of your expertise as a lecturer?
- (c) What are the challenges/problems, in your views, that lecturers are likely to face meeting needs of dyslexic students?

Prompts: - time and resources.
 - subject specific.
 - experience and knowledge/expertise about dyslexia.
 - system of support at central and school level.
 - Students in need of support.

- (d) Do you have a system that enables you to follow the student's needs at a later stage in your school? or, do you know if any one else does?

7. Whose role do you think normally should be to support students with dyslexia in your school?
8. What role do you think academic staff have in supporting dyslexic students in your school?
9. What type of responsibility do you think dyslexic students seeking support ought to have towards meeting their own learning needs?
10. Do you wish to say anything that we may not have covered in the interview?
-