



# Perceptions of Success in Dyslexic adults in the UK

Neil Alexander-Passe<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Head of Learning Support, Mill Hill School, London

---

## Abstract

*This paper reports on a reflective qualitative/quantitative study of 29 adult dyslexics and their perceptions of success. It compares depressive (N=22) to non-depressive dyslexics (N=7), with gender, age of diagnosis and academic success variables. Interpretive Phenomenology Analysis was used to investigate dyslexia and perceptions of success. The study uses both quantitative and qualitative data to understand how dyslexic adults perceive any life success, and whilst many were degree educated, this was not seen by many as enough to herald themselves as successful. Many talked about reaching one's potential, but this was seen as a personal goal-setting exercise, with those who felt themselves as unsuccessful creating unrealistic goals. Whilst many were seen by others as successful, again they dismissed this and denied themselves such attributes.*

*From the quantitative data, overall the whole sample felt more successful than unsuccessful (65.4% to 30.8%). Males felt more unsuccessful (45.5% to 36.4%), but females felt significantly more successful (72.2% to 16.7%). The secondary questions gave a number of reasons for this: compared to females, males felt rejected by peers, felt inadequate, frustrated and self-blamed, with the strongest differences in terms of feelings of inadequacy in over 50% of both the depressed and non-depressed males.*

---

## Introduction

The aim of this paper is to study both dyslexia and the perceptions of success amongst such individuals. Each person's definition of success is different, and this

difference is as unique as their many facets of their dyslexia. Has dyslexia held them back, and if so how? Have they re-defined success with dyslexia as a variable? Do they have the same definition of success as their non-dyslexic

---

\* Correspondence to:  
Neil-Alexander-Passe, Email: [neilpasse@aol.com](mailto:neilpasse@aol.com), [www.dyslexia-research.com](http://www.dyslexia-research.com)

peers? Do dyslexics create realistic concepts of potential? Are depressive dyslexics more (or less) successful than non-depressives? Lastly, did their negative experience as an undiagnosed-dyslexic growing up have an impact on their perception of their own success?

## Empirical Review

### What is Dyslexia?

According to Rose (2009) Dyslexia (specific reading disability) is defined as a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed. Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities. It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut-off points. Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor co-ordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia. A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well-founded intervention.

Whilst there are many theories to the cause of developmental dyslexia, many believe phonological deficits are a core function (Snowling, 2000; Thomson, 1996). Whilst research has looked at a medical-based identification, with DNA the most likely candidate (Bishop, 2009; Grigorenko, Wood, Meyer & Pauls, 2000), to date identification has relied upon

educational psychologists to diagnose 'dyslexic-type deficits' through a number of sub skill assessments.

Whilst dyslexia is widely understood to affect reading, writing, short-term memory and associated traits (Thomson, 1996, Riddick, 1996, Miles 1994) there is less information available about how dyslexics interact with society and their environment at large (Scott, 2004; Alexander-Passe, 2006, 2008, 2010). Many ignore dyslexia as a life-long condition that affects individuals from cradle to grave and the emotional/psychological manifestations from such a condition.

Alexander-Passe (2010), Scott (2004), and McNutty (2003) agree that dyslexia is camouflaged in adulthood, due to advanced coping strategies allowing a sense of normality to be projected. Dyslexics are very conscious of their differences, so create a secondary persona to operate in the wider community (Alexander-Passe, 2010, 2012; Scott, 2004). This persona works the majority of the time; however when it cracks can become highly embarrassing, demonstrates how vulnerable they can be, and confirms their otherness compared to their peers.

There is however a shortage of research concerning dyslexia and personal perceptions of success and this paper aims to shed light on this subject.

### Dyslexia and Self-esteem

There is strong evidence to suggest that dyslexics suffer from low self-esteem when they fail consistently at school and that deviant behaviour is a common bi-

product (Morgan, 1996; Kirk & Reid, 2001; Scott, 2004; Hales, 1994; Riddick, 1996; Humphrey & Mullins, 2002). Riddick, Sterling, Farmer and Morgan (1999) and Peer and Reid (2001, p. 5) agree that 'frustration leads very often to antisocial or deviant behaviour' amongst dyslexics, especially those with low self-esteem.

Some pupils might disrupt a class because they interpret the class work as threatening, and use attention seeking to protect self-esteem, according to Molnar and Lindquist (1989). They suggest that if the teacher, in class with pupils, can re-interpret the nature and purpose of classwork (keeping the child's self-esteem), the child's long-term behaviour will change. But most teachers, as Molnar and Lindquist (1989) found, hand out reprimands, as this is the only skill they know that quickly influences a child's present behaviour – a fire-fighting technique. Low self-esteem will also mean the development of a poor or negative self-image.

Such beliefs become self-fulfilling prophecies due to the expectation to fail (Riddick, 1996). Morgan and Klein (2003) note that childhood experiences of being labelled 'thick' and public humiliation caused by failing often results in choices which reinforce low self-esteem. This results in many dyslexics failing in public examinations and leaving compulsory education without the ability to pursue normal career paths (college-university-careers), due to few or no academic qualifications.

Specialist schools or classes for dyslexics have been found to improve self-esteem, especially social and academic self-

esteem (Thomson & Hartley, 1980), and Scott (2004) suggests the best improvements in self-esteem comes from literacy, and the improvement of literacy breaks the difference between dyslexics and their peers, as 'difference' is the core problem.

Empirical studies note correlations between low self-esteem/anxiety and academic failure - more so with dyslexics, as, since Humphrey and Mullins (2002, p. 199) note 'the experience of dyslexics at school has clear and demonstrable negative effects on the self-concept and self-esteem of children'. Riddick et al. (1999, p. 241) indicated 'the powerful mediating effect of literacy performance on how individuals perceive themselves and are perceived by others', suggesting literacy failure can distort the dyslexic's self-perception.

There is significant empirical evidence to suggest that dyslexics leave full-time education damaged by their experience at school, and many leave with little or no qualifications to their name. Thus to achieve any form of success following such trauma manifesting in low self-esteem must be a lot harder in comparison to their peers. This study aims to look at how success can be created out of nothing, in a group of adults who experience depression, in comparison with their non-depressed peers.

### **What is success?**

According to Oxford Dictionaries (2013), success is defined as (1) the accomplishment of an aim or purpose: the president had some success in restoring confidence; (2) the attainment of

fame, wealth, or social status: the success of his play; (3) a person or thing that achieves desired aims or attains fame, wealth, etc.: to judge from league tables, the school is a success, must make a success of my business.

To summarise the above definition one could conclude that success is accomplishing an aim or goal, and in many ways it is aligned with fame, wealth and social status. This will be the basis of this paper.

### **Dyslexia and realistic success (theory)**

To understand how success and dyslexia align, it would be best to start at school, the place where most young people will experience success. But in the case of dyslexics, and according to literature noted earlier, it commonly is a place of trauma and failure. Thus dyslexics rarely experience as much success as their peers, and commonly fail, on a daily basis, in these early environments. Not only this, all their peers are well aware of their failure in tasks which can cause them embarrassment and bullying, along with the development of low self-esteem.

So could one hypothesise that success for a dyslexic could be: surviving each day at school without getting something wrong, and if they did, that no one seeing it; or accomplishing on par with their peers even though the effort required was much greater than would normally be expected.

As the quote goes, 'success begets success', so must 'failure begets failure'. If dyslexics experience failure on a daily basis, then this could be self-perpetuating

(according to the Pygmalion effect by Rosenthal & Jacobsen, 1968; Mitchell & Daniels, 2003; Whiteley & Johnson, 2012). Thus one could ask, are dyslexics less likely to experience (achieve) success? And if they do, will this be comparative to non-dyslexics, who would have experienced a higher likelihood of achieving success?

Another perspective could be given by examining 'Attribution theory' by Seligman (1991) and Seligman, Abramson, Semmel and Baeyer (1979) as a means to combat 'Learned Helplessness'. Seligman discusses how by retuning or reframing an individual's perception of events from global (e.g. I am rubbish at Maths) to specific (e.g. I only find fractions hard) will allow the sense of failure to reduce and a sense of success and mastery to increase. This is especially useful for dyslexics who experience high levels of failure in educational setting.

### **Dyslexia and success (empirical)**

There is a growing body of research that investigates success amongst dyslexics from many perspectives.

To start with dyslexia organisations in the UK and the USA frequently publicise a long list of dyslexics of note (BDA, 2013; IDA, 2013), these range from billionaire businessmen (Sir Richard Branson, Charles Schwab, Ingvar Kamprad), film stars (Tom Cruise, Whoopi Goldberg), politicians (Winston Churchill, George Patton), inventors (Alexander Graham Bell, Thomas Edison), artists (Leonardo da Vinci, Pablo Picasso), scientists (Steve Jobs, Albert Einstein), sports people

(Muhammad Ali, Sir Steven Redgrave), and writers/poets (Agatha Christie, Benjamin Zephaniah).

The most known study is by Logan (2001, 2009, 2010) investigating the frequency of dyslexics amongst corporate management and entrepreneurs. Her conclusions based on a small response rate (43% in the UK study and 7% in the US study) of undiagnosed dyslexics (a screening questionnaire was used) found more self-diagnosed dyslexics as entrepreneurs (from an N=30 US sample). However due to the sample size, response rate and that no evidence of dyslexia diagnosis was required to participate, these findings should be taken with caution.

It is argued that self-employment allows dyslexics the ability to work in their own way, concentrating on strengths, rather than suffering huge amounts of paperwork in middle-management. Success also came through delegating paperwork and other tasks, so they could concentrate on what they do best, talking to people and coming up with novel/divergent answers to problems. Fitzgibbon and O'Connor (2002) support Logan's conclusions that dyslexics are least likely to thrive in a corporate environment.

Whilst dyslexic organisations herald well-known dyslexic businessmen (e.g. Richard Branson, Charles Schwab) as role models, are these realistic? Biographies of such men suggest they delegate all menial tasks (note-taking, reading and writing emails, checking financial forecasts etc.), the tasks dyslexics are typically not good at. This frees them up

to think creatively/divergently, to sell ideas to others, and indulge in risk-taking; skills dyslexics can excel in. Gatewood, Shaver and Gatner (1995); Stewart and Roth (2001), and Logan (2001) would argue that such skills are essential for entrepreneurship. Branson and Schwab have built global empires that are built on them acting autonomously - thus they are the brand.

The most relevant study for this paper is by Fink (2002) who investigated 60 successful men and women with dyslexia (e.g. doctors, lawyers, educationalists, filmmakers, computer programmers, writers, administrators etc.). The aim of the project was to assess how diagnosed dyslexics had attained in prestigious careers whilst battling with literacy problems. Results of the interviews found that: (1) they pursued passionate interests - subjects they were happy to read about and thus improve reading ability with; (2) development of persistence and empathy - to not give up in the face of struggles/problems and to empathise with others with similar struggles; (3) mentors were important role models and supporters in struggling times; and (4) denial of access to chosen careers by others - being discouraged reinforced motivation to overcome barriers.

Goldberg, Higgins, Raskind and Herman (2003) point to findings of a 20 year longitudinal study of successful and unsuccessful adults with learning disabilities (a similar term for dyslexia in the US), with N=47 participants. Interestingly participants were classed as successful by clinical judgement on six domains (employment, education, independence, family relationships,

community relations/interests and crime/substance abuse). Those judged successful had the following variables correlated with success (Perseverance .88, Proactivity .90, Goal-setting .75, Self-awareness .69, Emotional stability .55, Lack of support systems -.84, Emotional instability -.78, Reactivity -.70, Lack of goal setting -.70, and lack of self-awareness -.58). These would support Logan's (2001, 2009) data.

Tulip Financial Group's (2003) study of N=300 UK millionaires found that 40% were dyslexic in a study reported in the media in 2003. Adrian Atkinson, a business psychologist who worked with the study, noted that 'Most people who make a million have difficult childhoods or have been frustrated in a major way. Dyslexia was one of the driving forces behind that'. Millionaires they found knew that mistakes were OK, speed is the key to business advantage, and they work within their strengths. Rene Caraylol, a business adviser and another member of the research team stated of dyslexic millionaires 'They don't do failure, they redefine it. Failure for them is a learning experience that will enable them to be even better. If they fall over, they just come straight back up again' (Sunday Times, 2003).

Many researchers find successful dyslexics, whilst experiencing success, also fear failure; over produce; have a very strong personal self-drive for financial freedom; dream about achieving their goals; are control freaks; extremely self-critical; perfectionists; always striving to do better; have a need for order, are confident; persistent and show stubbornness (Scott et al. 1992;

Wszeborowska-Lipinska, 1997; Reiff, Gerber and Ginsberg, 1997). However, studies of individuals who go on to become millionaires have shown that the proportion of dyslexics among them is four times the proportion of the general population (Stanley, 2002), suggesting such attributes are not necessarily debilitating.

There seem to be counter-arguments concerning self-esteem. Scott et al. (1992) suggest successful dyslexics will: lack self-confidence; self-doubt, have low self-esteem and fear rejection. Whilst Wszeborowska-Lipinska (1997) counters this by suggesting that, as successful dyslexics are not only reaching the heights of their peers but feel the need to surpass them, they therefore require more self-confidence and higher self-esteem than their peers do.

Richardson (1994) and Richardson and Stein (1993) take an interesting perspective on the personality profile of successful dyslexics, looking at psychological factors. Findings indicate that successful dyslexics were eccentric, extroverted and used unusual perceptual experiences (hunches, gut reactions and delusions) for decision making.

A main difference between successful and unsuccessful dyslexics found by Scott et al. (1992), is that they had at least one person who believed in them (mostly their mother) and encouragement of talents and hobbies (also found by Morgan and Klein, 2001 and Thomson, 1996). Thomson also noticed that successful dyslexics were commonly those who 'got by' by being highly intelligent, but were often under-achievers, failing to attain

their potential and sometimes suffering a lifetime of frustration.

Gerber, Ginsberg and Reiff (1992) believe a 'goodness of fit' and the seeking of support systems are two key external factors for dyslexics and those with learning difficulties (an American term which covers dyslexia) to achieve success at work. The 'fit' or 'match' of dyslexic abilities to the employment environment and expectations create success for both employer and employee. Morgan and Klein (2001, p. 130) interestingly contemplate that employers need to be 'aware that whilst some dyslexic difficulties seem like incompetence, they need not necessarily be an impediment to doing the job'. Dyslexics doing jobs differently can also have their advantages, as Klein and Sunderland (1998) found with one young dyslexic labelled a 'slow learner' at school. At 16 years old she went to work for a local factory making electrical components for cars. Her role was basic and routine, but within a short time she had re-wired one of the components in such a way that it was more efficient, used less wire and saved the company large amounts of money.

### **Dyslexics who struggle**

A high percentage of individuals in UK and Swedish prisons with reading difficulties or dyslexia (30-52% of all prison inmates in tested prisons) would suggest that many leave mainstream education unable to find gainful employment and are forced to use illegal means to support themselves and their families (Alm & Andersson, 1995; Kirk & Reid, 2001; British Dyslexia Association,

2004; British Dyslexia Association and HM Young Offender Institution Wetherby, 2005; Dyslexia Institute, 2005; Herrington, 2005). Some individuals with dyslexia (depending on education and severity) may find it very difficult, if not impossible, to learn to read, write or do mathematics (Scott, Scherman & Philips, 1992).

Frequently, adult dyslexics find they lack not only adequate academic and emotional skills, but also interpersonal communication and social skills as well - putting them at a greater risk of a continual cycle of failure.

More recently, UK research highlights the frequency of dyslexia in UK prisons. Rack's (2005) study in eight Yorkshire and Humberside prisons suggested dyslexia was three to four times more common amongst prisoners than in the general UK population, with an incidence of 14 - 31%. He found that 40 - 50% of prisoners were at or below the level of literacy and numeracy expected of an 11-year old (Level 1), 40% of whom required specialist support for dyslexia. He concluded that dyslexia is three to four times more common amongst offenders than amongst the general population, Herrington (2005) reported that the Basic Skills Agency Initial Assessment recorded 60% of prisoners had a reading ability equivalent to or less than that of a 5-year old child.

Lastly, British Dyslexia Association (2004) indicated that problem behaviour amongst young people with dyslexia was often evident before identified as dyslexic, thus it could be argued that their adverse behaviour was the manifestation of undiagnosed learning difficulties.

**Methodology**

**Sample**

Participants were recruited three ways: (1) emails to UK dyslexia newsgroups, (2) adverts on dyslexic web-forums, (3) inclusions on dyslexia associations’ websites. Four dyslexic sample groups were requested (with/without depression, degree/non-degree educated), with dyslexic adults with depression being largest group replying.

All participants were required to provide evidence of: (1) formal diagnosis of dyslexia evidence (e.g. educational psychologist reports), (2) depression (e.g. a clinical depression diagnosis or at least one course of physician/GP prescribed anti-depressants). Whilst mild depression is common in society, only severe cases

tend to be referred for clinical diagnosis. See Tables 1, 2, 3 for sample details. The mean age of dyslexia diagnosis data indicated that non-depressives tended to be diagnosed earlier, however in both groups they were mainly diagnosed post-school and after leaving university.

**Apparatus**

An investigative semi-structured interview script was used with N=24 items (See Figure 1). Interviews lasted between an hour and three hours.

**The Interview Process, Confidentiality, Informed Consent and Personal Disclosure**

All participants were sent details of the study before the interview, and all verbally confirmed participation before

Table 1. Sample data: Size, mean age and standard deviations

	N	Mean age (years)	Standard Deviation
All	29	40.56	12.67
Depression diagnosis	22	42.32	13.0
No depression diagnosis	7	35.14	10.89
Depressed - females	15	38.8	11.71
Depressed - males	7	49.86	11.32
Non-depressed - females	3	18.0	1.63
Non-depressed - males	4	43.5	6.54
Depressed - dyslexia diagnosis	22	28.09	11.83
Non-depressed dyslexia diagnosis	7	22.28	14.77



Table 2. Sample Data: Depressed Participants

Depressed	Age	Diagnosed age of Dyslexia	Gender-male	Gender-female	Degree-educated	Non-degree educated	Depressed at school
Adrian	45	32	X		X		
Brian	70	35	X		X		X
Jasper	59	45	X		X		
Norman	40	33	X		X		X
Anita	47	45		X	X		
Emma	36	25		X	X		X
Maureen	34	27		X	X		
Rachel	40	32		X	X		X
Shelley	61	50		X	X		X
Susan	27	20		X	X		X
Trixie	58	11		X	X		X
George	54	40	X			X	
Ronnie	33	15	X			X	X
Samuel	48	19	X			X	
Andrea	41	39		X		X	
Karen	56	40		X		X	
Kirsty	23	16		X		X	X
Lara	25	20		X		X	X
Milly	37	7		X		X	
Natasha	40	25		X		X	
Norma	29	23		X		X	X
Phoebe	28	19		X		X	X

Table 3. Sample Data: Depressed Participants

Depressed	Age	Diagnosed age of Dyslexia	Gender-male	Gender-female	Degree-educated	Non-degree educated	Depressed at school
Zara	26	8		X	X		
Harry	52	45	X			X	
Jordan	34	33	X			X	
Malcolm	46	36	X			X	
Peter	42	8	X			X	
Izzy	24	5		X		X	
Jean	22	21		X		X	

Please describe how you are feeling today? (*Are you taking any depression medication at present?*)

Please describe your life/yourself? (*I need to create a description of you e.g. age, education, job, character, personality etc*)

Do you enjoy life?

Please describe your childhood? Was it happy? (*e.g. with your family*)

Do you have any siblings? Do you think you were treated fairly/unfairly to your siblings?

Please describe your time at school? Was it enjoyable?

Did you ever get frustrated from your learning difficulties?

What does dyslexia mean to you?

Is dyslexia something positive or negative?

How does dyslexia affect your daily life?

What classic dyslexia symptoms to you have?

Do you think your hobbies help you? Giving you self-confidence?

Do you ever blame your dyslexia for things?

Do you/have you ever resented your teachers at school for not seeing your difficulties?

Do you ever feel rejected? Please explain?

How does failing or getting things wrong affect you?

Do you ever say why me? Why am I dyslexic?

Do/Did you self-harm? Why? What are the triggers?

Have you ever thought about or tried to commit suicide? Why? What were the triggers?

Do you think dyslexia and depression are correlated (linked)?

Did you ever truant/run away from home?

How do you feel going into schools now, what triggers any negative emotions?

Do you enjoy being you? Please explain?

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?**

**What do you think makes a successful/unsuccessful dyslexic?**

**Do you feel you are reaching your potential?**

Figure 1. Interview Script N=24 items. (Alexander-Passe, 2010)

the start of each recorded interview. Participants were also advised that they could avoid any questions that were too emotional to answer and could halt the interview and their participation in the study without reason; fortunately, no participants took this option. As avoidance was noted in several interviews, further investigative questions were required.

Confidentiality was assured at several points: (1) in the original study advert; (2) in email confirmation/requests for basic details (name, age, education etc.); (3) at the start of each interview, (4) advising participants that pseudonyms names would be used.

Each participant was also reassured that they would receive a copy of their transcript which they would have the opportunity to check and modify. As the interviews concerned participants disclosing emotionally painful or frustrating events it was felt best that the interviewer (Alexander-Passe) also disclosed, where required, that he was diagnosed dyslexic at fourteen years old and understood and had experienced many of the difficulties at school that they may have encountered.

## Analysis

Each interview was recorded on audio tape, transcribed, spell-checked with minimal grammar changes; lastly a check was made for readability. The transcript was then emailed to each volunteer for them to check and amend if required, with the opportunity for them to add additional notes or post interview

revelations, as interviews can commonly trigger post-interview thoughts. Interviews were then subjected to IPA analysis.

## Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

IPA is a relatively recent analysis model but has its historical origins with phenomenology and aiming to return to studying living things (Husserl, 1970). This refers to the concept that "to return to the things themselves is to return to *that* world which precedes knowledge, of which knowledge always speaks" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). Husserl was very interested in the life-world, comprising of the objects around us as we perceive them and our experience of our self, body and relationships.

Whilst there are many forms of phenomenology in use (*Idiographic, Eidetic, and Transcendental*), IPA using Idiographic ideals is used in this study. Smith developed Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith, Harré & Van Langenhove, 1995; Smith & Osburn, 2008) to analyse elements of the reflected personal experience - the subjective experience of the social world. Giorgi (1994) argues that phenomenology avoids the reductionist tendencies of other research methodologies, and uses the researcher's assumptions/divergent links to inform new insights from the data, rather than forcing data to fit pre-defined categories.

Such intuition in the researcher allows 'outside the box' thinking. The researcher is an interpretative element to understand themes and body language, compared to Discourse Analysis (Potter, 1996) which

	All %	All males %	All Females %	All Depressed %	Non-Depressed %	Depressed with degree %	Depressed without degree %	Depressed males %	Depressed females %	Non-Depressed males %	Non-Depressed Females %
	N=29	N=11	N=18	N=22	N=7	N=11	N=11	N=7	N=15	N=4	N=3
<b>Feeling successful</b>	<b>65.40%</b>	<b>36.40%</b>	<b>72.20%</b>	<b>63.60%</b>	<b>42.90%</b>	<b>63.60%</b>	<b>63.60%</b>	<b>42.90%</b>	<b>73.30%</b>	<b>25.00%</b>	<b>66.70%</b>
<b>Feeling unsuccessful</b>	<b>30.80%</b>	<b>45.50%</b>	<b>16.70%</b>	<b>22.70%</b>	<b>42.90%</b>	<b>18.20%</b>	<b>27.30%</b>	<b>42.90%</b>	<b>13.30%</b>	<b>50.00%</b>	<b>33.30%</b>
Feeling sensitive to criticism	30.80%	27.30%	27.80%	27.30%	28.60%	18.20%	36.40%	28.60%	26.70%	25.00%	33.30%
Feeling self-blame	34.60%	45.50%	22.20%	31.80%	28.60%	36.40%	27.30%	42.90%	26.70%	50.00%	0.00%
Feeling rejected by my peers	69.20%	72.70%	55.60%	68.20%	42.90%	54.50%	81.80%	85.70%	60.00%	50.00%	33.30%
Feeling misunderstood	69.20%	54.50%	66.70%	63.60%	57.10%	63.60%	63.60%	42.90%	73.30%	75.00%	33.30%
Feeling introverted	50.00%	45.50%	44.40%	45.50%	42.90%	36.40%	54.50%	42.90%	46.70%	50.00%	33.30%
Feeling inferior	57.70%	54.50%	50.00%	50.00%	57.10%	45.50%	54.50%	57.10%	46.70%	50.00%	66.70%
Feeling inadequate	30.80%	54.50%	11.10%	27.30%	28.60%	27.30%	27.30%	57.10%	13.30%	50.00%	0.00%
Feeling helpless when I fail at tasks	65.40%	54.50%	61.10%	63.60%	42.90%	45.50%	81.80%	57.10%	66.70%	50.00%	33.30%
Feeling frustrated	69.20%	81.80%	50.00%	59.10%	71.40%	45.50%	72.70%	71.40%	53.30%	100.00%	33.30%
Feeling alienated	57.70%	54.50%	50.00%	54.50%	42.90%	72.70%	36.40%	57.10%	53.30%	50.00%	33.30%

relies on precise analysis of the words used.

IPA has been used in many research studies (Thompson, Kent, & Smith, 2002; Clare, 2003; Biggerstaff, 2003; French, Maissi, Marteau, 2005).

IPA is suitable for this sample due to: (1) Being 'social model of disability' and inclusion friendly, aiding understanding in special need samples; (2) Allowing flexibility and the ability for themes from initial participants to inform an investigative interview script; and (3) Dyslexic friendly as it does not rely solely on discourse.

### **Analysis Methodology Used in this Study**

This study predominately uses IPA methodology for analysis of data; however the results from the transformations (themes) were then used to create quantitative data, thus mixing qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Nineteen main themes were identified from transformations in the third stage of IPA and two-hundred feelings or aspects were identified for these nineteen themes, displayed in quantitative percentages. The quantitative data was then used to create tables along with interview evidence in the form of quotes (from mean units from the second IPA stage) are used to form each argument/topic for the results.

## **Results**

### **Profiles**

Profile results from this study are drawn

from Table 4. Primary questions were about 'do you feel successful or not'? Secondary questions are drawn from the wider study on depression and emotional coping.

Overall the whole sample felt more successful than unsuccessful (65.4% to 30.8%). However, males felt more unsuccessful (45.5% to 36.4%), but females felt significantly more successful (72.2% to 16.7%). The secondary questions points to reasons for this: compared to females, males felt rejected by peers (72.7% to 55.6%), felt inadequate (54.5% to 11.1%), frustrated (81.8% to 50%), and self-blamed (45.5% to 22.2%).

Looking at the depressive data, depressives compared to non-depressives felt significantly more successful (63.6% to 22.7%), this was due to high feelings of: rejection by peers (68.2%), being misunderstood (63.6%), helpless when failing at tasks (63.6%), frustrated (59.1%) and lastly alienated by others (54.5%). Non-depressives tended to be undecided about feeling successful and unsuccessful (both at 42.9%) and showed high ratings for feeling frustrated with life (71.40%), and misunderstood and inferior (both 57.1%).

Both depressives with and without degrees felt more successful than unsuccessful (63.6% to 18.20% and 27.3%), however those without a degree felt strong feelings of rejection by peers and helpless when failing tasks (both 81.8%), along with frustration (72.7%).

Comparing depressive gender data, females felt more successful than males (73.7% to 42.9%), with lower frequency as

unsuccessful (13.3% to 42.9%). Males felt high levels of rejection by peers (85.7%) and frustration (71.4%). Whilst a smaller sample, non-depressives tend to follow a similar pattern with females feeling more successful than unsuccessful (66.7% to 33.3%), however males felt more unsuccessful (50% to 25%)

## Interview Evidence & Discussion

### Feeling successful

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?** To a certain degree, yes. But I would say it has been very work hard to get where I am. You know, I'm a very stubborn person and if I put my mind to do something, I've always been like that to a certain extent. So yes but I've had to work very hard to get there. (Andrea).

**Do you feel that you are reaching your potential?** No! I think my opportunities to reach my potential were reduced by me being diagnosed too late. I think going back into education when I did, showed that I missed out on so much opportunity.

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?** Yes. I think that in spite of the lack of help when I was at school, I think that I am in professional employment, a professional and I have a higher education qualification, I am happy in my job and happy in my life. **What makes a dyslexic successful?** [Long pause] the main thing for anybody is to be happy, but I think to basically achieve in a world not made for us. It is a difficult one to define. **For me, it is not about having a degree. It is about being happy with where you are at.** Yes, I agree. Whilst I needed to prove to myself I could do it, I

admire anyone who can go further. I do not have an honours degree, as I could not deal with a dissertation. I feel I have enough to stick two fingers up at my old teachers. I just got to the stage where I have a good job, foster kids. The trauma of doing a dissertation was going to be too much. (Anita).

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?** [Laugh] yeh, I would actually... I'm quite pleased and if I was to die today, I feel I have achieved quite a lot. **Do you feel you have reached your potential?** Nowhere near yet. Well... just over half way there. (Emma).

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?** I would like to think I'm as successful as I want to be now, but I want to become more so. **What do you think makes you a successful dyslexic?** Being positive, not bitching about it, moaning about it, not saying 'I'm dyslexic, help me, I have a disability' ... Don't use anything as an excuse, not being dyslexic. If you are going to be successful you will no matter what. Just do not use dyslexia as an excuse. Know when you are wrong and accept it, no one is perfect and that you will make loads of mistakes. To not be afraid of failing as well. **So it sounds like being contented with your life, not resenting your past.** Not resenting it one bit, it's who I am. I wouldn't change anything about my life. (Izzy).

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?** Yes. I think that comparing what I have done to what I could have left school with. I could have left school at sixteen years old and done nothing. I think that I put a lot of the good characteristics of dyslexia, like being

inordinately stubborn to good use and I wasn't going to let people say that 'you can't do this', I've been to university and I have my BA, you know I think I am successful as a dyslexic and I think that dyslexia got me there and I'm not sorry for that. **So what do you think makes a dyslexic successful? Reaching your potential or getting a degree?** I think you have to set your own rating of successful, my view of it might not be suitable for someone else, and I would never tell anyone that my version is the right one. I said I wanted to get a degree and I did, that for me is my success...I do not think you should cramp (judge) anybody else's success, in terms of some people getting through school is a success if they are dyslexic and hate it that much, for them that is success. (Kirsty).

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?** [Pause] yes, as I am not in prison. **Why prison?** So many dyslexics end up in prison. Most cannot read and write. But the fact that I have what I have, with whatever means I have used to get it, makes me successful. I am successful, as I have a lovely family and I am not in prison yet. **Do you think it is a fine line to your past that you might have ended up in prison?** Probably being Jewish is part of why I am not. (Malcolm).

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?** I would say I was successful at hiding it for thirty-three years. I think subsequently I have been told I am successful, people have said to me 'it is really impressive, and you have done really well'. Basically I got half way through my master's course and doing very well before I was diagnosed. They

said 'you have O'levels, A'levels, and an undergraduate degree, and you didn't have any support!...That's fantastic' and I that sort of flipped one-hundred-and-eighty degrees with the feelings I had about it, that I didn't do as well as I should have done, that I could have done better, as there were people now saying 'you did really well, considering all the stuff you had to deal with'. So I kind of probably am, but I don't feel successful in my own camp, so in some ways I kind of... it's difficult. **So other people call you successful but you don't feel it yourself?** Yep. **So what would you need to feel successful?** I think to feel successful; I would need to feel that I was fulfilling my potential in terms of understanding and ability to act. I have had one or two experiences, where I was absolutely stretched and reached for something and achieved it. (Norman).

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?** You are using very ambiguous terms. For some, being successful is the ability to write a letter or an essay for the first time. For me, I think I've done relatively well compared to the average person, I have more than the minimal wage coming in, but there are colleagues doing better than me. We all drive to do better and I know I have done better than some people have [my peers]. **To some dyslexics that having a degree means they are success.** I read about someone who studied for a degree and was dyslexic, but it didn't make them any happier, so I think if I got one I would feel better about myself, it won't change me, it won't take away the years of bullying. I think it's good to get a degree and I would feel better about myself. **There is no right or wrong answers to such**

**questions; I see it is more to do with one's potential. How you judge yourself.** It is about status and stuff. **Some see it about money or about being happy. I would feel happy** to have a degree but it wouldn't make me happy every day. It would make me feel better about my work and my capabilities, so in that sense I can understand that. But it wouldn't make me whole (complete), it's just one aspect to your life. I see the need to do better, that part of me, to conquer it [getting a degree]. (Phoebe).

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?** I might turn it round and say that I am successful and I am dyslexic, which sits more comfortable with me (Shelley).

The quotes powerfully describe how dyslexics feel about success. Attributes noted to success were: stubbornness, hard-working, degree-educated, proving oneself, positivity, not fearing failure, relaxed about making mistakes, and hiding ones dyslexia. Many talk about stubbornness as believing in oneself and ones abilities, such individuals note that move towards success was not being afraid of making mistakes, and seeing mistakes in a positive means to gain mastery in a profession or field.

There were many positive definitions of success ranging from being married to having children. Whilst many agreed that attaining a degree made them successful, others disagreed and said it would just make them feel better about themselves (higher self-esteem) which was a personal challenge.

Norman interestingly remarked that he

was successful as he had hidden his dyslexia for thirty-three years, but was this success? It suggests that only through hiding his dyslexia could he have gained success, a negative perspective. Another negative view by Norman was being successful by not being in prison, as research suggests a high frequency turning to crime as a means to maintain self-esteem (Morgan, 1996; Kirk and Reid, 2001). Shelley was at odds with the term 'successful dyslexic' and preferred 'successful and dyslexic', suggesting that success came despite her dyslexia, not because of it.

### Feeling unsuccessful

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic? No. What do you think you would need to call yourself a successful dyslexic? A degree?** Well. I think a degree is just one milestone to complete. For me at this age, if at a young age I had achieved my degree it would have made an advantage in my life, which would be more than an achievement, to respect myself. A degree is to achieve something that I was not equipped to achieve [when I was younger]. It was not that I was not inspired and that people were not there for me, I just did not do it. (Jordan).

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic? No,** because there is so much more I want to achieve. **Do you feel you are reaching your potential? No. Do you feel you will ever reach it?** I hope so. (Jean).

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?** No, I wouldn't say I was. Perhaps it's just I'm accepting that I am



where I am, I do what I do, and I can't change the past, but there is the opportunity to change the future. To sit back to think and ask myself if I'm successful or unsuccessful? [pause] you can wallow in that for a long time, and then you suddenly realise you have wasted a lot of time, something that's not productive. **Many dyslexics feel that having a degree is their mark of success, to get to that point. But you have that and beyond but still you don't feel you are successful?** I have achieved a lot of things which is quite good, I've stood for [the UK] parliament, I got a degree, I'm now teaching which is something I really enjoy. **Have you reached your potential?** No. There is always more to do. (Harry).

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?** [Long pause] I have to answer that no. **Why?** Because I am never happy with what I have done. **You were comparing yourself with your dyslexic brother with the degrees and qualifications, would you call him a successful dyslexic?** [Long pause] I would not call him a successful dyslexic because he has degrees, I would call him more successful than me because he is more contented with life, whether he is or not I do not know, I do not see him that often. I would hazard a guess he is more contented with life and I am very discontented with my achievements. **Do you think he is happier and more contented because he is reaching his potential?** Yes maybe. **Do you think you are?** No. **Near it?** No. **So what would be reaching it?** When I have a house in Africa, Costa Rica and do not need to work anymore **So it is about money then?** Unfortunately, yes, and that is one

of the things I hate about myself. I used to be incredibly materialistic, crave a nice bike or car, and crave to be seen to have money. I do not care about that anymore, so I am not as materialistic as I used to be. (Peter).

**Would you call you're a successful dyslexic?** Nope, not yet. Every dyslexic feels they have under-achieved don't they. **Do you think when you get a degree that you will be a successful dyslexic?** Yes. No I don't think I will actually, because even if I get it, it would be like, thinking 'I got support, so it's not really me'. **So you think the support you get would take from the value of the achievement?** Yes. **Don't you think getting the support is purely there to be a support; they aren't doing it for you?** In a way, but it still feels like that. (Ronnie).

The quotes above largely describe potential, under-achievement and unrealistic concepts of personal success. Going back to attribution theory, if individuals set very high success criteria and they are unable to reach them, and then they are setting themselves up for constant failure. Seligman would argue that one needs to create smaller and more specific goals, where one can experience success, so that mastery can be experienced and self-esteem can be enhanced. Peter talks about a monetary definition of success, as only through riches can he outwardly be successful and not need to work, many successful individuals carry on working whilst attaining wealth and positions of influence (e.g. Richard Branson is a Billionaire), and enjoy personal challenges. Others in the study talk about

personal definitions of happiness and accomplishing goals. Both are valid definitions.

### Feeling both Successful and Unsuccessful

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?** I probably would have done a year ago when I graduated, as I felt good from that, also I had to do a CertEd as well (certificate of education, a teaching qualification), so for those two years at university, I was also teaching, so I would have said then. But now I have that on paper it really does not seem to be helping me, you know. But I don't know if that is normal or to do with the dyslexia? (Rachel).

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?** Um, I'm very tempted to give two answers. **Okay give both.** If in terms of the world, they might say no. I think for me I have been a successful dyslexic, as I have proved to myself and the world that I'm pretty able and have a lot of talent. At the end of my career as a theatre critic I was admitted to the 'critic's circle of Great Britain', so that's a professional body and means that you're good. **Potential comes up a lot when talking to dyslexics, do you feel you have reached your potential, or working towards it.** I think I am working towards it, I am still frustrated because I feel I should have at this stage have achieved more of my potential than I have, but whilst some of it is due to me, most is due to the frustrations concerning the way the world is. (Trixie).

**Would you call yourself a successful dyslexic?** It is quite funny in this one. In

the material world, I am a failure, because I cannot get a job, which is how most people measure themselves. But in the providing help to others I seem to be quite good at that, and that is helping me understand me, it means when people say 'thank you for helping me' that gives me a buzz. (George).

The three quotes describe different perspectives on success, one talks about gaining a degree and then finding out that that marker for success was useless and that they needed to be more realistic, another talks about others calling her successful but she talks about constantly not reaching her potential, thus she denies her own success. Lastly George brings the study back to outward symbols of success, a degree. However as discussed earlier success is more than academic attainment. He however feels successful in helping others and gaining outward symbols of praise, a simple but powerful 'thank you' by helping others.

### Conclusion

This paper began by investigating dyslexia, dyslexia and self-esteem, defining success, and looking at dyslexia and success from both theoretical and empirical perspectives. There is a growing body of research that supports the concept that dyslexics can do well in life and attain both academically and in professional careers.

However in the eyes of the ordinary dyslexics that struggle through school and in low paid careers, role models heralded by dyslexic groups (e.g. Richard Branson, Tom Cruise, Charles Schwab etc) are

unrealistic, as they are known for vast success, wealth and do not show any of the negative effects they themselves experience on a daily basis, namely: difficulty reading, misreading things, problems with short term memory, and being unable to tie a shoe lace amongst many attributes of dyslexia. It is argued by some (School of Dyslexia, 2013) that when you are rich and famous or work in the creative arts, then it's okay being dyslexia, its trendy, however to reach success in other professions (e.g. marketing, law, medicine, accountancy etc.) it can be a distinct disadvantage.

Logan (2009) is typical of the more recent wave of research that has investigated success and dyslexia, citing a study that argues that dyslexics tend to be more suited to entrepreneurship than working in corporate environments, however with a 7% response rate from her more recent US study, the results should be taken with caution. However the Tulip Financial Group's (2003) study of N=300 UK millionaires found that 40% were dyslexic is another similar study and found that dyslexics were highly resilient and used school failure and frustration as a motivation for success. A much larger sample which gives suggests a more powerful argument.

Other studies have looked at the attributes related to successful individuals, this the author finds more helpful for ordinary dyslexics and practitioners to develop the skills required for successful careers. Fink (2002), Golberg et al. (2003), Scott et al. (2003) note perseverance/resilience, the ability to bounce back after failure, goal setting, proactivity and lastly having support systems in place. This last point is defined as someone who believes

in them, and can assist in the areas they find difficult e.g. reading, writing, organisation. This is commonly a family member, a teacher or a mentor.

The quantitative data in this study found that this sample felt more successful than unsuccessful, with females feeling more successful than males. This was explained as males experiencing more rejection from peers, feeling inadequate compared to peers leading to frustration and self-blame. Interestingly the depressive sample felt more successful than the non-depressives (however most in this study had depressive symptoms), feeling unsuccessful was due again to similar factors: rejection from peers, feeling misunderstood by others, helpless when failing at tasks, which lead to frustration and perceived alienation by others. Non-depressives were undecided whether they were successful or unsuccessful and felt highly frustrated, misunderstood and inferior.

Interestingly, those with a degree felt more successful than not, with those with a degree, feeling rejection by others and helpless when failing leading to frustration. Gender data also shows depressive females feeling much more successful than males, with males feeling rejection from peers leading to frustration.

The interview data adds flesh to the bones of the hard quantitative data, and heavily talks about potential. Whilst attaining a degree and surviving school to reach university, their real success was personally defined concerning happiness with life. They echo the empirical studies, in that their success came from being stubborn, attaining despite educational

struggles/failure, resilience, and hiding their dyslexia. Success came despite their dyslexia, not because of it. It was also noted that success came from not ending up in prison, as many dyslexics do turn to crime for self-fulfilment and for monetary gain. Norman powerfully concludes if he had gained so much without a dyslexia diagnosis, how much more could they have achieved if they had been actually diagnosed and helped at school. One could argue that being the underdog was his motivation for success.

Those feeling unsuccessful talked about not reaching their potential, and whilst other might class them as being successful, they did not and thus struggled to create realistic goals. Unfair family comparison to non-dyslexic or even dyslexic siblings was noted by one, which caused anxiety. Each dyslexic or individual is different, and each has their own abilities and struggles in life, and as noted earlier success is personally defined and this can have a powerful influence on one's mental health. Self-blame and thus self-doubt was noted in the study data, which explains why many in this study denied their success in life.

To conclude, this study has raised interesting questions about personal definitions of success, and highlights that dyslexics can be plagued by self-doubt and unrealistic concepts of potential. Whilst many in the study had gained a degree, this was not seen by them enough to herald them as successful. However personal satisfaction and having a loving family unit was seen by many as more important than status and money. Lastly, it was noted that success came despite their dyslexia and not because of it, and their school struggles gave them

their motivation to prove themselves in life. To end, Shelley argued that she was uncomfortable being called a 'successful dyslexic'; she preferred 'successful and dyslexic', which again discusses the phenomena that having dyslexia will not give you special powers, it is just a learning or life difference.

### **Strengths and Limitations**

Whilst 29 participants took part in the study, 22 were diagnosed as depression and only 7 had no depression diagnosis. The author took the viewpoint that the vast majority of the participants (N=29) suffered one or more depressive symptoms, and that the study would not label any quotes as from a depressive and others from a non-depressive, as this would be misleading and lead the reader to make assumptions. It is striking that even in a sample that is plagued with depressive symptoms, there are greater feelings of success than failure.

This study significantly adds to the literature on dyslexia and success, and indicates that dyslexia adults with a range of achievement levels can be successful even in the presence of depressive symptoms. One of the most striking findings is that over 50% of all males in the sample felt inadequate, in comparison with only 11% of depressed females and no non-depressed females. Moreover, significantly more females felt successful than males. One might argue that this is a legacy of dyslexia for males, whether or not they are successful in later life.

## References

- Alm, J., & Andersson, J. (1995). *Reading and writing difficulties in prisons in the county of Usala*. The Dyslexia Project, National Labour Market Board of Sweden at the Employability Institute, Usala.
- Alexander-Passe, N. (2006). How Dyslexic Teenagers Cope: An investigation of self-esteem, coping and depression. *Dyslexia, 12*, 4, 256-275.
- Alexander-Passe, N. (2008). The sources and manifestations of stress amongst school aged dyslexics, compared to sibling controls. *Dyslexia, 14*, 4, 291-313
- Alexander-Passe, N. (2010). *Dyslexia and Depression: The Hidden Sorrow*. New York: Nova Science Publishers.
- Alexander-Passe, N. (2012). *Dyslexia: Dating, Marriage and Parenthood*. New York: Nova Science Publishers.
- Biggerstaff, D. L. (2003). Empowerment and self-help: a phenomenological methodology in research in the first year after childbirth. In J. Henry (Ed) *European Positive Psychology Proceedings, 2002* pp 15 -24. Leicester: British Psychological Society
- Bishop, D. V. M. (2009). "Genes, cognition, and communication: insights from neurodevelopmental disorders". *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences 1156* (1): 1-18.
- British Dyslexia Association. (2004). *Unrecognised Dyslexia and the Route to Offending. Report of a project between the British Dyslexia Association and Bradford Youth Offending Team*. Reading: British Dyslexia Association.
- British Dyslexia Association. (2013). *Famous Dyslexics*. Retrieved 21st December 2013. <http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/about-dyslexia/famous-dyslexics.html>
- British Dyslexia Association and HM Young Offender Institution Wetherby. (2005). *Practical Solutions to Identifying Dyslexia in Juvenile Offenders: Report of a Joint Project of the British Dyslexia Association and HM Young Offender Institution Wetherby, 2004-05*. Reading: British Dyslexia Association.
- Clare, L. (2003). Managing threats to self-awareness in early stage Alzheimer's disease. *Social Science and Medicine, 57*, 1017-1029.
- Dyslexia Institute. (2005). *The Incidence of Hidden Disabilities in the Prison Population: Yorkshire and Humberside Research*. Egham, Surrey: The Dyslexia Institute.
- Fink, R. P. (2002). Successful careers: The secrets of adults with dyslexia. *Career Planning and Adult Development Journal, 18*(1), 118-135.
- Fitzgibbon, G. & O'Connor, B. (2002). *Dyslexia: A Guide for the Workplace*. Chichester: John Wiley and Son, Ltd.
- French, D. P., Maissi, E., & Marteau, T. M. (2005). The purpose of attributing cause: beliefs about the causes of myocardial infarction. *Social Science & Medicine, 60*, 1411-1421
- Gatewood, E. J., Shaver, K. G., & Gartner, W. B. (1995). A longitudinal study of cognitive factors influencing start-up behaviours and success at venture creation. *Journal of Business Venturing, 10*(5), 371-391.
- Gerber, P. J., Ginsberg, R., & Reiff, H. B. (1992). Identifying alterable patterns in employment success for highly successful adults with learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 25*, 475-87.
- Giorgi, A. (1994). A phenomenological perspective on certain qualitative research methods, *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology, 25*, 190-220.
- Goldberg, R. J., Higgins, E. L., Raskind, M. H., & Herman, K. L. (2003). *Life success for children with learning disabilities: A parent guide*. Pasadena, CA: The Frostig Center.
- Grigorenko, E. L., Wood F. B., Meyer, M. S., & Pauls, D. L. (2000). "Chromosome 6p

- influences on different dyslexia-related cognitive processes: further confirmation". *American Journal of Human Genetics* 66 (2): 715-23.
- Herrington, V. (2005). Meeting the healthcare needs of offenders with learning disabilities. *Learning Disability Practice* 8(4), 28-32.
- Humphrey, N., & Mullins, P. (2002). Personal constructs and attribution for academic success and failure in dyslexics. *British Journal of Special Education*. 29(4), 196-203
- Husserl, E. (1900; trans. 1970). *Logical investigations, I and II*. New York: Humanities Press.
- International Dyslexia Association. (2013). *The Power Of Dyslexia about Famous Dyslexics*. Retrieved 21st December 2013. <http://www.dyslexia.org/2012/05/25/the-power-of-dyslexia-about-famous-dyslexics/>
- Kirk, J., & Reid, G. (2001). An examination of the relationship between dyslexia and offending in young people and the implications for the training system. *Dyslexia*, 7, 77-84.
- Klein, J., & Sunderland, H. (1998). *SOLOTEC dyslexia good practice guide*. London: Language and Literacy Unit.
- Logan, J. (2009). Dyslexic entrepreneurs: the incidence; their coping strategies and their business skills, *Dyslexia*, 15(4), p.328 -346.
- Logan, J. (2010). Dyslexia entrepreneurs and Success in David McLoughlin and Carol Leather (ed.), *The Dyslexia and Employment Handbook 2010*. London: British Dyslexia Association,
- Logan, J. (2001). *Entrepreneurial success: A study of the incidence of dyslexia in the entrepreneurial population and the influence of dyslexia on success*. Ph.D. thesis, unpublished, University of Bristol, UK.
- McNulty, M. A. (2003). Dyslexia and the Life Course. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 36, 336-381.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. C. Smith, London: Routledge.
- Miles, T. R. (1994). *Dyslexia: The pattern of difficulties*. London: Whurr.
- Miles, T. R., & Varma, V. (1995). *Dyslexia and stress*. London, Whurr.
- Mitchell, T. R. & Daniels, D. (2003). Motivation in Walter C. Borman, Daniel R. Ilgen, Richard J. Klimoski, ed. *Handbook of Psychology, volume 12*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. p.229.
- Molnar, A., & Lindquist, B. (1989). *Changing problem behaviour in school*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Morgan, E., & Klein, C. (2003). *The dyslexic adult in a non-dyslexic world*. London: Whurr.
- Morgan, W. (1996). *London Offender Study: Crafting criminals – Why Are So Many Criminals Dyslexic?* University of London: unpublished dissertation.
- Oxford Dictionaries. (2013). *Definition of Success*. Retrieved 12th December 2013. [www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/success](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/success)
- Rack, J. (2005). *The Incidence of Hidden Disabilities in the Prison Population*, Egham, Surrey: Dyslexia Institute
- Reiff, H. B., Gerber, P., & Ginsberg, R. (1997). *Exceeding expectations: Successful adults with learning disabilities*. Austin, Texas: Pro-Ed.
- Richardson, A. J., & Stein, J. F. (1993). Personality characteristics of adult dyslexics. In S. F. Wright and R. Groner, (Eds.). *Facets of dyslexia and remediation*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Richardson, J. T. E. (1994). Mature students in higher education: Academic performance and intellectual ability. *Higher Education*, 28, 373-386
- Riddick, B. (1996). *Living with dyslexia: The social and emotional consequences of specific learning difficulties*. London, Routledge.
- Riddick, B., Sterling, C., Farmer, M., & Morgan, S. (1999). Self-esteem and anxiety in the educational histories of adult dyslexic students. *Dyslexia*, 5, 227-48.

- Rose, Sir J. (2009). *Identifying and Teaching Children and Young People with Dyslexia and Literacy Difficulties*, HMSO: London. Retrieved 20th October 2013. Available from: <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DCSF-00659-2009>
- Rosenthal, R., & Jacobsen, L. (1968). *Pygmalion in the classroom: teacher expectation and pupils' intellectual development*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- School of Dyslexia. (2013). *Its cool to be dyslexic*. Retrieved 21st December 2013. <http://schoolofdyslexia.blogspot.co.uk/2013/11/its-cool-to-be-dyslexic.html>
- Scott, M. E., Scherman, A., & Philips, H. (1992). Helping individuals with dyslexia succeed in adulthood: Emerging keys for effective parenting, education and development of positive self-concept. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 19 (3): 197-204.
- Scott, R. (2004). *Dyslexia and Counselling*. Whurr, London.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (1991). *Learned optimism*. New York, Knopf.
- Seligman, M. E. P., Abramson, L. Y., Semmel, A., & Baeyer, C. V. (1979). Depressive attributional style. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 88, 242-247.
- Smith, J. A., Harré, R. & Van Langenhove, L. (1995). Idiography and the case study. In J. A. Smith, R. Harre & L. Van Langenhove (Eds.) *Rethinking Psychology*. London: Sage.
- Smith, J. A., & Osburn. (2008). Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. In Smith, J. A (Ed.) (2008) *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Research Methods*. 2nd Ed. Sage: London.
- Snowling, M. J. (2000). *Dyslexia*. Oxford: Blackwells
- Stanley, T. J. (2002). *The millionaire mind*. London, Bantam.
- Stewart, Jr., W. H., & Roth, P. L. (2001). Risk propensity differences between entrepreneurs & managers: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(1), 145-153.
- Sunday Times. (2003). *The Mind of the Millionaire*. 5th October 2003.
- Thompson, A. R., Kent, G. & Smith, J. A. (2002). Living with vitiligo: Dealing with difference. *British Journal of Health Psychology*, 7: 213-225
- Thomson, M. (1996). *Developmental dyslexia: Studies in disorders of communication*. London: Whurr.
- Thomson, M., & Hartley, G. M. (1980). Self-esteem in dyslexic children. *Academic Therapy*, 16, 19-36.
- Tulip Financial Group. (2003). *Study commissioned for a BBC Two series 'The Mind of the Millionaire'*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation.
- Whiteley, P., Sy, T., & Johnson, S. (2012). Leaders' conceptions of followers: Implications for naturally occurring pygmalion effects. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 23(5), 822-834.
- Wszeborowska-Lipinska, B. (1997). *Dyslexic students who succeed*. Unpublished paper, University of Gdansk