

# Parent and teacher roles in supporting dyslexic learners

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## ABSTRACT

The present study aims to examine the role of parents and class teachers in guiding dyslexic children at SD Al-Firdaus Surakarta. The present study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, utilizing data collection methods such as interviews and direct observation. The results of the study on parents of dyslexic children yielded several strategies that are generally implemented, including medical examinations by doctors or experts in the field, the hiring of private tutors, the provision of self-confidence and rewards, and the consistent provision of learning assistance after Maghrib. The results of interviews with teachers indicated that comprehensive support from parents and teachers is imperative for enhancing the motivation and quality of learning in dyslexic children. This support encompasses various forms of assistance, including learning assistance, motivation, and the utilization of relevant learning aids. Special Guidance Teachers (GPKs) also play a crucial role in inclusive education, starting from student identification and assessment, curriculum adaptation, personal assistance, to the development of special programs to improve students' reading skills. This study underscores the significance of collaboration among parents, teachers, and GPK in fostering a conducive and supportive learning environment for children with dyslexia. The following text is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the subject matter.

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## 1. Introduction

Reading ability is the key to obtaining information from other fields of study. Reading is the first lesson taught to children when they enter elementary school (Damaianti et al., 2020; Little et al., 2021; Rombot et al., 2020). This is a basic skill for gaining knowledge from various fields of study (Smith et al., 2021). Reading is very important for everyone, including children who have difficulty learning to read, or dyslexia (Hall et al., 2023). Dyslexia is a condition in which children have difficulty understanding the elements of words and sentences (Snowling et al., 2020). Children with dyslexia also have the right to a decent education (Sefotho, 2020). Inclusive education emerged to help dyslexic children get an education (Knight, 2025; Nijakowska, 2022).

Education is one of the rights that must be received by students, both for students with special needs or disabilities such as dyslexia. It is better as teachers and parents to be able to understand what the difficulties are for children in their learning process (Abd Rauf et al., 2021; Agnieszka & Zrinka, 2021; Soğancı & Kulesza, 2023). As a reference, teachers should be able to provide a learning process that is appropriate to the conditions of each student, because there are still many teachers who provide learning only focusing on what material must be taught, without thinking about the psyche and psychology of students (Passadelli et al., 2020; Peltier et al., 2022).

The INTIS School Yogyakarta Elementary School has carried out an identification process for grade 3 students and it is known that there are several students who have dyslexia (Al Mufti et al., 2020). Children who have dyslexia basically cannot be seen during the school registration process until the teaching and learning process lasts at least two years, because children who have dyslexia have the same physical appearance as other children in general (Boardman, 2020; Javed et al., 2024). So that in the end it is known that children who have dyslexia are identified in the teaching and learning process (Andresen & Monsrud, 2022; Daniel et al., 2024). They have difficulty reading and writing compared to their peers.

In Indonesia, the problem of dyslexia is quite significant. According to a report by the Chairman of the Indonesian Dyslexia Association, of the approximately 50 million school-age children, an estimated 5 million have dyslexia, with an average of 2 million new cases each year (Mather et al., 2020). The etiology of dyslexia is multifactorial, involving both genetic and psychological factors (Theodoridou et al., 2021). Several contributing conditions include minimal parental involvement (Francisca, 2021; W. Wen et al., 2024), a lack of cooperation between parents and children (Huang et al., 2021), and poor communication between teachers and parents (Kundi & Alharbi, 2022). Therefore, an active role for parents, coupled with intensive collaboration with teachers, is crucial in supporting the development of children with dyslexia (Nozalia & Gutji, 2022).

Based on the data and background of the problem above, the role of parents and class teachers in dealing with children with dyslexia is important. Because, as explained, reading and writing skills are acquired at elementary school age. For this reason, this study can be taken into account because of this problem, however, teachers and parents are the ones who play an important role in the success of dyslexic children in their learning process. The present study aims to examine the role of parents, teachers, and special assistant teachers (GPK) in assisting children with dyslexia. Contrary to previous studies that have lacked comprehensive descriptions of parental involvement, this study emphasizes the diverse range of behaviors exhibited by parents. These behaviors include the decision to seek medical care for their children from specialists in the field, the provision or non-provision of specialized therapy, and the enrollment of their children in private lessons. The present study aims to shed light on the various roles involved in this process, with the objective of providing motivation and practical guidance for parents and homeroom teachers in their efforts to guide children with dyslexia more effectively.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Research design**

This research uses a descriptive qualitative research design. This design was chosen because the main focus of research was to deeply describe the role of parents and class teachers in assisting children with dyslexia in the inclusive school environment. The qualitative approach allows researchers to understand the phenomenon naturally, explore the real experience of the participants, and interpret the meaning behind the strategies carried out by parents, class teachers, and special assistant teachers (GPK). With this design, research does not try to measure variables quantitatively, but emphasizes a description that is rich, in -depth, and contextual in accordance with the conditions that occur in the field.

### **2.2. Participants of research**

The research participant consisted of parents and class teachers who accompanied children with dyslexia at SD Al-Firdaus Surakarta. The number of teachers involved was four people, while the number of parents was five. The two groups of participants were chosen because they were the most direct role in supporting the learning process of children with special needs, especially in overcoming the obstacles to reading and writing. Special Assistant Teachers (GPK) are also involved in interviews to complete data on school strategies in providing inclusive services. The selection of participants is carried out purposively, which is based on the consideration that they have knowledge, experience, and direct involvement with dyslexic children, so as to provide relevant and rich information to answer the focus of research.

### 2.3. Data collection tools

The main instruments in this study are interview guidelines that have been prepared and adjusted to the research objectives. The guideline contains a list of questions that explore the role of parents, class teachers, and GPK in providing assistance to dyslexic children. In addition to interviews, researchers also use observation sheets to record behavior, patterns of interaction, and forms of learning strategies applied in class and at home. Both of these instruments are designed so that they can complement each other so that a more comprehensive picture is obtained regarding the support provided by participants in the learning process of dyslexic children.

### 2.4. Research procedure

The research procedure was carried out in several stages. First, researchers identify relevant participants, namely parents and class teachers who are directly involved in assisting dyslexic children. Furthermore, researchers compile interview guidelines and test questions to match the context of the field. The next stage is the implementation of in-depth interviews with participants and direct observations in schools to observe the inclusive learning process that is carried out. Data from interviews and observations are then documented through field and recorded records, which are then transcribed and analyzed to find important themes related to the role of parents and teachers in supporting children with dyslexia.

### 2.5. Data analysis technique

Data were analyzed using descriptive qualitative analysis techniques. After the interview data is transcribed, the researcher conducts the data reduction process by filtering information that is relevant to the focus of the research. Furthermore, the data that has been reduced is categorized based on the main themes, such as parental strategy, the role of class teachers, as well as the involvement of special assistant teachers. The analysis is then followed by the presentation of data in the form of descriptive narratives, which gives a real picture of the practice of assistance in the field. Finally, researchers draw conclusions by connecting research findings to theory and previous research results, so as to produce a comprehensive understanding of the collaborative role between parents, teachers, and GPK in supporting dyslexic children.

## 3. Results and Discussion

The results of this study were obtained through in-depth interviews with teachers and parents who accompanied children with dyslexia in elementary schools. The data collected is then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman models which include the data reduction process, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Based on the analysis, a variety of strategies and roles of teachers were found in supporting students with dyslexia, both through motivation, special interventions, communication approaches, and patience and recurrent teaching strategies. The following explanation presents the main findings of each teacher who is a research participant.

Teacher A emphasized the importance of providing verbal and symbolic motivation to children with dyslexia. This is evident in her statement, "... by giving them compliments (great child, smart child, and giving them stars)..." From this quote, it can be interpreted that the teacher is trying to build the child's self-confidence and motivation to learn through positive reinforcement, both in the form of words and symbolic rewards. This approach aligns with the principles of inclusive education, where teachers focus not only on academic abilities but also on the child's emotional aspects to foster courage and enthusiasm for learning.

Teacher B highlighted the need for more targeted interventions tailored to the child's specific needs. She stated, "... When there are pull-ups, there is therapy tailored to the child's specific needs (dyslexia)..." This statement illustrates the teacher's efforts to connect school learning with additional therapy services. Interpretatively, the teacher understands that the role of educators extends beyond the classroom to facilitating access to professional interventions that support the child's development. This demonstrates a form of remedial collaboration to assist children with specific needs.

Teacher C revealed a strategy of intensive communication in dealing with dyslexic students. She stated, "...as much as possible, providing/treating approaches such as encouraging more communication..." This quote demonstrates that the teacher views communication as a crucial tool for understanding children's difficulties while fostering emotional closeness. Interpreting this strategy, the

teacher strives to build supportive relationships so that children feel safe and comfortable in the learning process. This strategy reflects a humanistic approach, which places personal interaction as the foundation for helping children develop.

Teacher D emphasized patience and repetition in explaining. She stated, "...I have to explain it 2-3 times to the dyslexic child until the child understands..." This quote demonstrates the teacher's awareness of the child's limitations in absorbing information and adapting her teaching style to their needs. Interpreting this approach, the teacher emphasizes consistency and patience in teaching, as children with dyslexia require more time to understand the material. This reflects the teacher's inclusive attitude and commitment to ensuring every child has an equal opportunity to learn.

The results of interviews with parents of dyslexic children revealed various strategies used to support their learning process. Parents reported efforts such as consulting doctors or specialists for proper examinations, hiring private tutors, and providing continuous motivation through praise and rewards to strengthen children's self-confidence. In addition, parents emphasized the importance of consistent study assistance, particularly after Maghrib prayers, as a routine moment to accompany and guide their children in overcoming reading and writing difficulties.

Parent A emphasized the importance of creating a fun learning environment for children with dyslexia. He stated, "...Parents play a role in creating enjoyable learning moments by understanding their children's interests, accompanying them during learning, and helping them read long instructions so that children with dyslexia can more easily understand and write answers." From this statement, it can be understood that parents' role is not merely as supervisors, but rather as facilitators who strive to adapt the learning process to the child's needs. His interpretation is that emotional and academic support from parents is a crucial factor in making children feel comfortable and confident in completing schoolwork.

Parent B demonstrated a form of support that places greater emphasis on meeting the child's emotional needs. He stated, "...Give the child what they want, not just the price. For example, if the child wants to buy food, they give them food; for example, if a toy, they give them a toy..." This illustrates that parental attention to their children's desires serves as a form of appreciation and positive reinforcement. This interpretation suggests that this attitude can strengthen the child's emotional bond with their parents while fostering learning motivation through a sense of appreciation and attention.

Parent C emphasized the aspect of scheduled learning support. He explained, "...usually this parent accompanies the child studying after Maghrib prayers (effectively starting at 7 am)..." This data indicates a special routine created to help the child get used to studying in a calmer and more focused environment. The interpretation is that a scheduled support strategy provides consistency and structure, which are essential for children with dyslexia to improve concentration and reduce distractions during the learning process.

Parent D focused more on psychosocial aspects, particularly regarding nurturing the child's feelings. He emphasized, "...the point is never to compare a normal child in general with a child with special needs, support each other..." From this statement, it is clear that the parents recognize the importance of a positive attitude in raising a child with special needs. The interpretation is that avoiding negative comparisons can maintain the child's self-esteem, minimize feelings of inferiority, and strengthen social support within the family environment.

Parent E revealed an additional strategy in the form of special tutoring. He stated, "...this child is given extra tutoring to reduce dependence on the tutor..." This statement indicates that the parents are trying to complement school support with external assistance to increase the child's independence. The interpretation is that this step reflects parents' awareness that additional interventions outside of school hours can help strengthen children's abilities, while reducing dependence on direct assistance from accompanying teachers.

The results of this study indicate that teachers and parents play a strategic role in supporting children with dyslexia through a complementary approach. Teachers focus on learning strategies at school, such as providing verbal and symbolic motivation, tailored interventions, intensive communication, and patience and repetition in explaining material. All of these strategies reflect an inclusive attitude and attention to students' emotional aspects. Meanwhile, parents play a role in creating a pleasant learning environment, providing emotional support, establishing consistent learning routines, maintaining children's psychological health by avoiding negative comparisons, and

complementing school support through specialized tutoring or external tutors. Overall, these findings confirm that the success of children with dyslexia is largely determined by the synergy between teachers and parents, which not only helps overcome reading and writing barriers but also strengthens children's learning motivation, self-confidence, and emotional well-being.

Linguistically, 'parents' refer to the father, the biological mother, or respected individuals. Parents, consisting of father and mother, are the child's early environment, and therefore, greatly influence the formation of the child's personality (Ayoub et al., 2021). Parents are the environment closest to the child, have deep insight into the child's special needs, have great influence, and are fully responsible for the child (Wen et al., 2023). In contrast, the role of experts is more consultative or as a form of 'social support' to achieve the child's success (Bermeo-Zambrano et al., 2020). The family is a very important early environment for children, and positive experiences in the family will make it easier for children to adapt to a wider life (Schuck & Lambert, 2020).

The family is seen as a 'crucial system' where children learn to meet the needs of life and face the challenges of the world. Therefore, parents have a very important role in increasing children's learning motivation, this has a significant impact on the learning process of dyslexic children (Knopik et al., 2022). Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that affects the ability to read or recognize letter symbols (Syahroni et al., 2021). Individuals with dyslexia have difficulty distinguishing letters or words, which indicates a reading disorder. Often, dyslexia is recognized when there is a difference between a person's reading ability and intelligence level (Abu-Hamour & Al Hmouz, 2020). Effective educational services play an important role in creating an inclusive learning environment, especially for dyslexic students (Skočić Mihić et al., 2022). Dyslexia, as a learning disorder that affects reading, writing, and speaking skills, requires special treatment (Toffalini et al., 2021). In accordance with Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, schools are responsible for providing equal education for all students, including students with special needs.

The recent study highlighted the aspect of educational justice for children with special needs. They stated that the right to obtain formal education is a fundamental right that must be guaranteed for all children, regardless of their physical or economic conditions (Forteza-Forteza et al., 2021). Therefore, policy interventions are needed to ensure that children with special needs from underprivileged families can access education in special schools (Mason-Williams et al., 2020). Inclusive education provides equal and adaptive learning opportunities for all students, including students with dyslexia, in regular schools. This is in line with the Salamanca Declaration and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which emphasize quality education without discrimination. Furthermore, inclusive education is a concept or approach to education that seeks to reach all individuals without exception or in other words, inclusive education is an education system that is open to all individuals and accommodates all needs according to the conditions of each individual. The design of education for students with special needs integrates the principle of respect for the equality of rights between individuals. This aims to ensure that children can access education without experiencing discrimination based on gender attributes, chronological age, ethnic background, sexual identity, linguistics, or physical status (Hidayati & Warmansyah, 2021).

Early intervention for children with special needs is the main focus of inclusive education (Fuller & Kaiser, 2020). This goal in detail includes reducing the negative impacts of growth and developmental barriers, as well as increasing opportunities for children to participate in general activities. Furthermore, this intervention is expected to prevent children from developing conditions that are getting worse due to irregular developmental patterns, so that they can grow with optimal abilities and avoid the emergence of other limitations as a consequence of primary disabilities.

This study has limitations in the relatively small number of participants, which only involves a number of class teachers, parents, and special assistant teachers from an inclusive elementary school, so that the findings obtained cannot be generalized to a broader context. In addition, the data collected is only through interviews and observations, so that there are still other aspects of the support of parents and teachers who have not been fully explored, especially those related to social, cultural, and educational policies that affect services for children with dyslexia.

Based on these limitations, further research is advised to involve more diverse participants, both from different school backgrounds, varied areas, and involving more parents and teachers to get a more comprehensive picture. In addition, the data triangulation method, for example by adding



documentation, in -depth case studies, or quantitative questionnaires, can be used to strengthen the validity of the findings. Further research can also be directed at the development of effective collaboration models between parents, teachers, and special assistant teachers, so as to make a practical contribution to improving inclusive education services for children with dyslexia.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study emphasizes the importance of getting comprehensive support, both physiologically and externally for children diagnosed with dyslexia. A good learning environment, family support, and active teachers and parents are some forms of support. The results of the study on parents of dyslexic children, obtained several strategies that are usually carried out, including conducting examinations by doctors or experts in their fields, bringing in private tutors, providing self-confidence and appreciation, not forgetting to always provide learning assistance after Maghrib. And the results of interviews with teachers showed that comprehensive support from parents and teachers, including learning assistance, motivation, and the use of relevant learning aids, is very important to improve the motivation and quality of learning of dyslexic children. Special Assistant Teachers (GPK) also play an important role in inclusive education, starting from student identification and assessment, curriculum adaptation, personal assistance such as providing re-explanations to dyslexic children, to compiling special programs to improve students' reading skills. This study emphasizes the importance of collaboration between parents, teachers, and GPK in understanding dyslexia and creating a conducive learning environment and providing support for dyslexic children.

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