

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter has explored the multifaceted challenges teachers encounter in identifying and supporting students with dyslexia in Malaysia, uncovering critical insights that point to the need for systemic change. Through interviews with dedicated educators such as Ms. Vania, Ms. Natasha, and Ms. Rita, it has become evident that limitations in teacher training, disparities in teaching abilities, the complexities of linguistic and cultural diversity, and deep-seated cultural stigma all play significant roles in hindering the effective identification and support of dyslexic students. These findings underscore the urgent need for targeted reforms to better equip teachers and create a more inclusive educational environment.

5.1 Conclusion

The investigation into the challenges faced by teachers in identifying and supporting students with dyslexia in Malaysia has revealed several critical insights. Through interviews with Ms. Vania, Ms. Natasha, and Ms. Rita, key themes emerged regarding the limitations in teacher awareness, the disparities in teacher abilities, the impact of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and the cultural stigma and parental denial associated with dyslexia.

Firstly, the limited awareness of dyslexia among teachers, primarily due to a lack of formal training, is a significant barrier. As highlighted by the interviewees, the absence of comprehensive training on dyslexia leads to reliance on superficial symptoms and personal observations, which can impede the early and accurate identification of dyslexia. This aligns with the research of Riddick (1996) and Torgesen (2000), emphasizing the need for educators to have a thorough understanding of dyslexia's cognitive and behavioural indicators.

Secondly, disparities in teacher abilities significantly affect the support provided to dyslexic students. Large class sizes and time constraints hinder teachers' ability to offer individualized attention, as noted by Ms. Natasha and Ms. Rita. The necessity for smaller class sizes and flexible schedules to accommodate the needs of dyslexic students is

supported by studies from the National Center for Learning Disabilities (2014) and Vaughn and Fuchs (2003), which advocate for more personalized teaching environments to enhance the identification and support of students with learning disabilities.

Thirdly, the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds of students in international schools add another layer of complexity to supporting dyslexic students. Teachers like Ms. Vania and Ms. Natasha face the challenge of addressing language barriers while providing effective instruction, which can exacerbate the difficulties faced by dyslexic students. Research by August and Shanahan (2006) highlights the compounded challenges of language acquisition and learning disabilities, underscoring the need for culturally responsive teaching strategies.

Lastly, cultural stigma and parental denial further complicate the identification and support of dyslexic students. As observed by Ms. Vania and Ms. Rita, cultural attitudes towards learning disabilities can influence parents' willingness to acknowledge and address their children's dyslexia. This stigma can lead to delays in seeking and providing appropriate interventions, highlighting the importance of fostering a more inclusive and accepting attitude towards learning disabilities.

In conclusion, the effective identification and support of dyslexic students in Malaysia require significant improvements in teacher training, classroom management, and cultural attitudes. Comprehensive training programs that equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to recognize and address dyslexia are essential. Additionally, reducing class sizes and allowing for more flexible schedules can help teachers provide the individualized attention needed for dyslexic students. Finally, fostering an inclusive culture that reduces stigma and encourages early intervention is crucial for ensuring that all students with dyslexia receive the support they need to succeed.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, several recommendations can be made to improve the identification and support of dyslexic students in Malaysian educational settings:

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UNVEILING THE INVISIBLE: UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES ELEMENTARY TEACHERS FACE IN IDENTIFYING DYSLLEXIA IN MALAYSIA

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5.2.1 Inclusion in Education Degree Curriculum

Brief lessons on dyslexia should be integrated into the education degree curriculum to ensure that future educators are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to identify and support dyslexic students effectively. This inclusion will lay the foundation for comprehensive training programs on dyslexia, focusing on its cognitive and behavioural indicators, as well as effective teaching strategies. Furthermore, ongoing professional development opportunities should be established for teachers to stay updated on the latest research and best practices in dyslexia education.

5.2.2 Improved Classroom Management

Policies that support smaller class sizes should be advocated for, as this would allow teachers to provide more individualized attention to students with dyslexia. Flexible scheduling options should also be implemented to accommodate the unique needs of dyslexic students, ensuring they receive the necessary support without feeling overwhelmed.

5.2.3 Addressing Cultural Stigma and Parental Denial

Additional linguistic support should be provided for students from diverse backgrounds, incorporating language acquisition strategies that consider the challenges faced by dyslexic learners. Cultural sensitivity training should be offered to teachers to help them understand and address the specific needs and challenges of students from various cultural backgrounds.

5.2.4 Culturally Responsive Teaching

Awareness campaigns should be launched to reduce the stigma associated with dyslexia, emphasizing the importance of early identification and intervention. Greater parental involvement should be encouraged through workshops and seminars that educate parents about dyslexia and the importance of supporting their children's educational journey.

5.2.5 Policy and Resource Development

A national policy on dyslexia should be developed, outlining standardized procedures for identification, support, and accommodations in schools. Additionally, adequate resources should be allocated to schools for the implementation of dyslexia support programs, including specialized teaching materials and access to educational psychologists.

Theoretical Benefit and Fundamental Research

These recommendations are underpinned by Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction and cultural context in the learning process. Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) highlights the necessity for tailored interventions and scaffolded support that meet students' unique needs, facilitating their cognitive development through guided interactions with more knowledgeable others.

In alignment with Vygotsky's theory, the recommendations advocate for integrating dyslexia education into teacher training, promoting individualized support, and creating culturally responsive learning environments. These approaches recognize the social and cultural dimensions of learning and aim to provide a supportive framework that addresses the diverse needs of dyslexic students.

Furthermore, Riddick's research supports the need for targeted teacher training, culturally sensitive practices, and comprehensive support systems. By addressing these areas, educational institutions can enhance their ability to effectively support dyslexic students, fostering an inclusive environment that promotes educational equity and success for all learners.

5.3 Future Research

Further research is needed to explore the long-term impact of these recommendations on the educational outcomes of dyslexic students. Longitudinal studies could provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of enhanced training programs, improved classroom management, and culturally responsive teaching strategies. Additionally, investigating the perspectives of parents and students on the support

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provided could offer a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and successes in dyslexia education.

5.4 Limitations

This study has several limitations. The small sample size and focus on teachers from urban and international school settings may limit the generalizability of the findings. The study's reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases, and the lack of diverse perspectives, such as those from parents and students, restricts the comprehensiveness of the insights. Additionally, the limited exploration of cultural factors and the absence of longitudinal data hinder a full understanding of the long-term impacts of dyslexia support initiatives. Future research should address these limitations by including a broader range of participants, such as educators from rural schools, parents of dyslexic students, students themselves, special needs educators, and teachers with dyslexia, while incorporating multiple perspectives to provide a more comprehensive view of the challenges and strategies for supporting dyslexic students in Malaysia. Employing longitudinal methods could also enhance understanding of the effectiveness of dyslexia support over time..