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Research Paper

Supporting Children with Dyslexia: Home, School, and Policy Approaches

Yamini Thakur[1]*, Yogesh Kumar Arya[2]

ABSTRACT

Developmental dyslexia is a neurodevelopmental disorder marked by persistent difficulties in reading, spelling, and decoding despite adequate intelligence and appropriate academic opportunities. Difficulties in processing the phonological structure of language are considered a core feature of dyslexia; however, increasing evidence indicates that additional cognitive processes, including working memory limitations, sequential processing difficulties, and rapid naming deficits, also contribute to the academic challenges experienced by dyslexic children. Consequently, effective management of dyslexia requires a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach that integrates evidence-based educational interventions with supportive home environments and inclusive educational policies. Although dyslexia persists throughout life, its impact can be substantially reduced through early identification and appropriate educational intervention. This article examines current evidence-based strategies for supporting children with dyslexia across both home and school environments. The integration of evidence-based practices with inclusive and policy-oriented educational planning may enhance academic achievement, psychological well-being, and long-term social inclusion among children with dyslexia.

Keywords: *Dyslexia, Intervention, Inclusive Education, Policy Frameworks, Reading Disorders*

Developmental dyslexia is a neurodevelopmental disorder included in the two main international classifications — DSM-IV and ICD-10 — as a child developmental disorder characterised by persistent difficulties in word recognition, spelling, decoding, and reading fluency despite intact sensory functions, adequate intelligence and educational opportunity (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Dyslexia affects approximately 5–10% of the population, with some estimates ranging up to 17.5%, making it one of the most common neurodevelopmental disorders encountered in educational and clinical settings (Shaywitz, 2003; Peterson & Pennington, 2012, 2015). These impairments substantially interfere with academic achievement and activities of daily living. Albeit dyslexia is most prominently described as a reading disorder, vast evidence indicates that its underlying mechanisms extend beyond literacy-specific processes. According to the simple view of reading proposed by Hoover and Gough (1990), reading comprehension depends upon both decoding ability and language comprehension. Consistent with this framework, atypical

[1]Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India
[2]Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India
*Corresponding Author

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early language development has been identified as a significant predictor of later reading difficulties. Children at risk for dyslexia often exhibit subtle developmental abnormalities during the preschool years, including delayed language acquisition, weak letter–sound knowledge, impaired naming ability, and reduced phonemic awareness (Snowling, 2000; Voeller, 2004). Deficits in language processing may emerge as early as two years of age and become increasingly pronounced with development. One of the dominant theoretical explanations of dyslexia remains the phonological deficit hypothesis, which proposes that impairments in phonological representations and processing interfere with the acquisition of grapheme–phoneme correspondences required for fluent reading (Snowling, 2000). Empirical findings have consistently demonstrated the central role of phonological deficits in dyslexia (Ramus et al., 2003). Phonological awareness, typically develops around the age of 4, is considered one of the strongest predictors of later reading ability and plays a prominent role in dyslexia research. Likewise, impairments in phonological short-term memory storage are among the most consistently reported cognitive deficits in individuals with dyslexia (Smith-Spark & Fish, 2007). In addition to academic difficulties, children with dyslexia frequently encounter significant psychosocial consequences, such as reduced self-esteem, heightened school-related anxiety, frustration, and social withdrawal (Alexander-Passe, 2006). Without timely and appropriate intervention, these challenges may persist into adolescence and adulthood, adversely affecting academic performance, emotional well-being, and occupational outcomes.

Consequently, supporting children with developmental dyslexia requires a comprehensive, multidimensional approach that involves families, educators, clinicians, and policymakers. Evidence-based educational interventions, classroom accommodations, emotional and social support, and inclusive educational policies are all essential for improving long-term developmental and academic outcomes. The present article assesses the evidence-based strategies for supporting children with dyslexia in home and school settings and examines the role of policy frameworks in facilitating effective identification, intervention, and educational inclusion.

Family and Home-Based Support

Family involvement and support play a crucial role in the development and growth of dyslexic children. Supportive home environments can significantly improve motivation, self-confidence, emotional well-being, and engagement in learning activities (Alexander-Passe, 2006). Effective home-based support not only enhances the literacy of dyslexic children but also boosts resilience and positive self-perception. At home, parents can foster literacy development through consistent, structured reading practices and strategies such as reading aloud regularly, encouraging shared reading activities, integrating audiobooks with printed texts, and practising reading in short, manageable sessions, accompanied by positive reinforcement. Many children with dyslexia display strengths in creativity, visual reasoning, problem-solving, and innovative thinking (West, 1997; Eide & Eide, 2011). Participation in activities such as art, music, sports, and technology-assisted learning may further enhance confidence, self-esteem, and emotional resilience. Accordingly, strengths-based approaches also contribute significantly to the development of positive self-identity and adaptive coping in children with dyslexia. Such approaches promote reading engagement while reducing performance-related stress (National Reading Panel, 2000). In addition to these supportive approaches, the home environment plays an important role in shaping reading development and risk for dyslexia. Studies suggest that early childhood exposure to reading materials and parental involvement serve as important protective factors influencing the academic outcomes of children with dyslexia (Senechal & LeFevre, 2002). Beyond improving academic

outcomes, family supports can also promote emotional well-being by reducing the stress and frustration associated with reading difficulties, as dyslexic children commonly experience academic frustration, reduced self-confidence, and increased school-related anxiety (Alexander-Passe, 2006). Hence, parents play a critical role in providing emotional support through positive encouragement, promoting emotional expression, and avoiding punitive responses to reading difficulties.

School Interventions & Support

School intervention is also vital in dyslexia because reading difficulties affect not only academic achievement but also language development, self-esteem, motivation, and long-term educational outcomes. Since children with dyslexia often struggle with decoding, spelling, reading fluency, and comprehension (Lyon et al., 2003), structured school-based support helps prevent these difficulties from widening over time. Early intervention is particularly critical because persistent reading failure may lead to reduced classroom participation, academic frustration, and emotional difficulties. Within school-based interventions, structured literacy approaches remain among the most extensively supported interventions for children with developmental dyslexia. These programs provide explicit, systematic, and sequential instruction in phonological awareness, phonics, decoding, spelling, and reading fluency. Ehri et al., (2001) concluded that phonemic awareness instruction significantly improves children's reading and spelling abilities. They found that explicit teaching of phoneme-manipulation skills (such as blending and segmenting sounds) helps children learn to decode words more effectively, especially when combined with letter and phonics instruction. Multisensory structured language approaches, particularly Orton–Gillingham-based methods, simultaneously engage visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning modalities during instruction. For example, children may articulate phonemes while tracing letters and visually identifying graphemes. Such multimodal learning experiences are believed to strengthen the neural pathways underlying reading acquisition. A considerable amount of evidence suggests that systematic phonics-based instruction significantly improves decoding ability, reading accuracy, and spelling performance in children with dyslexia (National Reading Panel, 2000). Children with developmental dyslexia exhibit slow, effortful reading; thus, reading fluency interventions are crucial for improving reading speed, automaticity, and comprehension. Evidence-based strategies include guided oral reading, repeated reading exercises, paired reading, assisted audiobook reading, and fluency modelling. In addition, educational capacities are also essential for minimising academic barriers while maintaining appropriate educational standards and expectations. Common supports for students with dyslexia include extended examination time, oral examinations, audiobooks, text-to-speech software, reduced copying requirements, lecture recordings, alternative assessment formats, and assistive technologies. Such accommodations enable students to demonstrate their knowledge and academic abilities without being disproportionately disadvantaged by reading-related difficulties.

Assistive technologies have become increasingly essential in promoting educational accessibility for students with developmental dyslexia, and commonly used tools include text-to-speech software, speech-to-text applications, predictive spelling programs, dyslexia-friendly digital interfaces, and audiobooks. These technologies help ease the cognitive burden of reading and writing tasks while improving classroom participation, academic independence, and overall access to learning. However, the emotional burden of dyslexia within educational institutions is often underestimated. Many children internalise their academic struggles and may perceive themselves as unintelligent despite possessing average or above-average intellectual ability (Alexander-Passe, 2006). Consequently, children suffer

from psychosocial difficulties such as anxiety, reduced self-esteem, school avoidance, social withdrawal, and learned helplessness. Teachers, therefore, play a vital role in fostering inclusive and emotionally supportive classroom environments. Effective strategies include avoiding public embarrassment during reading activities, encouraging peer acceptance, providing individualised encouragement, recognising student strengths alongside academic difficulties, and implementing inclusive classroom practices. In addition, school counselling services and psychological support may further assist children experiencing emotional distress associated with academic challenges.

Emerging Cognitive Interventions

Although phonics-based interventions remain central to dyslexia remediation, recent research increasingly highlights the importance of broader cognitive mechanisms underlying reading difficulties. Emerging evidence suggests that interventions targeting sequential processing and working memory may complement conventional reading instruction. Activities may include memory sequencing games, pattern reconstruction exercises, rhythm and clapping tasks, story sequencing activities, visual order arrangement exercises, and auditory repetition games. Such interventions may strengthen serial order representation, attentional control, and working memory processes, which are often impaired in dyslexia (Smith-Spark & Fisk, 2007; Szmalec, (Loncke et al., 2011)). Rhythm-based interventions aim to improve auditory timing and temporal processing abilities through activities such as drumming exercises, metronome synchronisation, beat perception tasks, rhythmic speech activities, and musical timing exercises. Usha Goswami (2011) proposed that rhythm and temporal processing training may enhance phonological awareness and speech rhythm perception, thereby supporting reading development in children with dyslexia.

Policy Frameworks and Inclusive Education

Policy frameworks also play a pivotal role in ensuring equitable access to learning opportunities for students with developmental dyslexia and other specific learning disabilities. Inclusive education policies aim to promote early identification, facilitate access to educational accommodations and support services, reduce discrimination, and improve teacher preparedness for addressing diverse learning needs. Such frameworks are essential for creating accessible and supportive educational environments that enable children with dyslexia to participate fully in academic settings. In India, several legislative and educational initiatives have been introduced to strengthen inclusive education for children with learning disabilities. The National Education Policy 2020 emphasises inclusive and equitable education for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The policy advocates for early identification of learning problems, individualised educational support, flexible teaching methods, and learner-centred pedagogical approaches to improve accessibility and educational participation. Similarly, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act formally recognises specific learning disabilities, including dyslexia, and mandates educational accommodations and equal learning opportunities within academic institutions. The Act also emphasises non-discrimination and accessibility in educational settings.

In addition, the Central Board of Secondary Education also provides several accommodations for students with learning disabilities, including additional examination time, reader assistance, exemption from specific language requirements, and permission to use computers during examinations. These accommodations are intended to minimise academic disadvantage while maintaining educational standards. Despite supportive policy frameworks, substantial barriers continue to hinder effective implementation. Common challenges include limited teacher awareness regarding dyslexia, shortages of trained specialists, delayed diagnosis,

persistent social stigma, unequal access to educational and clinical services, and inadequate institutional resources. These difficulties are often more pronounced in under-resourced educational settings. Therefore, strengthening teacher-training programmes, increasing public awareness, and improving access to specialised educational support services are essential for translating policy initiatives into effective educational practice.

Recommendations for Integrated Support

Supporting children with developmental dyslexia demands coordinated collaboration among educators, parents, psychologists, speech-language specialists, clinicians, and policymakers. A multidisciplinary and integrated approach may substantially improve educational and psychosocial outcomes. Key recommendations include:

- Early screening and identification of the disorder
- Parent education programs and active family involvement
- Structured literacy interventions integrated with cognitive support strategies
- Enhanced teacher training and professional development in dyslexia awareness
- Expanded access to assistive technologies and educational accommodations
- Strengths-based educational approaches that promote resilience and self-esteem
- Stronger enforcement of inclusive educational policies and accommodations
- Availability of school-based counselling and psychological support services
- Inclusion of sequential processing and working memory activities within intervention programs.

Such a multidimensional framework recognises that developmental dyslexia extends beyond reading impairment alone and involves interacting cognitive, emotional, social, and environmental factors.

CONCLUSION

Dyslexia is a complex neurodevelopmental condition that affects multiple domains of reading, language, and academic functioning. Consequently, effective support for children with dyslexia requires integrating evidence-based educational interventions, emotional support systems, active family and school involvement, and inclusive educational policies. Structured literacy approaches, educational accommodations, assistive technologies, and emerging interventions targeting sequential processing and cognitive functioning play significant roles in improving academic performance and developmental outcomes. Future intervention models may benefit from combining traditional phonological remediation with cognitive and temporal sequencing approaches to address both reading-specific impairments and the broader neurocognitive mechanisms underlying dyslexia. Ultimately, supportive home and school environments are integral for promoting academic achievement, emotional resilience, self-confidence, and long-term social inclusion among children with dyslexia.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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