

## Angie Garden

Liverpool John Moores University

### Introduction

Despite dyslexia being the most common specific educational disorder in the UK today, the impact of the diagnosis of dyslexia on the undergraduate student and their various coping strategies has received little attention.



The British Dyslexia Association reports that as many as 4% of the population have severe dyslexia, which is equivalent to 5% of school children (British Dyslexia Association, 2016).

Within higher education, there is a need for teaching and learning research to include more fully disabled students' experiences as learners as the number of students with dyslexia entering Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) increases every year (Gibson and Kendall, 2010).

### Methods

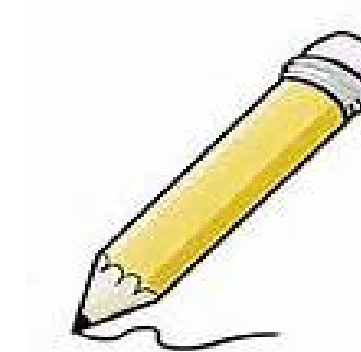
The topic of interest for this research concerns factors in school and university life impacting on the self-esteem and perceived academic achievement of learners with dyslexia (Phillips, Kelly and Symes, 2013).



This study aimed to explore the self-esteem, coping strategies and perceived academic achievement of undergraduate students with a recognised diagnosis of dyslexia at one northwest university.

Semi-structured interviews were carried out and subsequently transcribed including six student in-depth interviews and one university support staff interview.

### Results



Key themes extracted through a thematic analysis of the data included:

- Stage of diagnosis
- Impact of dyslexia on self-esteem
- Family reactions
- School experiences
- The social and emotional impact
- Positive experiences at university
- Experiences of friendships for dyslexic students
- Additional struggles
- Positive outcomes
- Strategies employed



### Conclusions

Recommendations for practice include training for academic staff on dyslexia awareness, points of good practice within teaching sessions and encouraging higher education institutions to provide environments where the disclosure of dyslexia is encouraged.



### References

1. British Dyslexia Association (BDA) (2016) Dyslexia and specific learning difficulties in adults. [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/about-dyslexia/adults-and-business/dyslexia-and-specific-learning-difficulties-in-adu.html](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/about-dyslexia/adults-and-business/dyslexia-and-specific-learning-difficulties-in-adu.html). Retrieved 08/06/2016.
2. Gibson, S. and Kendall, L. (2010) Stories from school: dyslexia and learners' voices on factors impacting on achievement. *British Journal of Learning Support*, 25: 4, pp. 187-193.
3. Phillips, S; Kelly, K. and Symes, L. (2013) *Assessment of Learners with Dyslexic-Type Difficulties*. London: Sage.