SPECIAL EDUCATION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TEACHERS' ATTITUDES ABOUT THE PSYCHOSOCIAL PROFILE OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH DYSLEXIA IN GREECE

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Abstract:
Research in special education has produced beneficial results for students with dyslexia as well as for their teachers. More specifically, research on dyslexia has opened many paths, but, at the psychosocial level, the bibliography lags behind and shows some gaps. This research aims to outline and compare the psychosocial profile of children and adolescents with dyslexia who study in the general classes of Greece from the point of view of primary and secondary school teachers. In particular, there was anxiety and low self-esteem in students with dyslexia, while at the same time the attitudes and management of teachers were investigated to improve and relieve the psychosocial problems faced by children in school. Two focus groups were included in the survey, which included a total of 19 teachers, 11 primary and 8 secondary schools of various specializations, and they participated in a semi-structured interview. Research has shown the existence of anxiety and low self- esteem in dyslexic children and adolescents in written and oral procedures such as spelling, reading and oral examinations. In addition, teachers in order to reduce stress and enhance students' self-esteem in stressful activities are rewarding and indirectly and positively exempting them during the examination process by asking them questions that meet their capabilities. Finally, all participants have raised the need for further training of themselves to be able to help children at both psychosocial and learning levels, as well as promoting individualized teaching to students with dyslexia to give them equal opportunities with their peers.

Keywords: dyslexia, psychosocial functioning, anxiety, low self-esteem, teachers' beliefs

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1. Introduction

Research on the learning experiences of pupils with dyslexia from foreign language courses held in Hungary (Kormos, Csizér & Sarkadi, 2009) has shown that the teacher's negative attitudes and inappropriate teaching methods have the power to undermine students' self-confidence and to provoke learning stress. The main conclusion was the existence of a causal relationship between the teacher's behavior and student attitudes in language learning. The researchers emphasize the importance of teachers being able to recognize that a child or teenager is dyslexic and aware of the difficulties that dyslexia causes in the learning process.

The students' preference in the particular lesson contradicts the subsequent research in which team work and collaboration is presented as a factor of integration, socialization and, the most important, practice in children with learning disabilities.

Loizou's research in Cyprus (Loizou, 2016) was aimed at exploring the changes made by two elementary teachers in their teaching to enhance the progress of pupils with learning difficulties in their classroom. Two weeks' non-participatory observation was carried out at the end of which semi-structured interviews were conducted by the teachers. The first study refers to a differentiated program for a second elementary school girl with learning disabilities. The second study concerned the implementation of multisensory philosophy in the third-grade elementary school where there were four students with difficulties in information processing and attention. As important practices applied by the teachers in both studies, the relationship of intimacy and trust with students is first presented, the differentiation of teaching with a key element focusing on the essentials, the application of multisensory philosophy, teamwork and interaction between peers, process-oriented praise, repetition, and experiential learning. This has led to the rise of self-fulfillment of dyslexic students and the reduction of stress levels in teaching.

Another research suggests that teachers are able to identify problems in student behavior due to experience or after comparing them with other students. These efforts are usually successful in detecting student difficulties (Dimou, 2008; Trigka-Mertika, 2010). Moreover, Greek teachers claim that, if they perceive psychological problems in their dyslexic students, they will propose to help by encouraging them to continue their effort and they will try to create better relationships between them and their typical developing peers to avoid those problems (Karantoula & Karpathiou, 2013).

In addition, research has shown that poor self-image, low self-esteem and anxiety are due to criticism of dyslexic children from their social environment, whether this is called family or school or classmates (Melekoglu, 2011). In other words, the researcher imputes the existence of anxiety and low self-esteem to the pressure they receive from exogenous factors in their social environment. Some teachers believe that dyslexic students experience feelings of anxiety and low self-esteem, perhaps, because they perceive their weakness in school performance over their classmates (Magou, 2014).

According to this research, teachers can detect the existence of psycho-social problems of dyslexic students in the class by compare them with their peers and the most of them help those students by encourage them to keep trying.

Finally, there are and some contrary researches to the above. Sometimes, according to a research, teachers are those who creates the feeling of anxiety in dyslexic students because of the pressure they exert on school and the consequent feeling of the students that they will disappoint them (Karantoula & Karpathiou, 2013). Another research claims that the behavior of teachers towards dyslexic students may vary, but the negative attitude of the teachers towards this group of pupils may have a profound effect on their schooling (Hornstra et al., 2010).

According to attitudes and beliefs, researchers have shown that the way of thinking and the practices adopted in the educational process by teachers are directly correlated with their attitudes and beliefs (Dima, 2015; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992; Richardson, 1994). The first definition about attitudes expressed by Allport (1967) who define them as: "*a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related*" (p. 8). He was the first who said that attitude is a hypothetical construct and based on Plato's attitudes' categorization into three major categories; cognition, affect and conation (Allport, 1967). Later, Peck and Tucker (1973) examined the relationship between attitudes, personality factors and classroom behaviors. It has also been demonstrated that the differing attitudes in teaching relate to social and educational psychology. Indeed, in social psychology there are two areas describing these behaviors; the attitudes related to the emotional field (affective) and beliefs related to the cognitive branch (cognitive). Fishbein (1967) was the one who separated the attitudes from beliefs based on the kind of aspect of the behavior they fall into. It therefore correlated the attitudes with the emotional component of the compassionate and the beliefs with its cognitive function.

In educational psychology, behavior has always prevailed, while intellectual processes have always been overestimated. Even the inquiries which initially concerned the attitudes ended up turning and reporting on behaviors (Ajzen, 1993). Thus, the view emerged that "*learned predispositions to respond to an object or class of objects in a favorable or unfavorable way*" (Fishbein, 1967, p. 257). In the next few years Krebs and Schmit (1993) defined the attitude as "*an individual's disposition to react with a certain degree of favorableness or unfavorableness to an object, behavior, person, institution or event- or to any other discriminable aspect of the individual's world*". Attitude has been defined as "*a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor*" (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, p. 269).

Beliefs, as shown by the research, are a concept that has developed strangely as it is connected with other concepts, such is knowledge, opinion, attitude, etc., that overlap it and it is difficult to be liberated from them (Pajares, 1992). Nevertheless, Eagly and Chaiken, (1993) defined beliefs as "*associations or linkages between an object and any of its*

various attributes." Rokeach (1968) divided the beliefs into 4 pairs of concepts. The first is existential-non-existential beliefs, secondly, shared vs. unshared beliefs, thirdly derived vs. underived beliefs and last beliefs concerning matter of taste. The first is the social and the physical world, and the second is the one that shares with the people around us. The third kind relates to beliefs that are internalized and do not have a direct link to a particular subject. The latter type is complex because it concerns a matter of personal choice that is taken in an arbitrary way. We can also separate beliefs into changeable and unchangeable, with the former being associated with the researcher's primitive beliefs and involving subjectivity. He emphasizes that they are not offered for discussion or change, and so he has clarified that such beliefs are related to self-identity, and if they are disrupted, instability will be caused to the individual. In addition, it stresses that beliefs from the same social sphere (eg class, family, and workplace) tend to be more valid because individuals accept or reject beliefs according to their identity and feelings of feeling "*group identity*" (Rokeach, 1968). It is very important to clarify that knowing with knowledge is a big difference. Belief is subjective and based on emotion, while knowledge is related to experience. Sigel (in Pajares, 1992) defines beliefs as mental constructs of experience, while Brown and Coney (in Pajares, 1992) associate belief with behavior as the first guides and determines the latter. In general, beliefs are, as is apparent from the above, subjective and real.

2. Methodology

The aim of this research is the comparison of the primary and secondary school teachers' views on the identifying and addressing anxiety and low self-esteem on children with dyslexia in general classes.

The specific objectives of the research are to investigate: (1) The similarities or differences in the way the primary and secondary school teachers identify the problems of anxiety and low self-esteem in dyslexic students in general classes, (2) Which of these two problems (anxiety and low self-esteem) identify more often and in which cases they occur and (3) How teachers deal with these problems in order to help dyslexic children.

The research questions of the current study are:
1) How do the teachers of primary and secondary school sketch the psycho-social profile of dyslexic pupils?
2) How and in which occasions do dyslexic students express their anxiety and low self-esteem according to the teachers?
3) What are the techniques of teachers to deal with anxiety and low self-esteem of dyslexic students?

2.1 Research Design
The design and organization of an investigation are largely determined by the nature of the problem and the purpose of the particular study dictates. The technique is the precise

and specific action whose necessity and limits are determined by the method (Vamvoukas, 1991).

In the current study the qualitative approach was chosen, because one of the main objectives of the study is not the generalization of results, but the investigation of the issue. According to Kyriazis (2006), "*the main feature of qualitative research is that it is based on a comparatively fewer cases, with the aim not of discovering general trends (necessarily involving any cases) but of forming a complete picture of each cases and finding the common elements. As a depth study, qualitative research leads to the gathering of detailed data on multiple aspects of the cases under investigation, it facilitates the process of developing and clarifying conceptual categories.*"

Qualitative research focuses on how people understand the world, experiences and themselves. An element of qualitative research is also the emphasis on the evolution of social phenomena and the processes through, as opposed to the static approach that characterizes quantitative research (Kyriazis, 2006). Moreover, in qualitative research the richness and the depth of information often overcome or return the original theoretical components and designs of the researcher questions, and can lead the research to new ways. In qualitative social research, a continuous and intense interaction between theoretical construction and research findings in the field is more likely (Iosifidis, 2008). Carrying out qualitative research involves filling the gaps in knowledge, understanding or describing a phenomenon/ situation/ experience, challenging or enriching theoretical knowledge, accessing a thing, or starting a change (Robson & McCartan, 2016).

2.2 Research Sample

In qualitative research generalization in the sense of representativeness is rarely an objective. This is because in qualitative social research we are often interested in individual cases requiring in-depth investigation for small samples characterized by specific socio-cultural specificities, which do not generalize in a general population reference or ways of forming meanings, interpretations and representations within specific contexts. Also, in qualitative research the aim is to study in depth social phenomena through social subject experiences, so as to formulate theoretical positions that contribute to a better understanding of social processes. Consequently, and from the above mentioned, the selection of the participants in the survey was made after their own voluntary participation declaration (Iosifidis, 2008).

At the stage of recruiting the participants, the issues that usually involve the researcher are first, if the people who will participate in the conversation will know each other or they will be randomly selected, and secondly if the groups are homogeneous or heterogeneous. Starting from the first criterion, indicate that it is usually appropriate individuals of a group are unknown to each other that are being selected at random (Krueger & Casey, 2000). In the present study the above requirement was met to the extent that this was possible. However, in groups where there were individuals known among themselves was that these individuals deviated more often than they did main

discussion and began their own interesting conversation, which it was usually irrelevant to the subject under study. However, in the groups that the individuals were aware of, the following was also positive. The conversation was encouraged more easily, and people felt more comfortable talking to their acquaintances, as there was a natural interaction among them due to intimacy between them. As to the second criterion taken into account when creating a group as to whether it should be homogeneous in terms of the characteristics of its members or not, before doing so, the researcher must first consider some things. The most important is that the purpose of focus groups is not to draw conclusions but to contribute to understanding, not to generalize but to focus on the sequence of ideas, as they appear during the debate and ultimately their purpose to make statements, but to give their views on how people perceive a situation (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Focus groups are designed to evoke diversity in the data, to distinguish the trends that occur for the subject in question in one or more groups, to recognize behaviors and not to quantify the degree to which they occur these occur in each subgroup and population (Puchta & Potter, 2004).

Taking the above into account, the choice of the people who will be composed of each group should not be entirely random, but it should have some degree of homogeneity. In addition, there are at least two reasons why group homogeneity is necessary. The first reason is the ease in analyzing the results and the second reason is the participants' comfort in sharing their thoughts in an intimate group that has a common basis of perception and knowledge. Sampling techniques can be divided into two categories, probability sampling or representative sampling, and non-probability sampling or sampling of the crisis. Sampling is probable according to the probability laws, it is controlled by the parameters of the gives the ability to generalize the conclusions drawn from a sample, so it also allows us to also calculate the estimation error. Sampling is unlikely in cases where probability sampling is not feasible or when an application of the research is of interest (Grawitz et al., 2007; Krueger & Casey, 2000; Morgan, 1996)

The present survey involved 11 primary school teachers of general education and 8 secondary education teachers, including both men and women, working in schools in Greece. Thus, during summer of 2018, two focus groups were held, each of which consisted of 11 and 8 individuals, respectively. The reason for this choice was to be able to compare the views of these two groups with each other that probably do not have the same dyslexic approach and to record the similarities and differences between primary and secondary education. The separation of focus groups was based only on the level of education they teach.

In the first focus group participated 11 teachers (4 men and 7 women), their ages ranged from 29 to 55 years old and their working experience fluctuated from 4 to 33 years. Their specialization was: 8 teachers, 1 English teacher, 1 gym teacher and 1 special education teacher. In the second focus group participated 8 teachers (4 men and 4 women), their ages ranged from 43 to 59 and their work experience from 13 to 32 years.

Their specialization was: 4 philologists, 1 mathematician, 1 physics teacher, 1 gym teacher and 1 theologist. The number of participants in each group is decisive for conducting an effective discussion in focus groups. The literature (Krueger & Casey, 2000) mentions the four individuals as the minimum number of participants in each group and twelve to the maximum and considers that the optimal number should be six to eight individuals (Bloor et al, 2001; Krueger & Casey, 2000). Due to the fact that the investigator of the same research applied the focus group methodology for the first time and therefore had no previous experience in doing so, it was considered that a smaller group with an average of eight to ten would be ideal for conducting of research.

2.3 Research Tool

In the present qualitative research were chosen interviews with focus groups as the most appropriate method of collecting data, because the study is a comparison one. In many theoretical researches were used focus groups as the most appropriate tool for data collection and especially in educational studies (Barbour & Kitzinger, 1998; Krueger & Casey, 2000; Morgan, 1993). The data produced by focus groups bring researchers with the multi-level and dynamic nature of human perception as well as the fluidity, contradiction and plurality of views, feelings and experiences of respondents (Wilkinson, 1998). According to Krueger, the focus groups approach refers to "*a carefully organized debate designed to draw perceptions and beliefs on a defined research topic within a permissive, non-threatening environment*" (Krueger, 1994). For Morgan, it is basically "*a way to hear people and learn from them*" (Morgan, 1998). A discussion guide was formed with questions that were used by the researcher to facilitate and guide the discussion process. In general, the driver's series of questions should have some basic traits, such as the initial questions being simple and easy to answer for, to promote the deepening of the topic to be discussed, i.e. to have a sequence from the general to the specific - focused questions and the time needed to answer each one has been calculated in advance. The above principles were also applied in constructing the discussion guide of the same study. Although there was a question guide, there was no strict adherence to the driver's order and content, as this is not appropriate when applying focus groups. The questions work as ancillary, that is, to facilitate the interviewer in the group. But the members of the group must have some freedom to express themselves.

2.4 Pilot Study

The prequalification of the question guide and the discussion process in general took place within the focus group organized and held one week before the start of the research process. Four graduate teachers, two of primary and two secondary, who work in private education and have knowledge of dyslexia, participated in this. This test group helped to choose the final questions. The entire guide to the questions is set out in the appendices. In the pilot study, the research tool was better formulated, as a question collapsed with the previous one because it was considered similar and the participants answered it

before the researcher ask it (Would you reward the effort of dyslexic children in the classroom or you will urge them to try more?). The place where the pilot study (and later the focus groups where took place) was cool, airy, spacious and bright and the participants did not face any problems.

2.5 Data Collection

The methods of data collection in qualitative research should allow the recording of participants' actions and speeches as would be, expressed in the absence of the researcher, i.e. without being influenced, and not primarily by, being imposed or guided by the researcher. In this way the researcher will be able to understand the unique and subjective experiences, beliefs and perceptions of the participants (Corbin & Morse, 2003). In the case of the semi-structured interview, the purpose is again the researcher's attempt to avoid submitting the answers to the participant and for this reason the semi-structured research interview is not strictly structured. However, in the case of the semi-structured technique the researcher forms a list of 7 or 8 points, which he definitely wants to cover. Semi-structured technique is primarily used by young, qualitative researchers, so they do not get caught up in the interview and do not forget to ask or observe the points they consider important for the research phenomenon. These key points are more of a memorandum note to remind the researcher of his research topic (Morse, 2004). Research interviews are usually recorded by the researcher, but other audiovisual media such as cameras are not excluded (Lowery & Evans, 2004; Postholm & Rokkones, 2015).

The type of the interview in the current research is semi-structured. Semi-structured interviews comprised of several key questions that help to determine the areas to be investigated, but also allows the interviewer or interviewee to follow a different direction in order to aim at an idea or reply in more detail (Gill et al., 2008). Qualitative research using open questions allows the respondent to express his own opinions, give his own explanations and share his experiences with his own words and without limitations (Poulopoulos, 1995). The use of a semi-structured interview allows the use of probing questions during the interview with the members of each focus group. The conversation between the members of the focus groups will be tape-recorded.

2.6 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is an independent qualitative descriptive approach that is described primarily as a method of identifying, analyzing and referencing issues within the data. It is a flexible and useful tool that provides a rich, purely qualitative, detailed and complex description of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It includes research on the recognition of common thread in the interviews (Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

Thematic analysis is structured in six phases. The first phase is the familiarization of the researcher with the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). After the interviews are conducted, they are transcribed, which is basically the data (Mertens, 2010). This phase is not a mechanical placement of words on paper but a first creation of meanings (Vary

& Clarke, 2006). High-quality data analysis is dependent on high-quality data collection (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). Consequently, it is the second phase where the data is organized in sign language groups (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In the third phase, the codes that have been constructed are combined to create wider codes called "*themes*" (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The next step is to re-examine the 'themes' and re-read the data to confirm first whether the themes 'work' with the data system and secondly to codify additional data between the issues that have been omitted in the previous phases. In the fifth phase, the themes are defined and named, referring to the corresponding excerpts for each subject and organizing them in a coherent and consistent description (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In the last phase, the researcher is invited to narrate the complex history of the data in a way that persuades the reader of the value and validity of his analysis. It is vital that the analysis provide a comprehensive, logical, non-repetitive and interesting description of the story that tells the facts through the themes. The data supply needs to be accompanied by selected excerpts that capture the meaning of meaning without unnecessary complexity and are embedded in a detailed narrative, arguing in connection with the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

2.7 Validity and Reliability

Qualitative research in the field of education, perhaps much more than quantitative research, has been and continues to be very critical of their validity, reliability and credibility. Qualitative surveys have been accused of using soft and blurry research processes, that their findings are "*fantasy, not science,*" and that the researchers who conduct them "*have no way of confirming what they are saying is true or not*" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 8).

Quality assurance and the prestige of quality research is achieved through the satisfaction of specific research consistency criteria and the detailed description of the research process in the reader, so that he in terms of the validity and reliability of this research (Androutsopoulou, Kalarritis & Bafiti, 2011).

3. Results and Discussion

The results of the survey are presented below for primary school teachers and separately for their secondary education peers. This method was chosen because the purpose of the research is to explore separately the attitudes and beliefs of the two levels of education and then to compare the results and find the similarities or differences between them. At this point, it should be made clear that the names of the participants were not used for reasons of impropriety and instead codes were used. Thus, «T» corresponded to the «teacher»; the «SET» corresponds to the special education teacher; the «GT» is about «gymnastics teacher» and the «ET» in the «English teacher» for primary school teachers. At the same time, «P» corresponds to the «philologist», «M» in the «Mathematician» the «PT» in the «physics teacher»; the «GT» is about «gymnastics teacher» and «Th» about

the «Theologist» for the high school teachers. Next, then, in the extracts from the interviews, was listed the code name of the participant who expressed the point of view. The present research is comparative and, as arise of its results, there are many agreements between the primary and secondary school teachers, but also a number of disagreements on the research questions. For the first research question, which was about the psychosocial profile of dyslexic students, the participants detected both similar and different behaviors between the dyslexic children and teens. On the one hand, the teachers of both focus groups described their students with dyslexia as people retiring and shy. All the participants explain that these descriptions arise from the fact that dyslexic pupils make a great effort to meet the demands of the school but do not make any effort and end up ever lower than their peers. Similar findings are reported in other studies which explain that poor performance in school activities reduces children's self-esteem and creates anxiety and shyness (Battistutta, Commissaire & Steffgen, 2018; Livingston, Siegel & Ribary, 2018). In addition, teachers of primary schools said that the most dyslexic students are social and at school breaks they play with all their classmates, while children isolated are those who, apart from dyslexia, have other diagnoses. On the contrary, teachers of secondary school noticed that on the one hand some dyslexic are very social but on the other hand mentioned that their real friends are few and usually dyslexics, too. That point of view is confirmed in literature. Specifically, their friends are usually composed of peers who also have learning disabilities (Weiner & Schneider, 2002). That probably happens, because they feel equated with their companions, all have the same skills and deficiencies, and each understands the problems of each other. Also, their contacts with friends are few, loose and not stable (Weiner & Schneider, 2002). However, the most teachers who participated in the current study, describe their students with dyslexia as very beloved to their peers and even as social as, as high school teachers have said, many of the dyslexic students conquer high-ranking positions in the pupils' council without leaving dyslexia to affect their social life. In contrast to the current research is a research which results had shown that children with dyslexia have less social interaction with their peers and that dyslexic are the less popular children in school (Alawadn, 2016). Nevertheless, primary school teachers underlined that students with dyslexia did not assume leading roles in students' council and that happens because those positions demand great abilities on reading and writing. This result is confirmed by the research of Carroll and Iles (2006), whose results are about the anxiety that dyslexic feel when they tested in reading and writing.

On the other hand, learning difficulties have been associated, both theoretically and research, with behavioral problems ranging from aggression to apathy or introversion (Grigorenko, 2001). In addition, a student with learning difficulties who is not able to have a social status within the classroom because they are not able to do the lessons can get attention or react through aggression or withdrawal. However, this removes him more than the rest of his class and functions and feeds the vicious circle of school failure (Adamopoulos, 2002). In the current study both participants of the two

focus groups answered, that in some cases the chronic isolation of the child leads to aggression and resignation. That aspect is confirmed by the literature as many scholars associate the aggression of children with dyslexia with their low self-esteem. Specifically, Park, Choi and Lim (2014) correlated aggression with the anxiety experienced by school children and depression resulting from their low self-esteem. There is, also, a difference between the current study and the bibliography, because the participants of my study consider aggression as the cause of chronic isolation of children by teachers and classmates while some other researchers have shown that the aggressiveness of dyslexic students is due to poor performance or poor vocal skills of dyslexics (Karami et al., 2012; Selenius, Hellström & Belfrage, 2011;). In the literature also mentioned that aggression causes problems in the relationships between the students (Park et. al., 2014), but the participants of the current research did not explain any similar opinion.

Finally, both the primary and the secondary school teachers when they had to describe the psychosocial profile of their dyslexic students they reported that the cause that affects pupils' psychology more is the label of dyslexia; however, their opinion shown deviation about the way that dyslexia affects the dyslexic students. Specifically, the participants of the first focus group mentioned that the stigmatization of dyslexic from the diagnosis acts like an extra weight in the psychology of the students. To support this argument, it is necessary to mention some studies that have emphasized the same theme. Especially, some researchers agree with the findings of this research as they have shown that the dyslexia label feeds children with a negative self-image and so rests on their physical weakness and does not try to develop skills. The same researchers underlined that the integration function creates feelings of exclusion and psychological pressure on dyslexic students and affects their psychosocial profile, which was also mentioned in this research by a primary school teacher (Alexander-Passe, 2015; Meadan & Halle, 2004).

However, some participants in the second contradicted this view by arguing that for adolescents the diagnosis of dyslexia is not only a label but instead is a "catharsis" and a release because they understand why they are lagging behind and can be improved. According to research, other studies have also been carried out, which mentioned the positive effects the child has on the diagnosis of dyslexia because it reduces the anxiety and low self-esteem of teenagers and gives them an explanation for the reasons that are disadvantaged by the peers (Heaton, 1996; McDougall, 2001; Riddick, 2000; Scott, 2004; Tsovili, 2003; Van der Stoel, 1990).

The second research question is about the way and the occasions that dyslexic students express higher levels of anxiety and lower self- esteem, both primary and secondary school teachers answered that dyslexic students get anxious in the same level as the typical developmental students. A researcher, also, mentioned that anxiety is a common feeling for all the students with or without dyslexia in the school place (Novita, 2016). School is a stressful activity for students, especially in Greece where dominate the belief that the school performance makes you a good person. However, all the

participants of both primary and secondary school groups claimed that dyslexic students are getting more anxious because they are constantly trying to conquer writing and reading skills, but always fail, especially in writings (i.e. writing a story or an essay, spelling).

To support these findings, it is necessary to mention some studies that have presented the same results. Firstly, it has been shown that written tests, and especially spelling, cause high levels of anxiety in children with dyslexia, especially when they have to write homonym words, while the same researches did not detect the existence of anxiety and low self-esteem in dyslexic children during the reading process (Bonifacci, Candria & Contento, 2007; Kinder & Elander, 2011; Yaman, 2014). Moreover, dyslexic students show higher anxiety and low self-esteem because they try to conquer writing and reading skills to gain recognition from classmates (Alevizou, 2002). Also, Novita (2016), mentioned that students with dyslexia shows high levels of anxiety in specific areas at school, but, as it happens in the current study, both researchers did not take under consideration the treatment which the dyslexic student helped by.

The difficulty of children to respond to and achieve in written tests seems to be due to the fact that writing is an acquired ability, as opposed to speech and, by extension, oral skills that are by nature (Avloniti, Zafiri & Pliogou, 2016). Furthermore, Alexander-Passe (2015), in his research, proved that dyslexia hampers students' lives and creates anxiety when they are going to write and read while studying in the elementary school. Nevertheless, despite the writing, dyslexic students show higher levels of anxiety and lower levels of self-esteem during the reading, according to the teachers who participate in the current study. Those answers can be easily verified by the literature. Tobia and colleagues (2015) noticed that levels of anxiety and low self-esteem increase in the loud reading because this kind of test acts as a threat to the child and affects his self-image because he has to be exposed to his classmates. In addition, the teachers of secondary school underlined that dyslexic teenagers feel anxious and their self-esteem is low during the oral examinations. The same conclusion was reached both primary school teachers who participated in the current study and other researchers, who considered that examinations are a psychopressive factor for students as they are invited to show their knowledge in a different examination system unknown to themselves (Alevizou, 2002; Lufi, Okasha & Cohen, 2004).

Additionally, elevated levels of anxiety in girls rather than in boys were observed in another similar survey (Devine, Fawcett, Szucs, & Dowker, 2012). Concerning the ways in which dyslexic students express their anxiety and their low self-esteem, the teachers of both focus groups agreed that both children and adolescents have a feeling of resentment when they are stressed and this is probably the case to protect themselves from the negative exposure to their peers. Specifically, dyslexic pupils on elementary school express their resignation by crying, while on the other side teenagers choose to choose to be silent when they are stressed (Alevizou, 2002). These reactions are described by other researchers as hypersensitivity and fear of inferiority. With regard to

adolescents, research agrees with the findings of this research as it has been discovered that student abandonment occurs in cases of great anxiety and low self-esteem in order to maintain the child's good self-image and not to disclose his incompetence (Alevizou, 2002; Alexander-Passe, 2010; Scott, 2004).

The other characteristic way to express dyslexics their anxiety and low self-esteem during school activities is to try to avoid school and its requirements mainly written tests. Although, such reactions are only observed by primary school teachers, while refusal to dyslexic teenager only concerns the refusal to participate in the lesson or be examined orally. Alevizou (2002), confirm those results because in her research mentioned that dyslexic students feel abhorrence for school because it is the place where their weaknesses are visible and so they are forever prevented from doing so (McNulty, 2003; Peleg, 2011). Besides, teachers underline that primary school dyslexic students, in contrast with the opinion of lyceum teachers about dyslexic teenagers, express their anxiety and low self-esteem with pain manifestations like headache or bellyache. Those anxiety manifestations are common in children with dyslexia when entering extremely stressful procedures as many researchers have mentioned. Specifically, pain that comes from anxiety and low self-esteem is a way of life for dyslexics and they face it commonly (Aston, 2016). Howbeit, the participants of the second focus group said that a common way to express dyslexic students their anxiety is the spastic movements, but that characteristic is nowhere found in the bibliography.

Additionally, both the current research and other previous researches have noticed that a lot of children with dyslexia due to their high levels of intelligence most of the times they can manage the anxiety and low self-esteem. Specifically, they create a second "*persona*" as a mask to use it in the stressful occasions (Grills-Taquechel et al., 2011; Alexander-Passe, 2012). The same researcher claims that that dyslexic feel anxious the first years in school, but as getting older they can manage the anxiety they feel when they had to write or read, because they know their disability and are more flexible (Alexander-Passe, 2015).

Finally, the third research question was about the way that primary and secondary school teachers try to manage and minimize the anxiety of the dyslexic students and to empower their low self-esteem. More specifically, after the survey, it was found that both primary school teachers and their colleagues in the secondary school place their main concern in dealing with the anxiety and low self-esteem of students with dyslexia, their psychological uplifting with practical reward, the encouragement to continue effort and encouragement that they can do the same things as their peers but do it in their own way. This technique is confirmed by previous research as it is argued that a positive feedback helps dyslexic students continue their efforts to develop skills and gradually recover their lost self-esteem (Bell & McLean, 2014; Elbeheri, Reid & Everatt, 2017; Kormos & Nijakowska, 2017).

However, on the one hand, primary school teachers strongly supported the reward by framing it with some individual techniques, such as the misappropriation of

error by the students as the errors are part of the human nature and happen to everyone, and the effort to protect them of these children from becoming a victim of suicide by their typically developed peers. On the other hand, secondary school teachers have addressed the issue of dyslexia with more certainty. This occurred because dyslexic teenagers and their parents have now accepted the diagnosis of dyslexia and is more relaxed and cooperative when they come in contact with the teachers of this level. In addition, previous research has shown that encouraging and motivating students who have been diagnosed with dyslexia to overcome difficulties during their educational process creates a strong confidence in them and helps them to deal with the later challenges that will be posed in a different way in secondary education (Patsidou- Iliadou, 2011; Elbeheri, Reid & Everatt, 2017). Specifically, both in the current survey and in the previous one, a more ardent attitude towards integration was found by the women who took part as they were looking for more practical ways to reduce stress and increase the low self-esteem of students with dyslexia, while the same the men more strongly supported the reward with various mechanisms (Papadopoulou, Kokaridas, Papanikolaou & Patsiaouras, 2004; Romi & Leyser, 2006).

Moreover, previous researches indicate that younger educators due to their recent graduation and having greater knowledge of modern inclusive education and aspects of special education seem to be more sensitized and more vigorous in identifying the difficulties of dyslexic students and look for ways to overcome these difficulties (Gal, Schreur & Engel-Yeger, 2010; Subban & Sharma, 2006). However, this belief has not been confirmed by the present study since both primary and secondary independent age teachers have shown unparalleled interest in seeking and practicing many ways to reduce children's stress during the educational process and to raise lost self-esteem. In addition to the encouragement, it has been observed in the present study that primary and secondary teachers with more work experience are more comfortable and flexible in teaching children with dyslexia as their experience makes them able to find immediate ways to integrate children who have been diagnosed with dyslexia, and to help them develop at a psychosocial level. Both foreign and domestic literature seems to be more supportive of the opposite view that younger experienced colleagues are more capable of managing dyslexic pupils' anxiety, but there is also a portion of researchers who confirm the data of this research as described above (Batsiou, Bebetsos, Panteli & Antoniou, 2008; Forlin, Loreman, Sharma & Earle, 2009; Subban & Sharma, 2006).

Secondary education female teachers, also, mentioned the fact that teachers themselves can help children deal with stress in the most stressful activities such as oral examination by asking them moderate difficulty to be able to be answered by dyslexic students. In particular, children diagnosed with dyslexia are not able to assimilate all the information they provide, so it would be good, according to the participants in this research, in the examination process to ask these children questions that would they are fit to their knowledge and learning profile, but such actions are not blatant because then there will be opposite results than expected. This is, also, supported by previous studies

which promote the provision of help to dyslexic students by the distribution of notes and diagrams, a technique reported by women in the sample of secondary school teachers (Waterfield & West, 2006; Hutson, 2006). It seems, at a gender level, that women are more sensitive to dyslexia and are constantly looking for more practical ways of supporting students while men remain in more theoretical ways such as encouragement.

Finally, the older and those with more years of work participants, men and women, and both focus groups, talked about their ignorance about dyslexia and that many times though they want to help these children do not have the proper training to do it. The same is true of research that has shown that teaching time is insufficient for individualized teaching, and that the lack of teacher training impedes the work of effective help for children with dyslexia (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Vlachou, Didaskalou & Kontofryou, 2015). Finally, primary school teachers who are primarily responsible for the foundations of children's education spoke of the need for personalized education in schools to help children gain knowledge in an easier way and without having to feel stressed and reduced their self-esteem. The same need for creating new curricula tailored to the needs of students with dyslexia has been raised by other researchers from previous years (Gari, Mylonas & Portešová, 2013; Koutrouba, 2012).

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