

# Barriers to Acceptance: Exploring Parents' Emotional Journey of Denial with Children Facing Dyslexia and Behavioral Issues

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## Abstract

This qualitative study examined the emotional journey of parents raising children with dyslexia and behavioral challenges, focusing on the barriers to acceptance and the psychological impact of denial. The research aimed to provide a localized understanding of how societal stigma, lack of institutional support, and personal struggles influence parental perspectives. By conducting in-depth interviews with six parents from Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte, the study utilized thematic analysis to interpret recurring patterns in their experiences. The findings revealed that parents experience intense emotional distress, including frustration, guilt, sadness, and anxiety, which often leads to delayed acceptance and difficulties in securing appropriate interventions. Parents highlighted the absence of specialized education programs, societal misconceptions, and a lack of community awareness as major obstacles in supporting their children. Furthermore, the study uncovered key coping strategies, such as seeking peer support, developing resilience, and fostering confidence in their children, as essential mechanisms for overcoming these challenges. Despite institutional limitations, parents demonstrated remarkable adaptability, advocating for their children while battling personal and societal barriers. This study underscores the urgent need for educational reforms, community-driven initiatives, and enhanced parental support programs to facilitate acceptance and provide accessible intervention services. Additionally, local government units and educational institutions must take active roles in raising awareness, improving special education access, and equipping families with essential resources. While the challenges remain significant, empowering parents through targeted interventions and support systems can foster a more inclusive and understanding environment for children with dyslexia and behavioral challenges.

**Keywords:** dyslexia; parental acceptance; behavioral challenges; emotional resilience; societal stigma; special education access

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## Introduction

Children with dyslexia and behavioral challenges face substantial obstacles in their educational and social development, placing significant emotional and psychological burdens on their parents. Many parents struggle to accept their child's condition due to fear, denial, and societal stigma, delaying appropriate intervention and support. Adams et al. (2023) highlight that dyslexia affects 5–20% of the population, with behavioral difficulties further intensifying these challenges. Rivera and Torres (2024) emphasize that these difficulties lead to heightened stress and anxiety among children, which also impacts their caregivers, making the emotional journey toward acceptance particularly complex. Fernandez and Cruz (2023) argue that addressing these challenges requires a multidisciplinary approach, integrating education, psychology, and community support to help families navigate this difficult process.

Globally, dyslexia and behavioral challenges are recognized as critical issues requiring intervention from educational institutions, healthcare providers, and psychological support networks. Organizations such as

the International Dyslexia Association advocate for early identification and intervention, as children with dyslexia are more likely to experience emotional distress, academic struggles, and self-esteem issues. Adams et al. (2023) report that children with dyslexia frequently encounter social isolation and frustration, exacerbating behavioral concerns. The persistence of these issues highlights the need for targeted awareness campaigns and specialized intervention programs to ease the emotional burden on families.

In many countries, including Brazil, dyslexia and behavioral challenges in children remain significant concerns, requiring interdisciplinary assessments and tailored interventions. Fernandez and Cruz (2023) state that children with dyslexia often exhibit cognitive and behavioral difficulties, affecting their ability to thrive academically and socially. Unfortunately, a lack of awareness and limited access to resources delay proper diagnosis and intervention, leaving parents uncertain about how to best support their children. Similarly, Rivera and Torres (2024) emphasize the importance of addressing the psychological needs of both children and parents, as untreated dyslexia and behavioral difficulties contribute to anxiety, depression, and family stress.

In the Philippines, dyslexia and behavioral challenges remain underrecognized issues, with limited resources and awareness creating significant barriers for affected families. Santos and Dela Cruz (2022) highlight that children with dyslexia frequently struggle with reading and social interactions, leading to heightened emotional distress and behavioral complications. Furthermore, Garcia (n.d.) discusses the prevalence of social stigma and inadequate diagnostic frameworks, which further hinder intervention efforts. In Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte, these challenges are particularly evident, as local families lack access to specialized educational and therapeutic services, leaving many without structured support systems to help them manage their child's learning difficulties.

According to Santos (2022), existing responses to dyslexia and behavioral challenges remain insufficient, leaving parents without the necessary resources to fully understand and address their child's condition. This underscores the urgent need for localized research that explores the emotional and psychological experiences of parents grappling with denial and the acceptance process. As Garcia (n.d.) highlights, the absence of specialized services and community understanding exacerbates parental struggles, making it crucial to implement awareness programs and early intervention efforts to support families in navigating the journey toward acceptance and effective intervention.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Children with dyslexia and behavioral challenges often face significant barriers that affect their educational, emotional, and social development. These challenges do not only impact the children themselves but also place considerable emotional and psychological strain on their parents. In Santo Tomas, Davao del Norte, families encounter unique difficulties, such as inadequate access to specialized support services and persistent societal stigma surrounding learning disabilities and behavioral disorders. Despite the growing awareness of these issues, there remains a critical gap in understanding the emotional journey of parents navigating these challenges. This study seeks to explore the experiences of these parents to address this gap and provide insights into fostering resilience, acceptance, and effective support strategies.

The research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What emotional and psychological challenges do parents face while raising children with dyslexia and behavioral issues?
2. How do societal stigma and limited access to educational and therapeutic services affect parents'?

- ability to accept and support their children?
3. What coping strategies and resilience mechanisms do parents use to navigate the challenges associated with their children's conditions?

### Theoretical Framework

This research is anchored in Resilience Theory, as introduced by Norman Garmezy. The theory emphasizes how individuals and families adapt and thrive despite facing adversity and challenges. It examines the interaction between risk factors and protective elements that foster resilience, focusing on both internal strengths and external support systems. In the context of this study, the theory provides a foundation to explore how parents of children with dyslexia and behavioral challenges demonstrate resilience and coping mechanisms in the face of emotional, social, and systemic barriers.

The Constructivist Approach serves as the foundation of this study, highlighting that reality is subjective and co-created through individual experiences and social interactions. This framework is supported by interconnected concepts that provide depth and structure to the research. Socially Constructed Reality emphasizes that participants' understanding of dyslexia and behavioral challenges is shaped by the social and cultural context they live in. Subjectivity focuses on the unique and personal perspectives of each parent influenced by their emotions and lived experiences. Individual Experiences explore how each parent's journey contributes to their understanding and the meanings they construct around their challenges. Interactions with Environment investigate how social, educational, and community factors affect the participants' realities and coping mechanisms which significantly shape the experiences and responses of these parents.

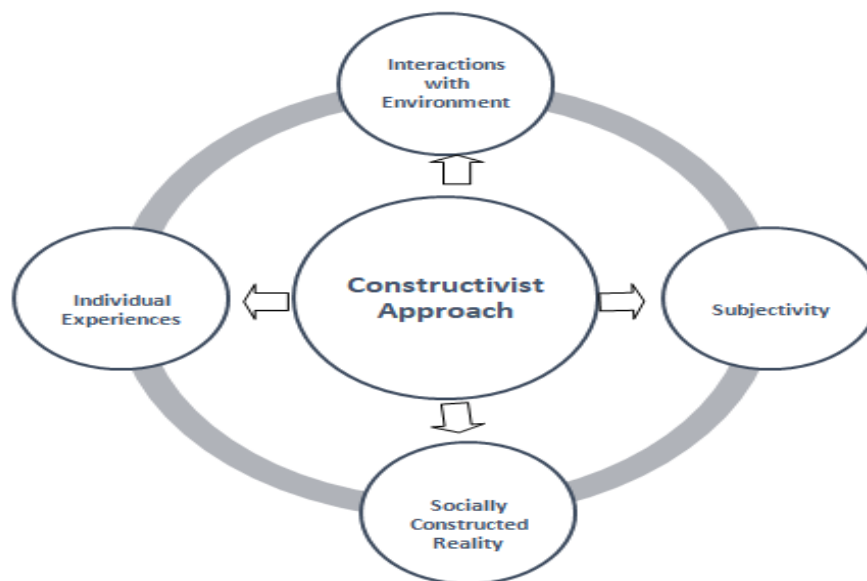


Figure 1. Barriers to Acceptance: Exploring Parents' Emotional Journey of Denial with Children Facing Dyslexia and Behavioral Issues

## Method

This study utilized a qualitative research design with a phenomenological approach, guided by the frameworks of Moustakas (1994) and van Manen (2016), to deeply explore the lived experiences of parents raising children with multiple disabilities. Through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, the study aimed to capture the emotional, social, and financial challenges faced by these parents, as well as their coping mechanisms and support systems. Purposive sampling was employed to select six parent participants from Santo Tomas, Davao Region, Philippines, a rural area marked by limited access to healthcare, education, and therapeutic services. This setting was chosen to provide a meaningful context for understanding the participants' realities.

For data analysis, the study applied thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), allowing for the identification of recurring patterns and themes within the interview data. The process included data familiarization, initial coding, theme development, and constant comparison, supported by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), to ensure reliability and depth. Key themes such as "navigating systemic barriers," "adaptive coping mechanisms," and "impact of societal stigma" emerged from the analysis. The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping by Lazarus and Folkman was used as a theoretical lens to interpret how parents managed stress and utilized available resources, contextualizing their experiences within the socio-economic and cultural landscape of Santo Tomas.

## Results and Discussion

This section presents the qualitative data gathered to achieve the study's objectives. The data was sourced from audio-video recordings of parents raising children with disabilities at Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte. These recordings provided firsthand insights into the lived experiences of parents as they navigated the complexities of raising children with unique learning and behavioral needs. Given the sensitivity of the topic, special attention was paid to preserving the authenticity of their narratives while ensuring ethical considerations were met.

The recorded interviews were manually transcribed and translated into English to maintain the accuracy and integrity of the participants' responses. This transcription process enabled a detailed examination of parental perspectives, highlighting both the challenges and adaptive strategies they employed in supporting their children's development. The meticulous translation ensured that cultural nuances and emotional depth were retained, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of their experiences.

Through the analysis of key statements extracted from each interview transcript, meanings were derived that reflected the emotional, social, and institutional barriers faced by parents. Thematic analysis was employed as the primary method for organizing the collected data, enabling the identification of recurring patterns and underlying themes. This approach allowed for a structured interpretation of how societal attitudes, emotional struggles, and coping mechanisms collectively influenced the acceptance and support of children with disabilities.

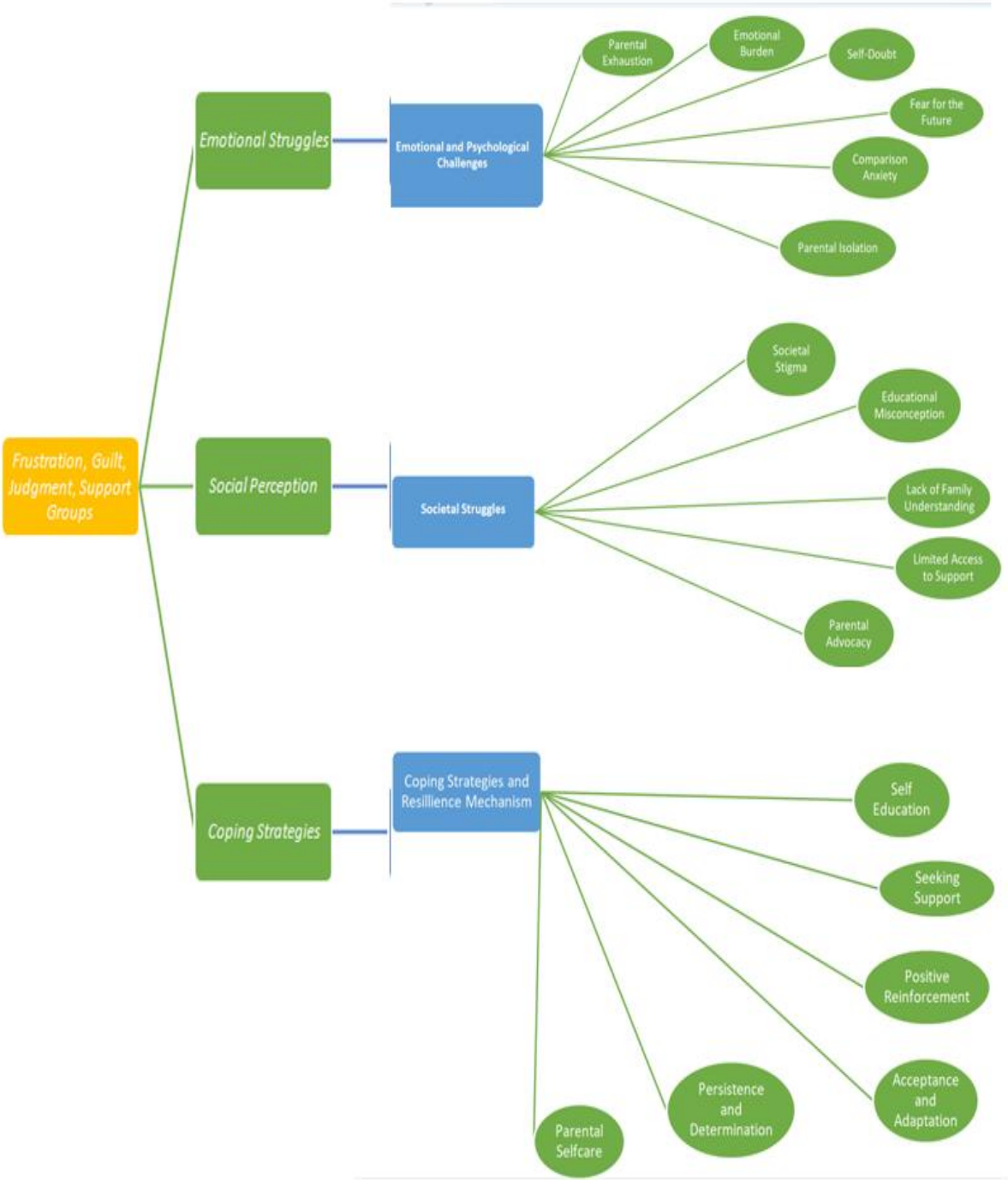


Figure 2. Reflects the experiences and challenges faced by parents raising children with dyslexia and behavioral issues.

It highlights the emotional distress parents encounter, including frustration, guilt, sadness, and fear for their child's future, which often leads to denial and delayed acceptance. Additionally, the figure illustrates the impact of societal stigma and misconceptions, showing how external judgment, misinformation, and lack of institutional support create further obstacles for parents seeking appropriate interventions

### Emotional and Psychological Challenges

*Parental exhaustion.* It is a common experience among parents raising children with dyslexia and behavioral issues. The daily struggles of supporting their child's learning difficulties, coupled with societal pressures, create significant physical and emotional fatigue.

*"Kada-adlaw, magpaka-kusgan ko, pero naa gyud mga gabii nga maghilak ko nga maghunahuna unsaon nako siya pagtabang." ("Every day, I try to stay strong, but there are nights when I cry, thinking about how I can help my child.")*

*"Lisod kaayo. Kada-adlaw, makita nako ang struggle sa akong anak, pero wala koy mahimo kundi magpadayon." ("It's very difficult. Every day, I see my child struggling, but I have no choice but to keep going.")*

Research by Emerson et al. (2010) on parental stress in families of children with disabilities supports these experiences, demonstrating that caregivers of children with learning challenges often experience higher levels of physical and emotional strain. The study suggests that the lack of adequate support systems exacerbates parental exhaustion, further reinforcing the need for educational accommodations and resources.

*Emotional Burden.* The emotional burden of raising a child with dyslexia is reflected in the overwhelming feelings of sadness and helplessness parents experience. Participant 6 shared:

*"Sakit kaayo sa akong kasingkasing ang pagtan-aw sa akong anak nga naglisod sa eskwela." ("It pains my heart to see my child struggling in school.")*

*"Kasubo kay makakita ko sa akong anak nga nasakitan siya nga murag dili siya pareha sa uban." ("Sadness because I see my child hurting, feeling different from others.")*

A study by Blacher and McIntyre (2006) on parental emotions related to disabilities found that feelings of sadness and worry are heightened when children struggle with academic tasks. Parents often internalize their child's difficulties as their own, which adds to their psychological distress and affects their overall well-being.

*Self-Doubt.* Parents of children with dyslexia frequently question their abilities and whether they are doing enough to support their child. This self-doubt affects their confidence as caregivers, further fueling emotional distress.

*"Usahay, makapangutana ko sa akong kaugalingon kung sakto ba akong gibuhay." ("Sometimes, I question myself if I am doing the right thing.")*

*"Makalagot usahay kay murag wala koy makuha nga saktong tabang." ("Sometimes, it's frustrating because I feel like I'm not getting the right help.")*

Research by Hastings and Taunt (2002) emphasizes that parents of children with disabilities frequently experience self-doubt due to the unpredictability of their child's development. This study suggests that a strong support network could alleviate feelings of inadequacy, yet many parents raising children with dyslexia lack access to such resources.

*Fear for the Future.* The fear of their child's future is one of the **biggest concerns** for parents. They worry whether their child will succeed academically, socially, and professionally despite their learning difficulties.

*"Kahadlok kay wala ko kabalo kung unsa ang iyang umaabot, kung maka-iskwela ba siya og tarong, ug kung makatrabaho ba siya nga malipay siya." ("I fear for his future, not knowing if he can get a proper education or find a job that makes him happy.")*

*"Usahay, maka-feel ko og kahadlok, kay murag ako ra usa nagdala sa tanan." ("Sometimes, I feel afraid because it seems like I am the only one carrying everything.")*

A study by Dyson (1997) on families of children with learning disabilities highlights that uncertainty regarding a child's future is a major contributor to parental stress. This research underscores that parents who lack access to specialized educational programs often feel helpless about their child's future prospects.

*Comparison Anxiety.* Parents frequently compare their child's development with other children, which exacerbates their emotional distress. This comparison anxiety makes them feel isolated and further reinforces their fears of inadequacy.

*"Dili lalim, labi na kung makakita ko sa ubang bata nga sayon ra kaayo nila ang eskwela, pero akong anak kinahanglan pa og dako nga paningkamot." ("It's difficult, especially when I see other kids learning easily while my child struggles.")*

*"Lisod kaayo kung makita nimo nga ang uban nga bata dali lang maka-learn, pero imong anak struggle gyud." ("It's hard seeing other kids learn quickly while my child struggles so much.")*

Research by Guralnick (2001) on family perspectives on disabilities found that parents of children with learning difficulties often experience guilt and frustration due to constant comparisons with neurotypical children. This study further emphasizes that social expectations play a critical role in shaping parental emotions.

*Parental Isolation.* Parents of children with dyslexia often experience social isolation, as they feel misunderstood by other parents and educators.



*"Sa eskwelahan, naa mga ginikanan nga magtan-aw sa akong anak nga murag problema lang siya kay sige lang og lihok ug kasaba." ("At school, some parents look at my child like he's just a problem because he keeps moving and making noise.")*

*"Bisan sa pamilya, naa mag-ingon nga 'basin kulang lang na sa disiplina.' Dili sila makasabot nga dili lang basta-basta ang iyang kahimtang." ("Even in the family, some say 'maybe he just lacks discipline.' They don't understand that his condition isn't that simple.")*

Research by Turnbull et al. (2006) on families of children with disabilities affirms that parental isolation is common due to societal misconceptions about learning disorders. This study suggests that without adequate awareness and inclusion programs, parents of children with dyslexia continue to feel alienated.

The emotional challenges faced by parents raising children with dyslexia and behavioral issues highlight the urgent need for better support systems, educational accommodations, and public awareness. Studies such as those by Emerson et al. (2010) and Florian & Hegarty (2004) demonstrate that parents who lack access to resources experience heightened emotional distress and self-doubt. The experiences shared by participants align with these studies, reinforcing the reality that dyslexia deeply affects family dynamics and parental well-being.

By addressing the psychological and emotional burden of parents, educators, policymakers, and support groups can create more inclusive interventions to assist families. Strengthening educational resources, conducting awareness campaigns, and providing professional guidance are essential in reducing parental exhaustion, self-doubt, and fears regarding their child's future.

### **Societal Struggles**

*Social stigma.* It remains one of the most significant challenges faced by parents of children with dyslexia and behavioral issues. The misconceptions surrounding dyslexia often lead to misjudgment, discrimination, and emotional strain for both parents and their children. Many people mistakenly believe that children with dyslexia are simply lazy or lack discipline, which creates an environment of prejudice rather than understanding.

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These statements affirm that social stigma leads to exclusion and misunderstanding, creating emotional distress for parents who constantly feel the need to prove their child's struggles are valid. Florian and Hegarty (2004) emphasized that negative societal attitudes toward learning disabilities contribute to limited opportunities for children with dyslexia. The study highlights that when communities lack awareness,



children are often labeled as "difficult" rather than recognized for their potential, reinforcing parental struggles. Additionally, research by Norwich (2013) suggests that public misconceptions about dyslexia result in a lack of empathy, further marginalizing affected families.

*Educational institutions.* It play a critical role in shaping perceptions of dyslexia, yet many teachers and school administrators still misunderstand the condition. Some educators mistakenly associate dyslexia with a lack of effort rather than recognizing it as a neurological learning difference.

*"Sa eskwelahan, naay teachers nga mag-ingon nga kinahanglan lang siya og disiplina, pero dili lang na ingon ana kasayon." ("At school, some teachers say he just needs discipline, but it's not that simple.")*

*"Sa eskwelahan, naa gyud mga magtutudlo nga nagtuo nga disiplina lang ang kulang sa akong anak." ("At school, there are teachers who think my child just lacks discipline.")*

These experiences reflect the harmful impact of misconceptions among educators, which often lead to inadequate support and ineffective teaching strategies for children with dyslexia. A study by Snowling et al. (2007) found that misconceptions among educators about dyslexia result in incorrect interventions, further disadvantaging affected students. This aligns with the experiences shared by parents, where a lack of proper training in dyslexia awareness among teachers results in ineffective educational support. Additionally, Hornby (2015) emphasized that schools must adopt inclusive learning strategies to address the unique needs of children with dyslexia rather than treating their difficulties as behavioral problems.

*Lack of Family Understanding.* Many parents raising children with dyslexia and behavioral issues also experience misunderstanding from their own families, which adds to their emotional struggles. Some relatives dismiss dyslexia as an excuse for poor performance, failing to recognize its neurological basis.

*"Sa pamilya, naa pud nagtuo nga dili siya mahimong normal." ("In the family, some believe he will never be normal.")*

*"Sa balay, naa pud mga paryente nga mag-ingon nga 'ayaw na paningkamot kay dili na normal imong anak.' Maka-down siya, Ma'am, kay gusto lang ko makakuha og saktong tabang." ("At home, some relatives say 'stop trying, your child is not normal.' It's discouraging because all I want is proper help.")*

These statements illustrate how family perceptions can negatively affect parental confidence, reinforcing feelings of isolation and helplessness. Turnbull et al. (2006) noted that family acceptance plays a critical role in shaping a positive environment for children with dyslexia. Their study showed that when relatives misunderstand the condition, parents feel unsupported, leading to higher stress levels. Similarly, Hastings and Taunt (2002) argued that the emotional well-being of parents is closely tied to the level of understanding they receive from their family and community.

*Limited Access to Support.* Despite the overwhelming challenges parents face, many struggle to find affordable and accessible resources for their child's education and development. Specialized education programs, tutors, and therapy are often too expensive or unavailable in certain communities, leaving families with few options.

*"Ma'am, nindot unta kung naay libre nga special education programs para sa mga bata nga naay dyslexia." ("Ma'am, it would be great if there were free special education programs for children with dyslexia.")*

*"Dili tanan makabayad og tutor o therapy. Kinahanglan pud og awareness campaign para mas kasabot ang mga tao." ("Not everyone can afford a tutor or therapy. There should also be awareness campaigns so people understand better.")*

These statements emphasize that the financial burden associated with dyslexia interventions often prevents children from receiving the support they need, leaving parents feeling powerless. Research by Dyson (1997) highlights that accessibility to educational accommodations significantly influences the success of children with dyslexia. The study suggests that without government-funded programs or affordable therapy, many children are left without proper intervention, reinforcing parental distress. Additionally, Norwich (2013) emphasized that inclusive policies should be implemented to ensure children with learning disabilities receive the necessary academic support, regardless of socioeconomic status.

*Parental advocacy.* It plays a crucial role in securing proper support and accommodations for children with dyslexia. Many parents take active measures to educate teachers, raise awareness, and push for inclusion, despite facing resistance from institutions or social circles.

*"Ako mismo mag-istorya sa iyang teachers, maghatag og mga materials para masabtan nila ang iyang kondisyon." ("I personally talk to his teachers and provide materials so they can understand his condition.")*

*"Ginatudloan pud nako siya nga dili siya dapat maulaw sa iyang struggles." ("I teach him that he should not be ashamed of his struggles.")*

These statements illustrate the proactive approach parents take in fighting for their child's needs, ensuring they receive equal treatment and understanding in education and social settings. Research by Florian & Hegarty (2004) highlights that parental advocacy significantly improves educational outcomes for children with learning disabilities. The study suggests that when parents actively engage with teachers and institutions, they help dismantle misconceptions about dyslexia and establish better learning environments. Additionally, Hornby (2015) stresses that effective parental advocacy fosters long-term success by ensuring educators implement inclusive teaching strategies.

The societal struggles faced by parents raising children with dyslexia and behavioral issues illustrate the pressing need for awareness, institutional reform, and accessible support services. Studies by Florian and Hegarty (2004), Norwich (2013), and Turnbull et al. (2006) reinforce the experiences shared by participants, showing that social stigma, educational misconceptions, lack of family understanding, and limited resources contribute to the difficulties parents endure. Addressing these challenges requires a collective effort from educational institutions, policymakers, and communities. Public awareness campaigns, specialized teacher training, and government-backed intervention programs can help dismantle misconceptions and create an inclusive environment for children with dyslexia.

## Coping Strategies and Resilience Mechanisms

Despite their emotional battles and societal challenges, parents demonstrate remarkable resilience, developing strategies to manage stress, advocate for their children, and create effective learning environments. Many emphasize the importance of patience and emotional reassurance, showing their child that their learning struggles do not define their potential.

*"Dapat taas ang pasensya, Ma'am. Dili pareha sa uban nga bata ang akong anak, pero kinahanglan nga ipakita namo nga normal ra siya." (Patience must be high, ma'am. My child is not the same as others, but we need to show them that they are normal.)*

This highlights how parental acceptance fosters emotional security in dyslexic children. Parents avoid imposing high academic expectations, choosing instead to focus on building their child's self-confidence. Schwarzer and Warner (2019) support this, showing that positive reinforcement strengthens learning resilience in children facing academic difficulties.

Many parents also rely on peer support, joining communities of other parents experiencing similar struggles. Sharing their journey provides emotional relief and practical strategies for navigating dyslexia-related challenges.

*"Nag-join ko og support group kay usahay murag nag-inusara ko sa akong pakigbisog. Nindot kaayo nga makadungog sa kasinatian sa uban." (I joined a support group because sometimes I feel alone in my struggles. It is comforting to hear others' experiences.)*

*"Kung mas kasabot ang eskwelahan sa iyang panginahanglan, mas dali unta para sa bata. Ang mga bata nga naay dyslexia dili kinahanglan husgahan." (If schools understood their needs better, it would be easier for the child. Children with dyslexia should not be judged.)*

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) affirm that parent support networks reduce emotional strain, providing guidance and reassurance for those overwhelmed by their child's condition. Parents ultimately advocate for educational reforms, stressing the need for inclusive learning environments rather than a rigid system that isolates dyslexic students. Williams and Lynch (2021) emphasize that early interventions and awareness programs significantly improve dyslexic students' academic experiences, ensuring they receive the accommodations necessary to thrive.

**Self-Education.** Due to limited professional support, many parents resort to self-education, researching dyslexia to better understand their child's needs and behaviors.

*"Magbasa ko og mga materials bahin sa dyslexia, ug mag-try ko og lain-laing paagi nga akong makita sa internet." ("I read materials about dyslexia and try different methods that I find online.")*

*"Importante kaayo nga ang mga ginikanan makasabot sa kondisyon sa ilang anak, kay kung mas kasabot sila, mas mahimo nilang tabangan." ("It is very important*

*for parents to understand their child's condition because the more they understand, the better they can help.")*

These statements highlight how parents take control of their child's learning process, often without external guidance. A study of Norwich (2013) states that self-education empowers parents to make informed decisions about their child's learning strategies, emphasizing that when parents are knowledgeable about dyslexia, they can implement tailored interventions at home. Also, Snowling et al. (2007) reinforce this, stating that parental awareness positively impacts a child's academic progress and emotional resilience.

*Seeking Support.* Support systems, whether through family, friends, or fellow parents, play a vital role in helping parents manage stress and develop effective coping strategies.

*"Dili lalim ang akong sitwasyon, pero naa koy pipila ka higala nga nakasabot ug nagahatag og moral support." ("My situation isn't easy, but I have a few friends who understand and provide moral support.")*

*"Nag-join ko og online support groups, kay importante kaayo nga naa kay kaistorya nga pareha og experience." ("I joined online support groups because it's important to talk to others with similar experiences.")*

These experiences underscore that finding understanding peers and emotional connections reduces the feelings of isolation that parents often endure. Research by Hastings & Taunt (2002) affirms that having a strong social support network significantly alleviates parental stress and improves emotional well-being. Similarly, Turnbull et al. (2006) state that connecting with other parents facing similar challenges fosters resilience and provides practical strategies for navigating the complexities of raising a child with dyslexia.

*Positive Reinforcement.* Parents often use positive reinforcement to encourage their child's learning progress, celebrating small victories to build their confidence.

*"Nag-focus ko sa iyang progress kaysa sa iyang struggles. Bisan gamay lang nga improvement, ginacelebrate namo." ("I focus on his progress rather than his struggles. Even small improvements, we celebrate.")*

*"Kung makita nako nga nagpaningkamot siya, akong ginaingnan siya nga proud ko sa iyang effort." ("When I see that he is trying, I tell him that I am proud of his effort.")*

These statements reinforce the importance of recognizing effort rather than limitations, empowering children to stay motivated despite difficulties. Research by Hornby (2015) states that positive reinforcement enhances a child's self-esteem and encourages perseverance in academic tasks. Florian & Hegarty (2004) emphasize that parents who consistently support their child's achievements help foster a positive self-image, which in turn strengthens their learning engagement.

*Acceptance and Adaptation.* Rather than forcing their child to conform to traditional learning methods, parents adopt alternative teaching strategies that suit their child's pace and abilities.

*"Dili pwede nga mag-expect nga pareha siya sa uban nga bata. Nagtan-aw ko og mga materyales bahin sa dyslexia ug nagbasa ko og mga libro para mas makasabot ko." ("I cannot expect him to be like other children. I read materials about dyslexia and books to understand him better.")*

*"Ginatudloan nako siya nga ang iyang journey lahi sa uban, ug dili siya kinahanglan magparehas sa uban aron mahimong malampuson." ("I teach him that his journey is different from others, and he does not need to be like everyone else to be successful.")*

These statements reflect how parents embrace their child's individuality, adjusting their expectations and providing customized learning solutions. Snowling et al. (2007) emphasize that acceptance and adaptation in parenting significantly enhance a dyslexic child's emotional resilience and academic engagement. Norwich (2013) reinforces that personalized learning methods yield better outcomes than forcing children into rigid educational structures.

*Persistence and Determination.* Despite challenges, parents display persistent efforts to provide the best possible opportunities for their child.

*"Una sa tanan, ayaw hunong sa pagpangita og paagi. Bisan lisod, naa gyud mga pamaagi nga makatabang sa imong anak." ("First of all, never stop looking for ways. Even if it is difficult, there are always ways to help your child.")*

*"Maski kapoy, kinahanglan ko magpabilin nga lig-on para sa iyang kaugmaon." ("Even when tired, I must stay strong for his future.")*

These statements illustrate the unwavering commitment of parents in supporting their child's learning journey, even in the absence of external assistance. Dyson (1997) states that persistence among parents fosters resilience in children, teaching them how to overcome adversity. Florian & Hegarty (2004) highlight that determined parental involvement contributes significantly to a child's ability to navigate academic difficulties independently.

*Parental Self-Care.* Maintaining personal well-being is crucial for parents to continue supporting their child effectively.

*"Ginapaningkamotan nako nga kalma ko kung maglisod siya, kay kung makita niya nga dili ko frustrated, basin dili pud siya mag-feel og pressure." ("I try to stay calm when he struggles because if he sees that I'm not frustrated, maybe he won't feel pressured either.")*

*"Ginabuhat nako ang tanan nga pwede aron dili ko mapuno sa stress. Usahay, magpaminaw ko og kalmado nga musika ug mag-exercise kada buntag." ("I do everything I can to avoid being overwhelmed by stress. Sometimes, I listen to calming music and exercise every morning.")*

These statements affirm that self-care is essential in maintaining emotional stability, allowing parents to provide effective support without feeling burned out. Hastings & Taunt (2002) argue that parental self-care directly influences a child's emotional health, reinforcing that when parents prioritize their well-being, they create a balanced and supportive environment for their child. The coping strategies used by parents in raising children with dyslexia highlight the need for long-term support, emotional resilience, and adaptive learning approaches. Studies by Norwich (2013), Florian & Hegarty (2004), and Hastings & Taunt (2002) validate the effectiveness of self-education, advocacy, positive reinforcement, and self-care in fostering success for children with dyslexia. Empowering parents through awareness programs, psychological support, and inclusive educational policies will further strengthen their ability to advocate for their child's success.

## **Conclusion**

This study examined the complex emotional journey of parents raising children with dyslexia and behavioral challenges, highlighting the barriers to acceptance, societal misconceptions, and coping mechanisms that shape their experiences. By employing a qualitative approach, the research provided in-depth insights into the emotional struggles parents face, revealing that denial, frustration, guilt, and fear significantly delay intervention and support. Parents' ability to accept and advocate for their children is influenced by their personal understanding, the availability of resources, and the extent of societal and institutional support they receive. Those who access peer support, educational guidance, and structured intervention programs demonstrate greater emotional resilience, enabling them to provide effective learning support for their children.

Despite these adaptive strategies, the study identified persistent challenges that hinder parental acceptance, including widespread stigma, lack of awareness, and insufficient institutional accommodations for children with dyslexia. Misconceptions regarding dyslexia and behavioral difficulties often lead to judgment, misinformation, and exclusion, making it harder for parents to openly discuss their children's struggles or seek necessary interventions. The findings emphasize the need for targeted awareness campaigns, improved teacher training, and policy reforms to ensure that parents receive adequate educational and emotional support in navigating their child's learning journey.

The resilience displayed by parents in overcoming denial, developing adaptive coping strategies, and advocating for their children underscores the importance of structured parental support programs, community engagement, and institutional reform. Recognizing dyslexia as a learning difference rather than a limitation fosters a more inclusive and empowering perspective, allowing both parents and children to focus on growth, strengths, and progress rather than obstacles. Future research should explore the long-term impact of parental attitudes on their children's academic and emotional development, while also evaluating the effectiveness of intervention strategies in shifting parental perspectives from denial to acceptance. Additionally, further studies should assess how cultural and societal influences shape the parental experience of raising children with dyslexia, ensuring that intervention programs are tailored to address specific social barriers and enhance support systems for families navigating these challenges.

## **Recommendation**

Based on the findings of this study, it is essential for the Department of Education to implement comprehensive parental education programs that focus on dyslexia and behavioral challenges. These programs should be grounded in Resilience Theory, equipping parents with the necessary coping mechanisms

to navigate emotional distress while fostering their child's strengths. Additionally, schools should integrate structured parental engagement sessions, workshops, and advocacy seminars to empower families with scientific, evidence-based strategies for managing their child's learning difficulties. The Constructivist Approach should also be incorporated to acknowledge parents' lived experiences, emotional responses, and interactions with social environments, ensuring that education and interventions align with their needs. Local Government Units (LGUs) must take an active role in developing community-driven initiatives focused on awareness campaigns, therapy programs, and early intervention screenings. Public outreach should challenge misconceptions surrounding dyslexia and behavioral challenges, encouraging acceptance, inclusivity, and proactive parental engagement.

Future research should focus on assessing the long-term effects of parental denial on children's academic and social outcomes. Investigating the role of cultural perceptions on dyslexia acceptance can provide insights into how societal influences shape parenting approaches. Evaluating the effectiveness of structured intervention strategies in shifting parental perspectives from denial to acceptance can further guide policy development, educational programming, and community-based outreach initiatives. By integrating scientifically grounded resilience-building strategies, parents will be better equipped to support their children emotionally, socially, and academically. Strengthening institutional collaboration between educators, policymakers, and advocacy groups will create a sustainable support system that enables families to transition from denial to active engagement, ensuring that children with dyslexia receive the interventions necessary to thrive.

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## Appendix A. Interview Guide Questionnaire

### Research Title: Barriers to Acceptance: Exploring Parents' Emotional Journey of Denial with Children Facing Dyslexia and Behavioral Issues

Research Question	Research Objective	Interview Questions	Probing Questions
<b>1. What emotional and psychological challenges do parents face while raising children with dyslexia and behavioral issues?</b>	Identify the emotional and psychological challenges parents face while raising children with dyslexia and behavioral issues.	1. Can you describe the emotional and psychological experiences you have faced while raising your child with dyslexia and behavioral issues? 2. How has your child's condition affected your mental well-being and daily life?	1.1 What specific emotions do you frequently experience in response to your child's struggles? 1.2 Have you ever felt overwhelmed or isolated due to your child's condition? If so, can you share an example? 1.3 How do you manage stress related to parenting challenges?
<b>2. How do societal stigma and limited access to educational and therapeutic services affect parents' ability to accept and support their children?</b>	Examine the impact of societal stigma and limited access to educational and therapeutic services on parental acceptance and support.	3. How has societal perception of dyslexia and behavioral issues influenced your ability to support your child? 4. What challenges have you faced in accessing educational and therapeutic services for your child?	2.1 Have you ever experienced judgment or discrimination from family, friends, or educators? If so, how did it affect you? 2.2 What resources or support systems do you wish were more accessible to parents like you? 2.3 How do you advocate for your child's needs in school or social settings?
<b>3. What coping strategies and resilience mechanisms do parents use to navigate the challenges associated with their children's conditions?</b>	Explore the coping strategies and resilience mechanisms parents use to navigate challenges associated with their children's conditions.	5. What strategies have helped you cope with the challenges of raising a child with dyslexia and behavioral issues? 6. Can you share any personal experiences where you successfully overcame a difficult situation related to your child's condition?	3.1 Are there specific support groups, therapies, or activities that have helped you manage stress? 3.2 How do you maintain a positive outlook despite the difficulties you face? 3.3 What advice would you give to other parents going through similar experiences?