

Promoting Inclusive Literacy through Teaching Practices for Students with Dyslexia in Primary School Settings

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Abstract

This study aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 4 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, both of which advocate for inclusive and equitable quality education. It investigates teaching strategies that support inclusive literacy for students with dyslexia in primary school settings. Using a quantitative descriptive and correlational design, the research was conducted in five mainstream primary schools under Botswana's Ministry of Education and Skills Development. The sample comprised 143 teachers and school administrators involved in special education, selected through the Cochran formula. Data was collected via a standardized, self-administered questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS. Findings revealed a strong positive correlation ($R = 0.864$) between inclusive literacy outcomes and factors such as teaching strategies, teacher preparation, inclusive practices, and resource availability. The regression analysis ($F = 34.251$) confirmed that these variables significantly predict literacy success for students with dyslexia. The study concludes that empowering teachers through systematic professional development is essential for fostering effective, inclusive education. It highlights the critical role of teacher preparedness in implementing inclusive literacy strategies and calls for targeted training programs to address the needs of students with dyslexia.

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INTRODUCTION

Dyslexia is among the most prevalent learning problems in school-going children across the globe, with a significant proportion of students not being identified and assisted, especially at the primary school level (Ohanga, 2024). This study explores inclusive literacy and pedagogical approaches tailored to the specific learning needs of students with dyslexia (Kelly & Phillips, 2022). Research conducted by Al Otaiba (2023) and Kothapalli, Raghuram, and Krishna (2024) highlights that timely and appropriately targeted instructional interventions significantly improve literacy outcomes among students with dyslexia. Nevertheless, in spite of the international efforts towards the establishment of inclusive education, there is still a shortage of teachers who are trained and equipped with the skills to adequately meet the needs of students with dyslexia (Materechera, 2020). According to Lumor and Muwanika (2024), in sub-Saharan African countries and other developing countries, students with dyslexia are further marginalized due to a lack of resources and teacher awareness in those countries.

This research has facilitated the continued practice of ensuring the right to education of all students as affirmed in the international conventions, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and Sustainable Development Goal 4, which upholds the provision of inclusive and equitable quality education. The CRPD is a crucial framework for promoting the rights of persons with disabilities (McCusker et al., 2023). Sustainable Development Goal 4 also emphasizes the provision of inclusive and equitable quality education (Albert et al., 2023). The study addresses the gap between policy and practice by concentrating on how primary school teachers may modify their literacy teaching in order to accommodate students with dyslexia. It refers to the fact that there is an undisputed necessity of inclusive pedagogies that address and respond to the diversity of students (Koutsouris, Bremner, & Stentiford, 2023). The study highlights that the

inclusive literacy of students with dyslexia would not only facilitate their academic achievements but also improve their self-esteem, social inclusion, and future prospects in life.

Although an increasing amount of research on dyslexia and inclusive education exists (Wilmot et al., 2023; Lindner et al., 2023), there is a net volume of literature that has been gathered in high-income contexts, and there is a dearth of empirical studies on the enactment of inclusive literacy practices in low-resourced primary school settings (Wickenden, 2021). Early intervention and systematic literacy instructions have been emphasized by researchers for students with dyslexia in line with Shanahan (2023). Nevertheless, these models tend to be on the conditions of environments that have access to advanced resources, well-trained staff, and conducive infrastructure (Duff et al., 2020). According to Mavutha and Mansingh (2024), in most developing nations, including those in Southern Africa, there is still a paucity of localized studies on how teachers can modify their teaching strategies to accommodate students with dyslexia in the regular education primary classroom. Consequently, educational interventions and pedagogical approaches are frequently adopted from external models that lack cultural relevance and contextual practicality. This misalignment often leads to inconsistent outcomes and perpetuates the exclusion of students from meaningful participation in education. According to Khoiriyah et al. (2022), learning difficulties that emerge within the classroom context require targeted interventions to enhance students' comprehension and foster their creativity through thoughtfully designed instructional approaches.

This study investigates the lived experiences, challenges, and adaptive strategies employed by primary school teachers working with students diagnosed with dyslexia in resource-constrained educational environments. Departing from previous research that has predominantly focused on diagnostic frameworks or policy-level analyses, this inquiry foregrounds classroom-based pedagogical practices by engaging directly with teachers who implement

inclusive literacy on the ground (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). By situating its analysis within the realities of teaching in under-resourced contexts, the study offers novel insights into special and inclusive education, emphasizing the importance of localized perspectives and practitioner expertise. The research further contributes to theoretical discourse by integrating inclusive pedagogical frameworks with contextually relevant literacy strategies tailored to the needs of students with dyslexia. Ultimately, the study advances the development of a culturally responsive and sustainable instructional model that supports equitable literacy acquisition for all students, particularly those with specific learning difficulties.

METHOD

This study used the quantitative descriptive research, which sought to investigate the teaching strategies employed by primary school teachers with the aim of fostering inclusive literacy among students with dyslexia. Ghanad (2023) attests that a descriptive design was deemed to be suitable because it allowed the researcher to present and analyze the qualities, frequency, and patterns of strategies used in inclusive classrooms without the need to control any variables. This design was particularly suitable for the study as it allowed the researchers to gather measurable data on teachers' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of various literacy strategies, thereby providing a systematic description of the prevailing situation in inclusive teaching practices (Weadman, Serry, & Snow, 2022). Jenkins (2021) argues that descriptive research enables a systematic explanation of a phenomenon in its natural occurrence and is therefore applicable in studies related to education, wherein research aims at exploring practices, experiences, and challenges in real-life

situations. The variables that were considered in this study were the use of multisensory methods, the application of differentiated instruction, and the readiness of teachers to work with students with dyslexia. These were defined concerning demographic features of teachers, including training, teaching experience, and exposure to inclusive education programs. The study being reviewed presented grounds upon which to generalize the outcomes to a bigger population and provided empirical evidence regarding the inclusive practices of literacy among students with dyslexia in the primary school, using a descriptive design. The results are likely to make an impact on the policy, training, and practice in the field of inclusive education.

In this study, stratified random sampling was applied as the researcher wanted to represent all schools that participated fairly. All schools were considered as strata, with the respondent count in each stratum being picked randomly. It was distributed as follows: School A (28), School B (28), School C (29), School D (29), and School E (29). The participants were qualified teachers/school heads with at least one year of experience in the teaching of literacy and/or in supporting students with special educational needs, and they were all selected according to the inclusion criteria.

The study population was teachers and school administrators in the sampled schools who were responsible for teaching literacy as well as offering special education services in their schools. The approximate number of people was 1230 in the five schools. In order to justify the sampling size, the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table, which offers a scientifically validated rule of thumb when choosing representative sample sizes of finite populations, was used to define the sample size in the study. The sample size determination table is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Sample size determination

Table for Determining Sample Size of a Known Population									
N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	290	165	850	265	3000	341

20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	346
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	354
35	32	150	108	360	186	1100	285	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	191	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	170	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	180	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	190	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	200	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	370
65	56	210	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	59	220	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	230	144	550	226	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	240	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380
85	70	250	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	260	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	254	2600	335	100000	384

Note: N = Population size; S = Sample size

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

Based on the table above (Table 1), at a population size of about 1230, the value of the recommended sample size of 291 at a 95% confidence interval and 5% margin of error is 291. Nevertheless, given the realities of time, resources, and access, the investigation settled on a final sample of 143 participants, which nonetheless is over 10% of the target population. Such a choice is consistent with the suggestion made by Hodge (2020), who asserts that when conducting research in a social science, a sample of at least 10% of the population is deemed to be satisfactory in terms of validity and reliability of the results.

The data collection was carried out based on a structured self-administered questionnaire, which consisted of closed-ended questions. This is a standardised instrument for gathering data in which users answer a predetermined series of questions with predetermined options on their own (Quansah & Amoako, 2018). Consistency and comparability between responses are promoted by the framework, which guarantees that each responder receives the same questions in the same order. Participants choose from predetermined options—like multiple-choice, Likert scales, or yes/no formats—instead of giving open-text responses since the questions are closed-ended. This style works well for collecting

measurable data, reducing errors in interpretation, and making statistical analysis easier. It is frequently employed in surveys when uniformity, clarity, and convenience of completion are crucial, particularly in contexts involving extensive or distant research. The questionnaire has been structured into categories of instruction practices and inclusivity (i.e., multisensory instruction, differentiated instructions, assistive tools), and the sense of preparedness and support of the institution. Out of the 143 questionnaires distributed to the selected respondents, 113 were returned fully completed, yielding a response rate of approximately 79%. This rate is considered acceptable for quantitative research and provides a sufficient basis for statistical analysis and interpretation. The items that measure teacher responses have been observed to have been rated as 5-point Likert items (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree). Content validity was established through the expert review, wherein three experts were involved in the discipline of inclusive education. A pilot study was conducted with ten teachers (not involved in the actual study), and there were a few minor changes made to address clarity. The questionnaires were administered in person and gathered in a period not exceeding four weeks in

an attempt to ensure that the response rate was high and consistent.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used for data analysis. The descriptive statistics were calculated as frequencies, means, and standard deviations to generalize the frequency of the various inclusive practices of teaching. Inferential statistics were used to establish the relationships between the teacher variables and usage of inclusive literacy strategies with the assistance of Pearson correlation and regression analysis. This is a statistical technique used to measure the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two continuous variables, producing a coefficient (r) that ranges from -1 to $+1$ (Dufera, Liu, & Xu, 2023). Significance level was 0.05. The analysis made it possible to understand which practice is the most popular, how the characteristics of teachers influence the use of these practices, and

what factors might contribute to or hinder the implementation of inclusive strategies to address the needs of students with dyslexia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the descriptive statistics for teaching strategies employed by primary school teachers to support students with dyslexia. In quantitative research, descriptive statistics are methods that summarize, organize, and present numerical data in an informative manner. They do not forecast or examine hypotheses but instead offer a distinct view of the data gathered (Mishra et al., 2019). The results show that there was overwhelming dedication to the adoption of inclusive approaches to students with dyslexia on the part of the primary school teachers. The table below shows the results.

Table 2. Teaching Strategies Used to Support Students with Dyslexia

Criteria	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	SD
Use of multi-sensory teaching techniques	2	5	13	50	30	4.01	0.88
Simplifying reading materials	1	6	10	52	31	4.06	0.85
Provision of additional time for students with dyslexia	0	3	12	55	30	4.12	0.75
Usage of colored overlays	5	10	20	45	20	3.65	1.02
Incorporation of assistive technologies	8	15	25	35	17	3.38	1.09
Frequent provision of individualised support	3	7	15	50	25	3.87	0.96
Adjustment of assessment methods	2	5	18	48	27	3.93	0.91

As shown in the table above, most respondents (80%) agreed or strongly agreed that they apply multi-sensory approaches, including visual, auditory, and kinesthetic approaches, with a mean score of 4.01 and a standard deviation of 0.88, indicating a consistent application of this approach. On the same note, 83% of the respondents indicated that they simplified

reading content to fit the reading levels of students with dyslexia. The mean of 4.06 is high, which indicates that the teachers are aware and adapt materials to fulfill the needs of students.

Moreover, 85% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they allow more time to the students with dyslexia when doing reading and writing activities, the highest score on all the

strategies. The average of this item was 4.12 with a comparatively low standard deviation of 0.75, indicating that such a strategy is broadly and commonly used. Modifying evaluation procedures (mean = 3.93, SD = 0.91) and giving individualized or small group instruction (mean = 3.87) were also highly ranked strategies, which indicates that a significant number of teachers customize learning instructions and evaluations to meet the differences in learning.

Use of assistive tools like the text-to-speech tool, however, had a relatively lower rate of adoption, with only 52% of the respondents agreeing to that, and a mean of 3.38 and a larger

standard deviation (1.09), indicating variation in access or confidence in using the text-to-speech tool. On the same token, coloured overlays/dyslexia friendly fonts had a moderate level of agreement (65%) and a mean of 3.65, which shows that the strategy is familiar but might not be uniformly used all around the classrooms. This research indicates the areas that may be helpful to provide more training or resources to support inclusive literacy practices.

The findings of this study further revealed the effectiveness of inclusive literacy practices on reading and writing skills for students with dyslexia in primary school settings.

Table 3. Inclusive Literacy Practices on Reading and Writing Skills

Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	SD
Improvement in reading	1	4	11	53	31	4.09	0.84
Improved writing skills	2	6	13	50	29	3.98	0.89
Classroom participation	0	5	10	55	30	4.10	0.83
Usefulness of group activities	1	3	14	52	30	4.07	0.82
Usage of differentiated tasks	2	5	12	51	30	4.02	0.87
Incorporating literacy practices	0	3	9	54	34	4.19	0.76
Close the performance gap with inclusive support	3	7	18	45	27	3.86	0.94

The findings suggest a slightly positive outlook on the effectiveness of inclusive literacy practices in enhancing reading and writing abilities among students with dyslexia. The respondents were in agreement with the question, stating that they have experienced an improvement in reading as a result of inclusive practices, with an impressively high mean of 4.09, a standard deviation of 0.84, and a large percentage of 84% agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. In the same way, 79% showed gains in writing, though with a slightly

lower mean of 3.98, so that although gains in writing are apparent, they may be more gradual than the gains in reading.

The item receiving the highest rating in the study pertained to the role of inclusive literacy practices in fostering student confidence, with a mean score of 4.19 and a standard deviation of 0.76, reflecting a strong level of agreement among respondents. These findings underscore the significance of inclusive pedagogical approaches in promoting students' self-esteem, classroom participation, and academic development.

Furthermore, learner engagement was also rated highly (mean = 4.10), with 85% of participants reporting increased involvement among students with dyslexia when inclusive instructional strategies were implemented. This suggests that inclusive literacy practices not only support academic achievement but also contribute meaningfully to the holistic development of students with specific learning difficulties.

Differentiated tasks and group activities were also found to be effective at 81% and 82%, respectively. The respective means (4.02 and 4.07) indicate the commonality in the belief about the worth of differentiated instruction and peer interaction. The item, however, I have seen students with dyslexia close the performance gap with inclusive support, was a little less strongly agreed upon (72%), with the mean of 3.86 and a greater standard deviation (0.94) implying a little range of results, perhaps because of situational differences such as number of students in a classroom, available resources, or degree of learning challenges.

The findings of this study further revealed teacher preparedness in their teaching practices for students with dyslexia in primary School Settings. Their experiences in teaching students with learning disabilities [in the context of this study, students with dyslexia] are graphically depicted in Figure 1 below.

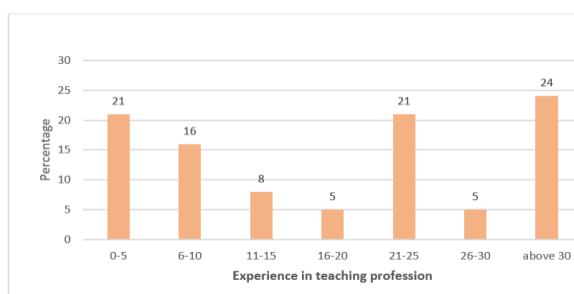


Figure 1. Experience in teaching students with disabilities

Figure 1 above illustrates that a notable percentage of teachers (24.0%) possess more than 30 years of experience, whereas 21.0% hold either 0–5 years or 21–25 years of teaching experience. Furthermore, 16.0% possessed 6–10 years of experience, and 8.0% had 11–15 years, showing

that the majority of respondents had over 5 years of teaching experience. Their significant experience working with students who have dyslexia likely enabled them to develop specialized expertise and skills in identifying learning challenges and implementing effective, evidence-based interventions. Seasoned teachers can modify lessons, materials, and assessments to meet diverse learning needs, ensuring fair access to education. They were also prepared to offer specialized assistance, aiding students with dyslexia in developing key literacy skills, such as phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, and comprehension, through tailored instruction and reinforcement.

A multiple linear regression framework:

The model summary below outlines a multiple linear regression approach in which four independent variables (teaching strategies, inclusive literacy practices, teacher preparedness, and resource availability) help predict literacy results for students with dyslexia. The statistical measures ($R = .864$, $R^2 = .804$, Adjusted $R^2 = .812$, Std. Error = 1.079) are presented to emphasize the robustness and suitability of the model.

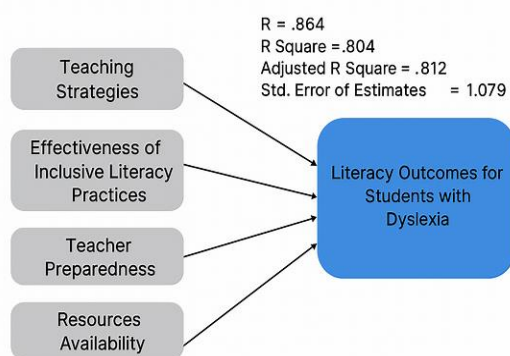


Figure 2. A Multiple Linear Regression Framework

Source:

<https://copilot.microsoft.com/chats/DP2ZVPDF2oiueBTrwxzbv>

The R value of 0.864 indicate that a strong positive relationship exists between the dependent and the independent variables that is teaching strategies, effectiveness of inclusive

literacy practices, teacher preparedness and availability of teaching resources. The Adjusted R Square (.812) validates a high explanatory power of the model, where the standard error of estimates is 1.079, which means the model fits the data relatively well.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

In this study, the purpose of the ANOVA is to test whether the variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the variation in one or more independent variables, rather than by chance alone. ANOVA has been used in this study to test whether teachers' ratings of literacy strategies differ significantly based on factors such as years of teaching experience, training background, or resource availability. number of students in a classroom, available resources, or degree of learning challenges.

The graphical representation of the ANOVA below illustrates that the regression model is significant ($F = 34.251$, $p = .000$), meaning that the overall effect of the independent variables of teaching strategies, effectiveness of inclusive literacy practices, teacher preparedness, and availability of teaching resources significantly forecasts the literacy outcomes of students with dyslexia. This implies that the model fits the data well and that the predictors make a significant contribution to explaining the variations in literacy performance.

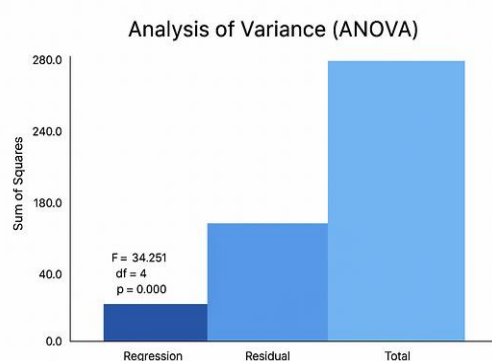


Figure 3. Graphical Representation of the ANOVA

The graphical display above illustrates the distribution of variance in literacy results for students with dyslexia, indicating the extent

explained by the regression model in comparison to residual error. The high F-value (34.251) and p-value (.000) highlight the statistical relevance of the predictors — teaching methods, inclusive literacy approaches, teacher readiness, and resource availability — in predicting literacy outcomes.

Among the main strengths of the research is that both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses have been employed, and a detailed picture of inclusive literacy practice has been presented. The descriptive data provided a detailed understanding of the behaviors and perceptions of the teachers, and the regression analysis revealed empirical relationships between the teaching practices and literacy outcomes. Such a two-fold method contributes to the validity of the results and provides practitioners and policy-makers with recommendations that could be implemented. In addition, the sample included practicing primary school teachers, which means that the data is of great relevance to real-world classroom situations.

This research discovered that primary school teachers utilize various inclusive teaching methods, including multi-sensory approaches, tailored assignments, and individualized assistance to help students with dyslexia. The same sentiments were shared by Losberg and Zwodzjak-Myers (2021) in their study conducted in England, who asserted that inclusive pedagogy in primary schools can be achieved by providing diverse learning opportunities accessible to all, by enhancing what is typically offered to every child, instead of just differentiated tasks and extra methods for those facing challenges.

Most teachers indicated favourable results, such as enhanced reading and writing abilities, heightened student engagement, and increased confidence in students with dyslexia. Moreover, the regression analysis revealed that the four independent variables, teaching strategies, effectiveness of inclusive practices, teacher preparedness, and availability of teaching resources, were important predictors of literacy outcomes for students with dyslexia.

The primary findings of the present study align with earlier research, which emphasizes the

significance of inclusive methods for supporting students with dyslexia. The implementation of varied tasks and multi-sensory techniques is a recurring emphasis of the teacher in this article, as suggested by Onyishi and Sefotho (2020), who assert that inclusive education thrives when teachers can adjust instructions to meet the diverse learning requirements of students. Furthermore, the noted learner involvement and confidence promoted by the research correspond with Van Pham (2024), who suggests that inclusive environments foster not only academic growth but also emotional and social well-being in students with learning differences.

Significantly, the inferential results reinforce the pre-existing evidence that teacher readiness and resource accessibility are essential for attaining effective inclusion. Micallef (2024) emphasized that through specialized training, teachers gain greater confidence and effectiveness in recognizing and supporting students with dyslexia. Similar to the results of Cranmer (2020), who observed that the development of inclusive strategies may be significantly limited without adequate tools, including assistive technologies, adapted materials, and visual aids, the strong effect of access to resources in this research study reflects the same. Therefore, the study contributes to and confirms previous literature on these factors as being significant based on statistical evidence.

The findings of this research carry several important implications for policies, practices, and future studies. Kilag and Sasan (2023) asserted that the readiness and training of teachers significantly indicate the need for structured professional development initiatives focused on inclusive literacy and methods addressing dyslexia. Educational policymakers should ensure that information on inclusive practices and learning disabilities is included in the teacher training programs (Selenius & Hau, 2023). This will help prepare teachers to effectively support students with diverse learning needs. According to Lynch et al. (2021), schools should have the appropriate resources in place to support effective teaching and learning, such as visual aids, assistive technologies, modified reading

materials, and more, to ensure that education is accessible to all students, especially those with dyslexia. Teachers must cultivate advanced critical thinking competencies to discern essential curricular content and determine appropriate evaluative measures (Nisa et al., 2021).

The research should be repeated in the future to examine the long-term impact of inclusion practices on literacy development, utilizing longitudinal designs. Also, the researchers might explore the contribution of other contextual variables to determine the success of inclusive literacy interventions, including school leadership, parental involvement, and class size. Regional or school-type comparative studies may also yield a more general appreciation of what works in various educational milieus. Lastly, the robust statistical associations identified in the current study suggest that future policies targeting the enhancement of literacy outcomes for students with dyslexia should focus on improving teacher capacity, access to resources, and fostering an inclusive culture within the institution.

CONCLUSION

The research has demonstrated that focused interventions, based on effective teaching methods, inclusive reading practices, and well-equipped teachers, can significantly enhance literacy outcomes among this group of students. Therefore, educational stakeholders must emphasize capacity-building efforts and resource allocation to promote fair learning conditions. The results of this study highlight the crucial predictive influence of teaching methods, the effectiveness of inclusive literacy approaches, teacher readiness, and access to teaching materials on the literacy results of students with dyslexia. The statistical analysis indicates that the regression model is a strong predictor of literacy outcomes for students with dyslexia. This indicates that instructional methods, inclusive literacy approaches, teacher readiness, and resource accessibility together explain a significant portion of variation in student performance. These results highlight the necessity

for inclusive teaching frameworks and supportive systems that cater to the varied needs of students with dyslexia, not only in South African classrooms, but the world over.

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