

Summary indications so far:

As the cut-off date for receiving QNR replies approaches (31st May 2016) final trickles of additional data are arriving.

With 163 good quality datasets now in my datapool this constitutes a good basis from which to tease out meaning from the results and relate this to my research questions and hypothesis. This process will continue throughout the coming weeks and months and with close to 15,000 bits of data to work through there is plenty to be getting on with!

Some interesting features of the data have emerged to far that need to be reported so that I can capture my thoughts as they stand just now:

- From the 95 datasets from respondents indicating no dyslexic learning difference and the 68 datasets from respondents who disclose their dyslexia, it is emerging that the Dyslexia Index (Dx) scale that I have created is proving to be the most useful discriminator. The scale ranges from 0 to 1000 – arbitrarily set end points but as good as any especially as this allows an element of discrimination and precision to be attributed to each, individual dataset result. At the outset, I set a boundary point of $Dx = 500$ as fence because from the early, limited datapool of respondents disclosing their dyslexia, with the exception of two results, the Dx value for the others was $Dx > 500$ and for most, $Dx > 600$. For students declaring no learning challenges, the majority were presenting a Dx value of $Dx < 400$ although with some presenting $Dx > 600$ which is exactly what I was hoping to see – that is, students declaring no (known-to-them) learning challenges but who, according to my Dyslexia Index discriminator at least, appeared to be indicating a dyslexic profile. Hence, those students would enable the research group DNI to be established which is, of course, a fundamental feature of the complete project. However, as the datapools have grown it has become clear that setting aside results where Dx is low and where Dx is high, nicely correlating with QNR respondents clearly in research groups ND and DI respectively, both research groups contain responses where the Dx values of the respondents falls in a kind of ‘middle ground’. It has emerged that some students who have disclosed their dyslexic learning difference are scoring $Dx < 500$ – at present, 9 out of the 68 datasets in this pool with two of those presenting $Dx < 400$. This is an interesting result and will merit closer inspection to see if I can explain it. A further 45 respondents present $Dx > 600$ which is as I might have expected as these are students with dyslexia after all, but this is leaving a middle ground of 14 respondents presenting a Dyslexia Index of between 400 and 600 – can I say that these students are ‘a bit dyslexic

but not much'? Further analysis will be required to respond to this however it has caused me to reflect on how to set the boundary point in research group ND for filtering out students in this research group who may be presenting a dyslexic learning profile and hence will form research group DNI. At the time when only a limited number of datasets had been received, I had set this boundary at $Dx = 500$ but now it is looking as though there is a crossover BAND rather than a POINT, which indicated a need to revisit this $Dx = 500$ boundary point. In research group ND, 38 students' QNR responses present $Dx < 400$, a further 38 present Dx in the crossover band of $400 < Dx < 600$ with the remaining 19 presenting $Dx > 600$. So in the light of this, I have now decided that in research group ND, a dataset with $Dx < 400$ is very unlikely to be indicating a student with a dyslexic learning profile and by comparison, a dataset with $Dx > 600$ is quite possibly indicating a dyslexic learning profile and consequently will be shifted to research group DNI. This now means that I have FOUR datapools, that is research groups, rather than the originally planned, three:

- research group DI is students who have declared their dyslexic learning difference in their questionnaire response AND who are presenting a Dyslexia Index of $Dx > 600$;
- research group ND is students who have declared no learning challenges or learning challenges other than dyslexia AND who are presenting a Dyslexia Index of $Dx < 400$;
- research group DNI is students who have declared no learning challenges or learning challenges other than dyslexia AND who are presenting a Dyslexia Index of $Dx > 600$;
- a new research group which is everyone else – that is, students from both research groups DI and ND who are presenting a Dyslexia Index in the range $400 > Dx > 600$.

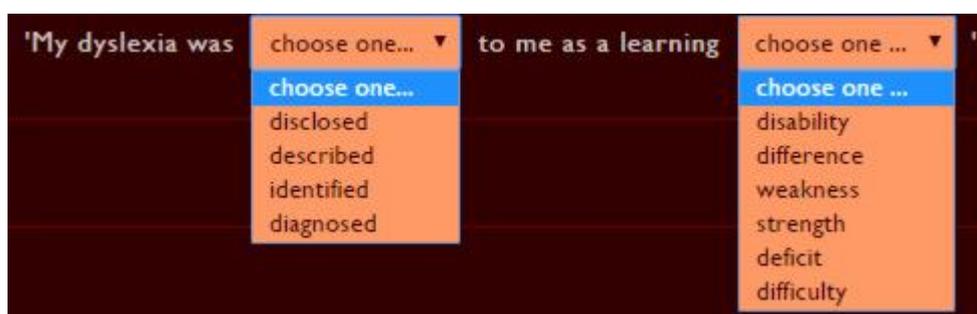
which is all very interesting!

The profiles of each of these FOUR research groups is now presented on the [QNR data profiles](#) page of the project website.

- **Data summary so far:** The table below shows a summary of mean averages calculated so far and includes standard deviations where appropriate in order to calculate effect sizes. At present, this summary table (*NB: DATA SUMMARIZED AS OF DATE OF THIS POST; UPDATED TABLE NOW AVAILABLE [here](#)) represents the most cursory of data analysis with much more detailed work on the information held in the complete datapool to be undertaken in the months ahead. However for the moment, the information presented here is highly interesting and in terms of effect size at least, is showing a significant difference between the mean Academic Behavioural Confidence of research groups DI and DNI.

Summary Table												
RG	Dx range	n	mean Dx	StDev Dx	mean ABC	StDev ABC	mean LRE	mean ARM	mean ASE	mean SE	mean LH	mean AP
DI	total respondents RG:DI	68	Dx		ABC		LRE	ARM	ASE	SE	LH	AP
	Dx < 400	2	385.72		59.27		50.83	25.08	51.67	62.58	16.92	70.33
	Dx < 500	9	445.75		59.79		42.46	37.43	54.13	62.30	30.70	51.56
	Dx > 500	59	668.05		58.24		53.38	33.59	51.35	50.51	44.16	51.21
	500 < Dx < 600	14	545.03		58.76		51.33	35.17	47.61	48.48	38.75	56.37
	400 < Dx < 600	21	517.65	46.42	59.15		47.58	37.10	50.02	53.06	37.38	52.98
profile means plotted ->	Dx > 600	45	706.32	60.99	58.08	15.88	54.02	33.10	52.52	51.15	45.84	49.60
ND	total respondents RG:ND	95										
	Dx < 400	38	324.81	80.50	68.55	12.15	41.43	41.19	56.17	49.25	30.14	50.63
	Dx < 500	56	365.38		69.15		43.46	42.83	57.50	48.94	32.80	50.33
	500 < Dx < 600	20	552.83		57.22		51.64	55.63	53.29	56.39	43.60	55.94
	400 < Dx < 600	38	504.61	59.15	63.48		49.80	51.20	56.62	52.55	41.15	52.98
(ND->) DNI	Dx > 600	19	681.94	82.09	64.38	11.11	52.07	55.33	57.21	50.40	42.27	57.42
	effect size ND-DI		-5.3		0.7							
	effect size DNI-DI		-0.3		0.54							

- **In what way has a student with dyslexia learned about their dyslexia?** It was felt at an early stage in the research design process that part of the enquiry would try to find out more about how dyslexia becomes known to students who have declared it on their QNR



response. This is important as one of the undercurrents to the project is the issue of the STIGMA associated with being labelled as dyslexic, especially as this may emerge as one of the factors that contribute to reduced Academic Behavioural Confidence in students with dyslexia compared to their peers. To explore this, QNR respondents who

were declaring their dyslexia were also invited to complete a sentence in the opening section of the QNR to report how they learned about their dyslexia: The summary grid below sets out this data from the 68 responses in research group DI. The grid total is 64 as 4 respondents in research group DI did not select options. It is disappointing to note, although entirely expected, that the majority of students reported that their dyslexia was ‘diagnosed’ with DIAGNOSED AS A DISABILITY slightly ahead compared with DISAGNOSED AS A DIFFICULTY. In my view, the most appropriate way to report dyslexia to an individual is to IDENTIFY dyslexia as a DIFFERENCE as this is most certainly likely to reduce negative connotations of it being noted as ‘disability’ such that this is constructed in society more generally (eg: Connor & Lynne, 2006, Phelan, 2010), and to also remove associations of dyslexia being something ‘medical’ as implied by ‘diagnosing’ it. It is of

number of respondents stating that:		" my dyslexia was (.....) to me as a learning (.....)				
	[DISABILITY]	[DIFFERENCE]	[WEAKNESS]	[STRENGTH]	[DEFICIT]	[DIFFICULTY]
[DISCLOSED]	1	0	0	0	0	2
[DESCRIBED]	2	1	0	0	0	5
[IDENTIFIED]	4	2	0	0	1	5
[DIAGNOSED]	21	0	0	0	1	19

note that only two students out of the 64 who provided this information reported that their dyslexia was ‘identified’ to them as a learning ‘difference’. This may be an indication that assessors might usefully reframe the terminology that they use to more positively identify dyslexia to students and to move away from legacy descriptors rooted in a kind of psychological determinism which strives to attribute dyslexia as a deficit rather than a natural occurrence of human neuro-diversity (Cooper, 2014). My view is that this adds evidence to the argument that it is a literacy-based education system that reduces those with a learning profile labelled as ‘dyslexic’ to a position of learning

disadvantage, and so it is learning environments that need to be changed, rather than people with dyslexia, FIXED. (See also: Thompson et al, 2015). However this is a complex discussion and one that will be explored more comprehensively in the literature review of this project and in the discussion of the results later on. It is also worth noting from the summary table that at least the number of students who reported their dyslexia as a 'difficulty' (31) was marginally higher than those reporting it as a 'disability' (26).

References

- Connor, D.J., Bejoian, L.M., 2006, Pigs, Pirates and Pills: Using film to teach the social context of disability, *TEACHING EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN* 39(2), 52-60.
- Cooper, R., 2014, Neurodiversity and dyslexia: challenging the social construction of specific learning difficulties. Available at: <http://outsidersoftware.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Neurodiversity-and-Dyslexia-Challenging-the-social-construction-of-specific-learning-differences.doc>.
- Phelan, S., 2011, Constructions of disability: A call for critical reflexivity in occupational therapy, *CANADIAN JOURNAL OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY* 78, 164-172.
- Thompson, C., Bacon, A.M., Auburn, T., 2015, Dyslexic identities in online forum postings. *DISABILITY & SOCIETY*, 30(9), 1328-1344.