INTRINSIC MOTIVATION IN PRIMARY STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA IN INCLUSIVE SETTINGS: A CASE STUDY IN KUBANG KERIAN

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Abstract: This qualitative case study intended to explore the intrinsic motivational experiences of primary students with Dyslexia in inclusive classroom settings within the lens of Self-determination Theory while adopting the Islamic perspective in understanding the human nature. Considering the students with Dyslexia as the unit of analysis, the sampling for this study is a purposive sampling. The participants of this study were three students with Dyslexia who studied in Year Four mainstream classrooms in a government-funded primary school in Kubang Kerian, Kelantan and two English Language teachers who taught them. The instruments used to collect the data were observation, semi-structured interview, document analysis and memo. A few methods that were used to establish the trustworthiness of the study were, triangulation, member checking, peer review and audit trail. In observing confidentiality and ethics, the students’ parents gave their written permissions while the teachers signed the informed consent agreement. The findings were analyzed using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis with the assistance of Atlas.Ti, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software. The study suggests that the motivational needs of students with Dyslexia learning in mainstream classrooms were fulfilled by themselves in different levels and needs as explained in the concept of fitrah where man is endowed with innate inclination to have positive self-regard, appreciate limited freedom and responsibility in serving God and finally, to love and have trust. Secondly, the teaching methods of English Language teachers in the inclusive classes related were found to support the students’ autonomy. Finally, to conclude, primary students with Dyslexia have strengths to fulfil their own learning needs as explained in the Islamic concept of man’s purpose in life is to be a vicegerent of Allah and accordingly is endowed with variety of capacities and tendencies to be realized throughout their lives in their limited stay in this world.

Keywords: Dyslexia, primary students, intrinsic motivation, Self-determination Theory, Islamic perspective.

INTRODUCTION

The Inclusive Education (IE) is a relatively new practice in Malaysia where the education system permits students of different abilities such as those with Learning Disabilities (LD), visual, and hearing impaired to learn together with their mainstream friends in the same classroom. Initially, the idea is to give equal access for students with disabilities to go to any neighbourhood school that they choose to and exposed to the equal curriculum that their mainstream friends experience.

However, the implementation of this new practice needs further meticulous considerations. Bringing students with SEN together with their counterparts to learn in the same classroom may not necessarily bring benefit to the student (Wah, 2010). Adverse classroom experiences may leave them further left behind regarding academic skills such as reading and writing, while those with high-quality motivation are found to survive better and have lower high school dropout rate (Froiland, Oros, Smith, & Hirchert, 2012).
The challenges in the execution of the Inclusive Education are faced in schools worldwide. Both the developed (Forlin, 2013) and developing countries face challenges in implementing Inclusive Education (IE) (Sharma, Forlin, Deppeler, & Guang-xue, 2013) as reported by media (“Known for inclusive kids,” 2014, “Singaporeans support inclusive,” 2016). Among the obstacles in implementing IE are these four aspects namely, the government (Sharmaa et al., 2013; Nissa, 2016), teachers (Mwangi, Aluko, & Associate, 2014; Ng, 2015), parents (Mwangi et al., 2014; Nissa, 2016) and students (Floyd, 2016; Nissa, 2016; Whited, 2015). Likewise, Malaysia faces similar struggles that relate to the government (Lee & Low, 2014; Muhamad Nadhir & Alfa, 2016), ineffective teachers (Lee & Low, 2014; Supiah, Haniz & Nordiana, 2013; Nurul & Nik, 2016), and students (Muhamad Nadhir & Alfa, 2016; Supiah, 2010).

Students’ needs had not been met and supported well (Lee & Low, 2014; Norliah & Hanafi, 2016; Nurul Aina, 2017) and they lack motivation (Muhamad Nadhir & Alfa, 2016) while the target on the enrolment of Malaysian students with SEN in IE is being increased (Lee & Low, 2014; Norliah & Hanafi, 2016; Supiah et al., 2013). The efforts made in addressing the motivation of LD students to learn together with their counterparts in the mainstream classroom has been sacrificed (Zalizan & Manisah, 2014) and is not defined.

**Limited literature on students with Learning Disabilities in Malaysia**

Researchers are calling for more efforts to be done in being aware of the needs of students with Learning Disabilities (LD) (Nurul Aina, 2017; Nurul & Nik, 2016), meeting the needs and facilitating the process in IE classrooms. The studies done on students with LD population in Malaysia are insufficient and distributed (Muhamad Nadhir & Alfa, 2016) while large-scale research on SEN is also sufficed (Lee & Low, 2014). Accordingly, studies relating to the implementation of IE found are limited to students with Autism or labelled as students with SEN. Studies done on students with Dyslexia in the IE setting are rarely found. Studies exploring students’ participation and engagement in IE classroom are also scarce. As for studies on challenges faced by Malaysian teachers, even though they were widely discussed (e.g. Norliah & Hanafi, 2016; Nurul & Nik, 2016; Noor Aini & Norhafizah, 2015) their teaching practices that specifically support the satisfaction of the needs in IE classrooms, especially with students with Dyslexia, are not found. The problem in which this study is based concerns primary students with Dyslexia and IM.

**Self-Determination Theory (SDT) discussion on Intrinsic Motivation**

Self-determination Theory (SDT) is a macro theory of human motivation and personality that attempts to specify the factors explaining the motivation phenomenon, developed by Deci and Ryan, by explaining student learning behaviour and the relationship with the environment (Nunez & Leon, 2015). Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier and Ryan (1991) maintained that IM is the best representative of self-determined behaviour Therefore, studies on self-determination of SDT were much establishing on the IM construct.

As a needs-based perspective, SDT equates motivation with the satisfaction of psychological needs (Reeve, 2012). In one of its five mini theories namely the Basic Needs Theory, it elaborates that students who have their basic psychological needs namely, the autonomy, competence and relatedness fulfilled will experience high-quality motivation compared to experiencing low-quality motivation when their needs are frustrated (Reeve, 2012).
In describing the phenomenon of motivation, the theory maintains that IM produces behaviours that are performed with full willingness, volition initiative and ownership. It focuses on the psychological aspect of humans such as the perception, cognition, emotion and needs to predict regulatory, behavioural and experiential outcomes (Ryan & Deci, 2000). SDT considers that it is more useful to explore motivation by not seeing it as in unity or describe as the total amount of motivation people have. The human taxonomy of motivation presented by SDT has described motivation regarding the type of motivation which is extrinsic and intrinsic. The theory further went on relating it to self-regulated behaviour but did not elaborate on engagement though it is in the definition of intrinsic motivation.

**Islamic concept of fitrah as a contribution to understanding human motivation**

The discipline of Psychology has provided the world much ideas on human nature and solutions to everyday problems. However, it is not able to deliver a comprehensive understanding of who man really is (Mohd Abas & Nik Ahmad, 2013) and solve life miseries and depression. The discussion on mind-body debate for instance, has left man on a dilemma in understanding his true, real self. The nature versus nurture issue was not able to be resolved clearly and productively while the purpose of human life was not discussed significantly to serve as a guide. Psychology, due to its limitations and priorities as a science of behaviour, may not be able to describe the spiritual aspect of humans comprehensively.

Nonetheless, recent studies show that other than the measurable behaviour aspect of man, spirituality is now been given its significance in the society (Lopez, Pedrotti & Snyder, 2014; Mohd Abas & Nik Ahmad, 2013; Schelechty, 2011). For example, Lopez, Pedrotti & Snyder, (2014) highlighted that spirituality is now been given concern and recognition in our lives by being a target in positive programmes. Modern Psychology is turning back to and accepting Eastern philosophy and religious traditions on their existing ideas of man (Mohd Abas & Nik Ahmad, 2013). Schelechty (2011) also reiterated that the new trend on acknowledgement and appreciation of spiritual dimensions of humankind is gaining popularity in the West. Hence, the importance of the spiritual dimension in the discussion of human nature is being significantly getting its place in present Psychology. In overcoming this restriction, the Positive Psychology (PP) as “a scientific study of average people’s strengths and virtues,” (Sheldon & King, 2001), appreciates contributions from other cultures both the eastern and western, spirituality, and religion (Lopez et al., 2014).

In overcoming this limitation, Islam has a lot to offer by introducing its worldview on human nature, particularly in areas concerning spirituality. Islam as a unique religion engenders scholars the inability to consider it an eastern or western religion. The confusion may be due to the virtues and practices being influenced by more than one context (Lopez et al., 2014). Furthermore, since the Islamic epistemology does not depend only on acquired knowledge but also rest very much on divine knowledge (Abu Sway, 1996; Al-Attas, 1998), the epistemology is objective-based. As a result, the perspective it offers is comprehensive and may go beyond the human logic and imagination. The unique feature of being accepted cross-culturally and objective-based epistemology make its perspectives worthy of consideration.
Consequently, researchers recommend that studies on man in Psychology to include Islamic perspective on human nature (Badri, 2018; Fariza, 2016; Mohd Abas & Nik Ahmad, 2013) and apply Islamic Psychology in Education (Fariza, 2016). According to Rothman’s (2018) Islamic Model of the soul, fitrah is the central conceptualization in the discussion of human nature. It is from the fitrah, which is purest innate tendencies, human needs emerge. Fitrah makes it easy and natural for people to be inclined to do good (Mohamed, 1996), relate well to people and other creatures, obey and strive for excellence. Naturally being born a believer of Allah, (Mohd Abbas & Nik Ahmad, 2013) fitrah makes a man yearn for God, wanting to relate to Him, obey Him and be pious. When man is unable to find God, the place of God is taken by something else such as wealth, fame, human companion, worldly gains or even simply his own nafs ammarah (passionate soul). This endowed inclination is seated in the qalb (spiritual organ of cognition) of man that is in its healthy form, basically trusting and optimist instead of skeptic. However, the fitrah can be distracted by the negative social upbringing and man’s other inclination towards evil and destruction that is known as nafs ammarah (the animal-based physical appetite soul). Naturally, man wants to be in control of himself, has the freedom to choose and not governed by others. The need to be in power and free to choose can be seen as the autonomy need. However, the freedom to be in power of self is also equipped with the need to be dependent and a servant of God. As for competence, naturally, man wants to learn, grow and fulfill his potentials, grateful of what he has and make good use of them. Finally, man has the natural need to love and relate to his Creator and people around him for they too are creatures of his Creator.

Man that follows his fitrah will naturally love and trust his God and accept his limited free-will and the responsibility that comes together with it. According to Ansari, (2002) the drive to experience the oneness of Allah (tawhid) is the basic motivational force (cited in Smither & Khorsandi, 2009). Experiencing the oneness of Allah is described as seeing everything; every creature and occurrence under the administration of a great, loving and wise God that resulted in God-consciousness and optimism. Tekke and Nik Ahmad (2016) suggested that the nature of the soul is also described as self-striving, self-regard and self-neglect. In conclusion, from the Islamic perspective, man has free-will and choice to be self-determined and is responsible for his actions in the present life and accountable in front of God in the Hereafter.

![Figure 2.2: Fitrah: Natural inclinations](image)

Islamic practices celebrate the thinking, emotions and actions of Muslims in performing their daily deeds. The tawhidic worldview that promotes God-consciousness in the muslims’ thinking and love of the prophet will affect their daily efforts, lives and partakes. Islamic Education propagates that God is always aware of what man do and say, always where he needs Him. The belief may give Muslims a sense of control and security. The action control belief that Muslims may hold is not one that is absolute control; rather one that is submissive to God’s decisions and destiny. Muslims are to strive in their endeavours as much as humanly possible with their efforts and supplications towards God.

Within the real IE classrooms context, the IM is nurtured or distracted in a social process where the tarbiyah process (Islamic Education concept of sowing the grain of potentials) and autonomy supportive teaching practices are present or absent. The real IE
classroom interactions between the teacher and the student represents the social dimension of the study.

The SDT suggests IM experience involves the satisfaction or frustration of three basic needs namely the autonomy, competence and relatedness needs tied to the social setting. IM in learning of the students is embodied as a fitrah in the inner of a person particularly in the qalb while it is supported and thwarted by the social surrounding that is the IE classroom ambience. When the basic needs are fulfilled, students’ motivation is satisfied. This study answered the recommendation by Lee and Reeve (2014) to study on the extent of student’s experience in contributing to motivational needs satisfaction and Nunez and Leon’s (2015) recommendation on studying the autonomy-supportive practices in real IE contexts. This study is also answering the call to include the Islamic perspective on human nature in the modern Psychology ideas on man (Badri, 2000; Fariza, 2016; Mohd Abas & Nik Ahmad, 2013) and apply Islamic Psychology in Education (Fariza, 2016).

The central research questions that drive the study are as follows:

1. How do primary school students with Dyslexia describe their IM in the IE setting?
2. To what extent is autonomy support practices found in the real context of IE classrooms?
3. How does the concept fitrah contribute to the understanding of IM in students with Dyslexia?

In answering the above question, the below conceptual framework was used as a guide.

METHODS

The design for the study is a qualitative case study with the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as its methodological framework. The study uses a purposive sampling study to ensure that the participants are able to answer the research questions. The participants for the study consist of three primary students with Dyslexia who study in Year Four mainstream classrooms in a government-funded primary school and two of their teachers who teach them English Language. The specific teachers were chosen for the students named English Language as their favourite subject.

The researcher is considered as the key instrument in the study for the researcher collected, managed, analyzed and interpreted the data personally. The instruments used to collect the data are observation, semi-structured interview, document analysis and memo. Student and teacher behaviour were observed to get the feeling and classroom ambience from student perspective and also a teacher’s perspective as an observer. The students were observed...
at least three times to ensure reliability. After the observation, both students and teachers were interviewed using a semi-structured interview that were based on the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI) by Deci and Ryan (1991). The interview took about half an hour per person with the teacher taking a longer session. Some students took more than one session due to their ability to answer and their consistency in their answers. The students were assisted to draw sociograms in describing their relationships with their classmates. Pictures of their classwork were also taken to be analyzed during document analysis. Memos which are notes that the researcher used throughout the study were used to reflect on the decisions made, responses to unexpected situations, emerging patterns and the coding processes. Once the data was collected, the researcher managed all the data that were in visual and audio form, written and drawn form into Atlas.ti in order to standardize the coding and decoding process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic data

Demographic data was gained from observation, field notes, participants and parents of student participants. Three students and two teachers were involved in the interview sessions. Students and teacher participants were designated pseudonyms to respect the privacy of the participants as suggested by Creswell (2014). Pseudonyms are fictional names that researchers routinely use to give anonymity to participants involved (Given, 2008). The 10-year old student participants were identified as having Special LD known as Dyslexia and enrolled in the Special Education Integrated Programme for Dyslexia for Inclusive Education (IE), under the Malaysia Ministry of Education (MOE) in a High Performing School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Parenting background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Halim</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>4A</td>
<td>Single parent household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>4B</td>
<td>Two-parent household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madi</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>4B</td>
<td>Single-parent household</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Participant One: Designated Halim. Halim was a ten-year-old Malay boy who was brought up by her mother where his father divorced and left the family after he was born. He was a thin and small-framed boy. Halim was the only Special Education student in his class. He was separated from his Special Education friends who also participated in the inclusive programme this year because of his good results.

Student Participant Two: Designated Adam. Adam is a ten-year-old Malay boy who was brought up by a regular two-parent household. Both parents were working. Adam was bigger compared to boys of his age and wore spectacles. Adam and other three boys from the Dyslexia Program learned in the same mainstream class.

Student Participant Three: Designated Madi. Madi is a ten-year-old Malay boy who was brought up by his mother where his father had divorced her mother and is staying in another state. He reported that he meets his father during school holidays. Madi was thin and small framed. He reported that he likes writing activities. Madi shared the same class as Adam.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Age category</th>
<th>Specialization</th>
<th>Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>27 years</td>
<td>50-55</td>
<td>English Language</td>
<td>4A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>25 years</td>
<td>50-55</td>
<td>English Language</td>
<td>4B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher Participant One: Initialized as T1. T1 taught Halim, student-participant One, English Language. T1 has 27 years of teaching experience but during the study was her first experience in teaching children with Dyslexia. She has been teaching in the school for 21 years but this is
the first year that she teaches the low-achieving class and students with Dyslexia. Classes in government schools are usually streamed to high-achieving to low-achieving classes and inclusive students are usually placed in low-achieving classes.

Teacher Participant Two: Initialized as T2. T2 was paired with Adam and Madi for she teaches them the English Language. As for T2, she has 25 years of teaching experience but during the study was her first year of teaching students with Dyslexia after.

**Students with Dyslexia fulfill their learning needs in Inclusive Settings in variation according to their strengths**

In discussing the IM experience, five themes were identified from the data codes developed in the analysis. The themes were autonomy, perceived competence and relatedness.

![Figure 3.1: Cross-case intrinsic motivation (IM) experience](image)

This chart is revealing in several ways. Out of the three themes, the autonomy experience seemed to be shared by all participants. As for competence experience, even though low competence was reported by all participants in the figure 3.1, high competence was also reported by Adam and Madi where Adam believed that the English Language is simple to be learnt and Madi believed that he could finish his assignments quickly. As for relatedness, Halim shared more relatedness experience than Adam and Madi when he enjoyed meeting his friends and teacher where he reported as having best friends and a teacher that he adored. Adam shared his experience of playing with his friends who also have Dyslexia and not really bothered with his mainstream classmates to the extent of not to even remember their names. Finally, Madi did not share genuine social relatedness with his friends or teachers. Madi reported that he communicated with some of his classmates who have Dyslexia but he did not name them as his friends when asked in the interview.

With respect to the first research question, as expected, it was found that there are variations in the IE experience of students with Dyslexia that brought about the satisfaction and frustration of their needs. The current study suggests that students with Dyslexia have strength in contributing to their motivational learning needs in mainstream classrooms but in different levels and situations with the autonomy-support of the inclusive classroom setting. The SDT and Causal Agency Theory suggestion on the satisfaction of the basic psychological needs namely autonomy, perceived competence and relatedness with causal action eased in answering the RQ of how the primary students with Dyslexia described their IM during English Language lessons in the IE setting. The quality and by-product of IE such as an in-depth account the autonomy satisfaction experiences of the children with Dyslexia were revealed in this study.

This is the first qualitative study to reveal the presence of IM in primary students with Dyslexia in Malaysian IE setting. The current study reported real experiences that children with Dyslexia went through in the IE setting. The experiences were shared with the researcher as precious empirical data that may not be able to be gained had it not done in qualitative inquiry.

All three student participants independently agreed that they experience autonomy satisfaction but expressing in different forms. The autonomy need was much reported under the
criteria intrinsic value which included the interest in the activities in the subject or interest in the teacher. Although he neither conveyed the feeling of relatedness with the teacher nor uneasiness, his description of feelings towards her was OK. Nonetheless, the teacher felt that she is close to him where he shared personal stories with her. The openness that the teacher portrayed during lessons had actually supported the growth of his IM. The teacher’s efforts in making the class activities interesting such as making masks, supporting students with Dyslexia to participate in the school programme like the “Book come alive” programme, accepting spontaneous student-suggested activities like reading recycled books are some of the autonomy-supportive teaching practices that have satisfied the autonomy needs and supported the growth of IM indirectly.

Interesting activities provide good experiences and memories. The student participants related their good memories that encouraged the growth of their IM such as the educational visits, experiments done, hands-on activities, the games played with friends, meaningful relationships with friends and teachers. This finding is significant in reminding teachers and pushing them to maintain good practices of planning meaningful and interesting learning activities for students, and ensuring the students have good emotional experiences throughout their school life for it goes a long way in their learning endeavours.

Madi’s engrossment in his work that made him oblivious to his friends and surroundings suggested that he had experienced flow (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 2006). The satisfaction of both needs explained the engaged behaviour reported by the teacher and evidenced in the document analysis. This study found that there are approaches appreciated by the student, such as games, visits, hands-on and the social makeup of good friends, caring teachers and sensitive school policies facilitate the growth of IM.

Adam reported feeling incompetent in finishing both the classroom tasks and his homework. He sounded frustrated when he said that he did his homework but he could not finish it. Unlike Halim, Adam did not say that the work was hard, but his body language indicated that he was sad that his work is not finished. Field notes of other subjects evidenced that Adam was still writing at the end of the lesson after the class had thanked the teacher.

As for Madi, his incompetent feelings surfaced when talking about class performance where he compared himself with his friends who got first and second in class and when he did not get any prize even though he did receive a prize when he was younger. His incompetent feelings or low self-esteem, as T2 described it, was also detected when he confronted it to T2 by saying that he is not bright. Other than these evidence, Madi’s competence in writing and accomplishing his classwork was much satisfied. This incompetent feeling could not be detected when competence is referred to as his mastery skills that is writing. He is very competent in writing skills and believed he could finish his work. He can be seen as confident when referring to mastery goals but unconfident when discussing performance goals such as position in class, exams and receiving rewards. This explanation is in line with adopting mastery goal orientation as the recommended structure in class recommended by Sideridis (2016) as opposed to performance goal orientation. Halim however, found copying from friends’ work helped him finish his work. He found exercises given in IE classes more challenging than ones given in the segregated classroom which also happen to be the Malay Language.

Perhaps, the most disturbing finding in this study is that students with Dyslexia are not able to keep up with copying and writing competence of mainstream students but not given extra time in exams. Students with Dyslexia have to sit for the exam without modifications in terms of the time given to them. Even though the Ministry of Education had provided guidelines for the extra time, in reality, the students in this school were previously denied extra time by the State Education Department. From this study, the incompetence of the participants was voiced out by the teachers. The students with Dyslexia write slowly and not to the level of the mainstream students. They should be entitled to extra time during exams.

In this study, students’ beliefs and actions were observed, discussed, documented and presented in terms of intrinsic motivation (IM). These findings reflect those of Burden and Burdett (2005) who also found that students with Dyslexia possess the strength of positive feelings, demonstrated strong internal locus of control and the belief of having the ability to
perform. The current study has shown evidence of strengths in primary students with Dyslexia that can be developed and appreciated in the course of implementing successful IE. The finding gives more significance to the strength of students with Dyslexia because the setting is in the inclusive setting compared to the study made by Burden and Burdett (2005) which was in a segregated setting where the students attended a special school for students with Dyslexia.

Adam’s persistence and efforts in finishing the task in spite of the low competence is the strength and energy that he had portrayed in the study. His initiatives in class participations, school-activity participation, and good organizational skills of bringing his stationaries and exam papers compared to his mainstream classmates were evidence of his self-emanated control actions. His cheerful personality was also a possible explanation for his relatedness need fulfilment. As for Madi, his strength is in believing that he has the competence of finishing the task assigned to him and the good classwork that he had delivered. He had displayed a positive self-regard (Tekke & Nik Ahmad, 2016). The strength seemed to be related with his autonomy and competence need. Finally, Halim’s relatedness needs were fulfilled with his strength in establishing meaningful relationships with his classmates and the English Language teacher. All participants reported their varied and specific needs satisfaction during their IE experiences.

The students have shared their needs satisfaction and dissatisfaction which affirms the fitrah that they have even though they are children with Dyslexia. Due to fitrah of trusting and relating to people well, Halim trusted and liked his teacher even though he could not explain why. He related well with his classmates and has best friends. His natural inclinations to relate to people makes it easy for him to make friends and like his teacher.

Effective autonomy-supportive practices in Inclusive classrooms

![Figure 3.2: Cross-analysis of autonomy-supportive teaching practices between class 4A and 4B](image)

Four of the six broad themes presented in the figure 3.2, namely acknowledgement of negative feelings, non-controlling language, offering meaningful choices and nurturing inner motivational resources, are the conditions that are needed in the education domain to be considered as a most effective condition to be autonomy-supportive. Therefore, the chart above indicates that English Language lessons in both classes 4A and 4B are in the most effective condition to provide autonomy-support to the students. The other two themes; description of internal resources and building rapport with students were the emerging themes identified. The theme being reported most is the acceptance of the students’ negative feelings, followed by the nurturing of internal resources and the description of internal resources.

Teachers report as not having enough time to practice individual teaching or differentiation instructions with students with Dyslexia considering the number of students and limited training and experience that they have in dealing with students with Dyslexia. As a result, the teaching strategies that they have are ad-hoc and experimenting based. The frustrations were also due to the feeling that they could not do more for the students like having more focused, individual time with them and have more confident strategies to be used with them. The incompetent feelings that the teachers have in teaching and dealing with them bring about hidden frustrations in the interviews. The patience in dealing with the students’
competence and non-engagement behaviours are the two coping skills that both teachers seemed to have in dealing with the obstacles.

In maintaining autonomy-supportive practices environment classes, both teachers had their own ways of facing and coping with the challenges. T1 shared her optimism behind her giggled frustrations when reporting on Halim’s incompetence, non-persistence and non-engagement in class. She hoped that in spite of Halim’s non-performance, Halim is at least clearer on what is going on in his life and what is important. She is optimistic that one day Halim would be given guidance in his life and her job is to keep on giving good advice, motivational stories and hope in her lessons. Optimism in Islam is based on good faith towards Allah that He would only grant good and nothing less. The human ability to comprehend the good is secondary. Hence T1’s optimism that Halim will improve and her efforts will bring benefit, may be the reason for the autonomy-supportive environment to be its most effective condition in the classroom.

T2 herself was proactive and had her own mission of not wanting students to have dislikes of the English Language. It was her intention to make her English Lesson class interesting and avoid from making her students loathe the subject. She tried to have good communication with the students even though it was not in the English Language. Making good intentions is basic in the teachings of Islam where the first action you start with is the action within. From the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w., he reminded us that “Actions are only by intentions,” which carries the meaning among which blessed consequences of actions depend on the heartfelt quality of the intention.

From the rich and detailed descriptions of students’ strength, weaknesses, likes and dislikes, it is proven that the teachers have a genuine interest and care for them. They would not be able to describe the students should they not give enough attention to the students and practice student-centred strategies. Another theme found to be as essential is building rapport with the students as a condition that is associated with autonomy-supportive practices.

Both teachers participated in the study were in their first year of teaching students with Dyslexia. However, their teaching experience was beyond 24 years. They were able to adapt to the students’ needs and difficulties. The findings of the study have displayed real teaching practices in IE classrooms that are autonomy-supportive in nature as per mentioned in the literature. Autonomy-supportive teaching practices listed in literature are nothing foreign in the teaching and educating profession. They are natural and humane practices that genuine and aspiring teachers acquire in their professional journey.

As much as students in the study are seen as children with own strength of autonomy and competence, teachers are adults and more self-directed, self-fulfilling, have the ability to manage, and support students with Dyslexia even with limited experience and training in Special Education. The findings suggested that both teachers have quality inner strengths as individuals. The autonomy-supportive teaching practices they presented are fruits of their good intentions, hopes, patience, and optimism of the students’ progress and achievements. The teachers themselves are self-directed with intrinsic aspirations and not restricted to the Education Ministry policies and guidelines. They listen to their instincts and fulfil the trust given to them as teachers.

The Muslim society is seen as a collective society that works and moves in a communal fashion. Easily, they are thought to act without having the autonomy need and only consider the sanctions of the community. Nevertheless, Muslims are guided and inculcated to act autonomously and have clear, intrinsic intentions of fulfilling their purposeful life in this world and the hereafter. Fulfilling autonomy needs in Muslim Malay children is significant and part of the Islamic Education System. The ability to self-satisfy the autonomy needs in Muslim Malay children is manifested in the study. At the most minimum level of satisfaction is Halim’s interest in his teacher. The concept of fitrah helps to explain, acknowledge and certify this strength that the children, even those with learning disabilities have i.e. to self-fulfill the need of power, self-regard and love naturally, with spontaneity, without external temperament. This innate and inborn inclination is a gift that God has equipped humans in order for them to fulfill their purpose as vicegerents in this world and to know and feel God’s presence in this world as their loving and caring creator and administrator.
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