Operant Subjectivity

The International Journal of Q Methodology

Perceived Teacher Support among Primary and Lower Secondary School Students with Learning Difficulties

Lok Subba
Western Norway University of Applied Sciences
Edwin Bru and Arlene Thorsen
University of Stavanger

Abstract: Many students with learning difficulties (LDs) receive their education in regular (inclusive) classrooms. Although some studies suggest that general teachers have varying degrees of skills, knowledge and willingness to provide academic, interpersonal and environmental support to these students, little is known about how these students experience various aspects of teacher support in inclusive classrooms. This study investigates these students' perceptions of teacher support by applying Q methodology. Twenty-six primary and lower secondary school students with LDs who were receiving education in regular classes participated in the study. The findings show that students with learning difficulties perceive teacher support in three main ways: those who perceive many areas of such support to be adequate and satisfactory, those who are upset with teachers' lack of emotional sensitivity and relational bonding and those who are ambivalent about teachers instructional, curricular and emotional support.

Keywords: emotional and behavioural problems, learning difficulties, Q methodology, sensitivity, teacher support

Introduction

School experiences in children's and adolescents' formative years are influential markers of their academic and psychological developmental trajectories and outcomes (Gustafsson et al., 2010; Roeser, Eccles & Sameroff, 2000). Students with learning difficulties (LDs) are at a comparatively greater risk of finding academic tasks and learning processes more challenging and stressful than non-LD students. Students with LDs have a higher risk than their non-LD peers of developing low self-esteem and motivational, emotional and behavioural problems (Meltzer, Gatward, Goodman & Ford, 2000; Nelson & Harwood, 2011; Svetaz, Ireland & Blum, 2000). Students with LDs are thus in need of additional support to cope with the constraints and challenges in learning academic tasks and achievements induced by the conditions of LDs. Available research on how students with LDs experience teacher support in regular classrooms is mostly concerned with curricular and instructional accommodations and peer support (Klingner & Vaughn, 1999; McLeskey & Waldron, 2002; O'Rourke & Houghton, 2008; Yuen, Westwood & Wong, 2005). Many teachers seem to find it challenging to teach and support students with LDs in inclusive classrooms (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Forlin & Chambers, 2011; McIntyre, 2009). Recent studies investigating how teachers

experience the support needs of students with LDs in inclusive classrooms have revealed that students' support needs in inclusive classrooms are complex in nature and involve a wide range of issues, such as emotional, behavioural, environmental and structural support and teacher sensitivity (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Bruggink, Meijer, Goei & Koot, 2013; Sharma, Loreman & Forlin, 2012). There is, however, very little research on how students with LDs experience various aspects of teacher support in regular classrooms. Gustafsson et al. (2010) have stressed the need for more research involving students and their voices, experiences and perspectives regarding their school experiences. The aim of this study is to investigate how students with LDs perceive different areas of teacher support in inclusive classrooms.

Teacher Support in Regular Classrooms

Students with LDs have intellectual functioning within a normal range, but due to a disorder in one or more specific areas of psychological processes, these students' academic learning and skill development (either in specific areas of scholastic skills, such as reading, spelling, expressive writing, arithmetic or combined skills) are adversely affected (Fuchs, Mock, Morgan & Young, 2003; Hall, 2008; World Health Organization, 2012). In recent years, these conditions have also been known as specific learning difficulties (Kavale, Holdnack & Mostert, 2006; Kirby & Kaplan, 2003; Snowling, 2005). Today most students with LDs attend regular schools and classes, and this seems to be a growing international trend (Ainscow & César, 2006; Florian, 2008; Thomas & Loxley, 2007; United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation, 1994). Teachers, however, seem to have varying degrees of willingness, skills, and knowledge to teach and support students with LDs in regular classrooms (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Cook, 2001; McLeskey & Waldron, 2002). Many teachers seem to experience teaching and supporting students with LDs as desirable but challenging and, at times, unfeasible (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Buell, Hallam, Gamel-McCormick & Scheer, 1999). These variations in attitudes, beliefs, knowledge and teaching practices presumably affect how students with LDs experience teacher support. There seems to be a paucity of knowledge about how students experience these variations in teaching and support practices in addressing their complex additional support needs in inclusive classrooms.

Instructional and Curricular Aspects of Teacher Support

Previous studies of how children with LDs perceive teacher support have primarily focused on the academic aspects of teacher support. Klingner and Vaughn (1999) synthesised 20 studies and highlighted earlier studies' focus on seven aspects of instruction: homework, grading practices, assignment routines, helping practices, instructional practices, grouping arrangements and adaptation. Similarly, O'Rourke and Houghton (2008) explored how students with LDs perceived instructional, curricular, physical and peer support, and Whinnery, King, Evans and Gable (1995) investigated perceptions of teacher support in inclusive and pull-out classrooms. The findings indicate that most students with LDs prefer instructional and curricular adaptations and believe that their motivational and learning outcomes will benefit from such adaptations. Compared to students without LDs, higher numbers of students with LDs emphasised clear, simple and organised instruction as very helpful for them. They also appreciated choices in activities and decision-making, adapted tasks and assignments and explained materials and tasks well. These students also preferred teachers who, among other attributes, were sensitive to understanding their helping needs, provided managerial support, made learning easy and provided sufficient time for them to complete their work (Bryan, Burstein & Bryan, 2001; Klingner & Vaughn, 1999;

O'Rourke & Houghton, 2008). Most of these studies focused on students' preferences rather than on how students actually experience teacher support in different areas of instructional and curricular practices.

These studies have shown that a large majority of students with LDs still experience insufficient adaptations and accommodations in curricula and instructions (Fulk & Smith, 1995; Vaughn, Schumm, Klingner & Saumell, 1995).

Social and Emotional Aspects of Teacher Support

Complex processes such as instructional, curricular, emotional, interpersonal, social, environmental and communicational issues are related to classroom support mechanisms, which are linked to positive motivational, mental health, school-connectedness, engagement and academic achievement and outcomes in schoolchildren (Kidger, Araya, Donovan & Gunnell, 2012; Klem & Connell, 2004; Roeser, Eccles & Strobel, 1998; Sabol & Pianta, 2012). Both conceptual and empirical studies have underlined the significance of social and emotional aspects of teacher support for students' sense of well-being, security, relatedness and self-esteem and for facilitating motivation and engagement in school work (Danielsen, Breivik & Wold, 2011; Sabol & Pianta, 2012; Skinner & Wellborn, 1997). Interpersonal support mechanisms are found to have positive effects on individuals' sense of well-being, adaptive coping capacities, self-esteem, engagement and academic learning and regenerative processes (Cornelius-White, 2007; Klem & Connell, 2004; Sabol & Pianta, 2012). Ryan and Deci (2006) and Deci, Hodges, Pierson and Tomassone (1992) emphasise the role of autonomy support in facilitating self-regulatory behaviour, intrinsic motivation, and psychological well-being in individuals. Autonomy support (e.g., encouraging personal initiatives, allowing choices, facilitating empowerment and self-determination, involving students in decision-making and self-determination) as a key element in social support is shown to facilitate a sense of control, competencies, empowerment and relatedness (Cornelius-White, 2007; Poulsen, Rodger & Ziviani, 2006).

Despite convincing knowledge about the role of social and emotional support in facilitating students' psychological well-being and academic learning and outcomes, very few studies have investigated these aspects of teacher support for students with LDs. Students seem to prefer student-centred over teacher-directed schoolwork as they find this way of doing schoolwork authentic, meaningful and empowering (Kogan & Rueda, 1997). Whinnery, King, Evans and Gable (1995) included three items in their study to explore how students felt about teachers' acceptance and emotional support. The results showed that although a majority of students with LDs in regular classrooms felt that classroom teachers liked them, slightly more than a third of them felt otherwise. One-fifth of these students felt that classroom teachers sometimes embarrassed them in front of other students, although the rest did not feel that way. Most of them felt that classroom teachers said nice things about them, but one-tenth of them felt otherwise. Differences in age, gender and LD types seem to influence the way students perceive social and emotional support from their teachers (Martinez, 2006). Students seem to regard teachers who are perceived as friendly and positive as highly supportive (O'Rourke & Houghton, 2008). In a review study, Gustafsson et al. (2010) highlight the significance of well-functioning student-teacher relationships for students to learn and function well in school. A number of studies have reported the diversity in how students with LDs experience emotional and social support from teachers in different ways, ranging from strongly negative experiences to positive experiences (Glazzard, 2010; Klingner & Vaughn, 1999; McNulty, 2003; Nielsen, 2011). However,

many studies involving students with LDs lack a theoretical systematisation of the concept of social support and its operational constructs.

Variations in Perceived Teacher Support

In terms of their emotional and behavioural functioning and adjustments, children with LDs constitute a heterogeneous group (Lamm & Epstein, 1992; McKinney, 1989; Nelson & Harwood, 2011). Furthermore, the conditions of LDs are diverse in nature and affect different areas of academic learning and skill development (e.g., specific areas such as reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic skills and specific disorders of scholastic skills) (World Health Organization, 1993). Studies have documented that some students seem to experience different aspects of teacher support as very supportive, appreciative and satisfying, whereas others find their teachers insensitive, unable to understand their needs and providing very little support (Glazzard, 2010; Gustafsson et al., 2010; Nielsen, 2011). Klingner and Vaughn (1999) reported contrasting results in their synthesis study of students' desire for adapted homework, instructional organisation types, grouping preferences and the individuals from whom the students liked to receive help. Similarly, O'Rourke and Houghton (2008) reported that students seemed to show ambivalent feelings about teachers' direct assistance. However, findings from other studies show that some students are reluctant to receive much direct help from teachers (Klingner & Vaughn, 1999; Nielsen, 2011).

   The contrasting findings on students' preferences and experiences suggest the likelihood of heterogeneity in students' perceptions of teacher support. There is, however, little research that attempts to investigate and understand the nature of possible variations in students' perceptions of different aspects of teacher support.

Methods and Research Design

The selection of a pertinent research design is necessary to achieve this study's aims. Q methodology was designed and developed to systematically study human subjectivity (e.g., viewpoints, beliefs, feelings, attitudes, opinions, judgements) from the standpoint of the persons who are being studied (Brown, 1980; McKeown & Thomas, 1988; Stephenson, 1953; Watts & Stenner, 2012). The pertinence of this methodology for the present study lies in its explorative quality and power to investigate the participants' subjective experiences and perceptions as well as its ability to reveal participants' commonly shared viewpoints.

Concourse and Q Set

In Q methodology, a wide range of statements or viewpoints are collected, and they represent a "concourse" on the topic of investigation (Dziopa & Ahern, 2011; McKeown & Thomas, 1988; Watts & Stenner, 2012). These viewpoints can be collected naturally through interviews and observations or from ready-made sources, including relevant academic or media sources (McKeown & Thomas, 1988). In the present study, the concourse was generated by combining natural and ready-made sources, which McKeown and Thomas (1988) term the "hybrid" sampling method. The natural sources included three interviews, which consisted of an in-depth interview with an elementary student with LDs and a mother of a student with LDs. Four female teachers (aged 36 to 42 years) also participated in a focus group interview. All of these teachers had many years of experience teaching students with LDs in regular classrooms at both elementary and secondary levels. The ready-made statements were generated from relevant academic sources and checklists (Bru, Stornes, Munthe & Thuen, 2010; Chen, 2005; Dunkel-Schetter, Folkman & Lazarus, 1987; Kerres Malecki & Kilpatrick Demary, 2002; Klem & Connell, 2004; O'Rourke & Houghton, 2008).

The selection of the Q set from the concourse can be conducted in a structured or unstructured manner (McKeown & Thomas, 1988; Stephenson, 1953; Watts & Stenner, 2005). As McKeown and Thomas (1988) and Watts and Stenner (2012) have cautioned that unstructured sampling may run the risk of either omitting or under- or over-representing some central issues, structured sampling was adopted for this study. Furthermore, a literature review revealed that many central areas of perceived teacher support for students with LDs have yet to be explored and understood. Central issues in teacher support that have been discussed in the literature review include curricular and instructional adaptations/accommodations, teacher sensitivity, autonomy support, emotional support, managerial support and environmental and behavioural support. Considering the issues raised in previous literature, the final Q set covered six main domains with five statements representing each domain of teacher support: emotional support (N = 5), autonomy support (N = 5), guidance support (N = 5), instructional and curricular adaptation (N = 5), involvement and sensitivity (N = 5) and structure and predictability (N = 5). The entire Q set consisted of 30 statements (N = 30) printed on individual cards. Considering the young age and reading challenges of many participants, the number of statements was limited to 30.

Participants, Q Sorting and Screening of Emotional and Behavioural Problems
Certified educational and psychological counsellors assessed all the participants in this study. All of the participating students were officially diagnosed with the conditions of LDS meeting the diagnostic criteria encoded under F.81 in "International classification of mental and behavioural disorder (ICD-10)" (World Health Organization, 1992). The participants fell into three main categories of LDs encoded in ICD-10, namely, F81.0, reading disorder/dyslexia (n = 14), F81.8, expressive writing disorder (n = 4) and F81.9, a specific developmental disorder of scholastic skills (n = 8) (World Health Organization, 2012).

Sixty-four students diagnosed with the conditions of LDs were initially invited to participate in this study. Twenty-six (40.6 %) of them, 15 boys and 11 girls, accepted and participated in the Q sorting procedures. The mean age of the participants was 12.2 years, ranging from 9 to 15 years (4th grade to 10th grade) at the time they participated in this study. The participants came from eight different primary and lower secondary schools, and all of them were receiving education in regular classrooms with additional support in certain subjects.

The parents of these 26 children and adolescents agreed to complete Achenbach's "Child Behaviour Checklist" (CBCL). Similarly, the teachers of these 25 students completed Achenbach's "Teachers' Report Form" (TRF) after obtaining formal consent from the students' parents. These instruments screen emotional, behavioural and social problems in children and adolescents (Achenbach et al., 2008; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001). Both parents and teachers reported for 12 students. For 14 other children and adolescents, only parents filled out the CBCL.

A nine-point scoring sheet was constructed with +4, "*most agree*", on one end, and -4, "*most disagree*", on the opposite end. The participants ranked and placed the statement cards on this scoring sheet according to their personal choices and judgements.

Every Q sorting session was conducted individually and was followed by a post-sorting interview, which took approximately 15 to 25 minutes for each participant. The interviews focused on understanding how the participants justified the ways they ranked statements and their school experiences, particularly how they felt about teacher support during lessons.

Data Analysis
The software PQMethod was used to analyse the data (Schmolck, 2012). The data for screening the participating children's emotional and behavioural problems were individually analysed using Achenbach's "Assessment Data Manager" (ADM), which applies multicultural norms (Achenbach, 2003).

Ethical Considerations
This study involved minors. For this reason, formal consent was obtained from the parents of all participating children. Furthermore, formal approval from the Norwegian Social Science Data Services was obtained to conduct this study, which involved the utilisation of personally sensitive information about the participants.

Results

Achenbach's multicultural norms were used to determine symptoms at the clinical level, with a t-score cut-off at ≥ 65, which indicates the symptoms within or above clinical range.

Table 1: Reported Emotional and Behavioural Problems

Symptoms	N	%
Emotional problems (anxiety, depressive moods, psychosomatic complaints)	4	15.4
Behavioural problems (rule breaking and aggressive behaviour)	0	0
Social problems	1	3.9
Compounded (emotional and behavioural problems)	9	34.6
None (no symptoms within clinical range)	9	34.6
Not reported	3	11.5
Total	**26**	**100**

The results in Table 1 show that 53.9 % of the children were identified to show symptoms of emotional and behavioural problems within the clinical range, of which 34.6% had scores that indicated both emotional and behavioural problems. Furthermore, 15.4% of the students were reported to have primarily emotional problems, and none was reported to have exhibited primarily behavioural problems. An additional 3.9 % had primarily social problems. For three students CBCL checklists were not submitted.

Factor Interpretations
Three factors were extracted using centroid factor analysis and hand rotation. The correlation between pairs of the three factors were $r = -0.15_{1,2}$, $0.50_{1,3}$, and $-0.36_{2,3.}$ Despite a seemingly high correlation between factors 1 and 3, a closer analysis revealed distinct viewpoints differentiating these two perspectives. Hence, a three-factor solution was retained.

Factor I: Conscientious but not quite in-touch teachers. Participants 1, 4, 11 and 12 defined Factor I with significant loading at $p < .01$.

Table 2 shows that LD types and emotional and behavioural problems varied among participants sharing this factor. However, male participants were in majority among the defining participants.

Table 2: Background Information about the Defining Sorts for Factor I

Participant	Gender	Age	Types of LD	Mental health status
P 1	Male	12	Specific scholastic skills disorder	NA (not reported)
P 4	Male	12	Expressive writing disorder	No significant symptoms
P 11	Male	14	Dyslexia	Anxiety, emotional problems
P 12	Female	12	Dyslexia	No significant symptoms

This factor accommodates generally positive viewpoints on teacher support (see Table 3). For instance, students seemed to see their teachers as highly sensitive and emotionally supportive (1, 7 and 25). Teachers were found to provide adequate academic support (4 and 16) and were able to create a secure and predictable environment for them (18 and 30) (see Appendix A: Factor Arrays).

Table 3: Statements at the Positive and Negative Ends of Factor I

No.	Statements on the positive pole of Factor I	Factor Score
7	*I feel secure with my teacher*	+4
25	*My teacher is patient*	+3
4	*My teacher gives me manageably difficult tasks*	+3
1	My teacher cares about me	+2
16	*My teacher knows about the types of tasks that I can manage*	+2
30	My teacher makes sure that I am doing OK during lessons	+2
18	My teacher has a good set of rules about how to behave with each other	+2

No.	Statements on the negative pole of Factor I	Factor Score
29	My teacher almost never manages to give me sufficient help with my schoolwork	-4
17	My teacher spends more time with other pupils than with me	-3
8	My teacher allows me to make choices in my schoolwork	-3
6	The teacher and I plan lessons together	-2
11	*My teacher never sees me when I need help*	-2
22	My teacher assigns tasks that make me nervous or anxious	-2
27	*My teacher provides good suggestions when I am struggling with my work*	-2

Note. Statements in italics are distinguishing statements.

Statements on the negative pole strongly suggested that teachers were not able to attend to the participants' needs in time or reflected that teachers spent more time with other students at the their expense (11 and 17). The participants also presented negative responses regarding assignments and schoolwork that could make them anxious (22). Positive viewpoints on emotional and academic support were the unique and distinguishing features of this factor (4, 7, 11, 22 and 25). The participants' verbal comments in the post-sorting interviews illustrate some of these perceptions.

Participant 11 commented:

> "*My teacher is very helpful and very patient. She is always there when I need help. I never need to become angry or frustrated*."

Participant 12 echoed this sentiment:

> "*I feel secure with my teacher. I think I am managing well at school*."

Students sharing this factor, however, were less satisfied with how their teachers involved and encouraged them in decision-making processes and provided them with opportunities to make choices (6 and 8). Furthermore, students evaluated other areas of autonomy support, such as involving them in decision-making and utilising their interests, neutrally or negatively. This evaluation suggests that these students were not entirely satisfied in this area of teacher support (2, 14 and 20). Similarly, these students seemed to lack sufficient guidance and suggestions from teachers during periods of struggle (27), which is a unique and distinguishing feature of this factor. Furthermore, none of the guidance support items received positive values (3, 9 and 24). Overall, students seemed to find their teachers to be emotionally and academically supportive, and they were quite satisfied in the areas of autonomy and guidance support. Students experienced their teachers as very conscientious and trying their best to help them. However, the students seemed to feel that teachers did not always properly understand what the students really felt, thought and desired and thus were not able to connect with them properly or were not always "on the same page" with them.

Participant 1 described how he felt about his teacher in the following words:

> "*I think my teacher works very hard to help me, but she does not always see or understand my real needs.*"

Factor II: Insensitive teachers and students in despair. Participants 6 and 22 defined Factor II with significant loadings ($p < .01$). Their backgrounds were dissimilar with regard to all four variables: age, gender, LD type and mental health status (see Table 4).

Table 4: Background Information about the Defining Sorts for Factor II

Participant	Gender	Age	Types of LD	Mental health status
P 6	Female	11	Dyslexia	No significant symptoms
P 22	Male	9	Specific disorder of scholastic skills	Externalising and social problems (parents' reporting)

Table 5 shows that participants constituting this factor held negative views of several areas of teacher support. Statements on both the positive and negative extremes emphasise students' unequivocal dissatisfaction with their teachers' sensitivity to notice them and provide timely, proper and adequate help. Furthermore, students felt that teachers were not paying sufficient and timely attention to them, and they even seemed to feel that they were being ignored (17, 11, 23 and 29).

Table 5: Statements on Both Ends of the Pole in Factor II

No	Statements participants "strongly agree with"	Factor Score
17	*My teacher spends more time with other pupils than with me*	+ 4
11	*My teacher never sees me when I need help*	+ 3
23	*My teacher seldom comes to me when I need help*	+ 3
5	My teacher spends enough time to help me	+ 2
10	My teacher gives me a manageable workload	+ 2
29	*My teacher almost never manages to give me sufficient help with my schoolwork*	+ 2
7	I feel secure with my teacher	+ 2

No.	Statements participants "strongly disagree with"	Factor Score
27	*My teacher provides good suggestions when I am struggling with my work*	-4
28	*My teacher makes schoolwork fun to learn*	-3
25	*My teacher is patient*	-3
1	*My teacher cares about me*	-2
6	My teacher and I plan lessons together	-2
8	My teacher allows me to make choices in my schoolwork	-2
9	My teacher explains to me why I am struggling with schoolwork	-2

Note. Statements in italics are distinguishing statements

Students defining Factor II reported lack of effective and adequate suggestions, guidance and explanations from their teachers (9, 27 and 28). They seemed to feel a strong sense of being ignored or neglected (1, 25, 11 and 17). They described their teachers as being impatient with them (25) and not caring enough and respecting their opinions, interests and needs (1, 8, 9 and 25).

Although students expressed negativity about their relationships with their teachers, they nonetheless scored quite positively on feeling secure with teachers (7). During the interview, Participant 6 explained that she was "fed up with her teacher", but she was "not afraid of the teacher". There remains a degree of uncertainty about how to interpret what students mean when they say, "I feel secure with my teacher". Similarly, students gave positive scores to the statement, "The teacher spends enough time with me" (5). Students negatively appraised teachers providing good suggestions and helping them understand things that were challenging to them (9 and 27). Most statements on curricular and instructional adaptations were neutrally valued (4, 16 and 22), except for

the one about receiving manageable workloads (10). Students also reported that teachers were not able to make learning and schoolwork enjoyable (28).

Different aspects of autonomy support were appraised as being poor (8, 14 and 26). Similarly, teacher support in creating good structure, predictability and an environmentally safe climate was either neutrally (18 and 24) or negatively scored (6 and 30).

Participants 6 and 22 explicitly communicated a sense of desperation during the interviews.

Participant 6 shared her feelings about her teacher:

"I am so fed up with my teacher. It has been like a nightmare. She has her favourites but I am not one of them. I am so glad that I won't be having this teacher next semester when I start the lower secondary!"

Participant 22 felt similar dissatisfaction about his teacher:

"She is so unfair. She never sees me or helps me! She blames me all the time. She yells at me all the time."

Factor III: Caring teacher, ambivalent feelings about academic and emotional support. Nine participants defined Factor III. The defining participants represented diversity concerning age, gender and emotional and behavioural functioning. Dyslexia and expressive writing disorder seem to be the largest LD group types included here (see Table 6).

Table 6: Background information for the defining sorts for Factor III

Participant	Gender	Age	Types of LD	Mental health status
P 5	Male	14	Expressive writing disorder	Externalising and internalising, compounded
P 9	Male	9	Expressive writing disorder	Social and internalising
P 10	Female	11	Dyslexia	No significant symptoms
P 14	Female	11	Dyslexia	Internalising and externalising, compounded
P 15	Female	9	Specific scholastic skills disorder	No significant symptoms
P 18	Male	12	Dyslexia	No significant symptoms
P 19	Male	14	Expressive writing disorder	Social problems
P 21	Male	11	Dyslexia	Internalising problems
P 24	Female	11	Dyslexia	No significant symptoms

Students defining this factor held generally positive views on teachers' emotional support and understanding for their difficulties and struggles (see Table 7). They also held a strong positive view on teachers' sensitivity to their needs and ability to provide

predictability by telling them carefully what to do during lessons (11, 12 and 23). The students nonetheless ranked "feeling secure with the teacher" at 0, indicating no strong sense of security or uncertainty about whether they felt safe with their teachers. They felt that teachers were impatient with them (25). On the other hand, students described that their teachers made strong efforts to provide timely and appropriate help (5, 11, 17, 23 and 29) and to create a predictable and safe environment (12, 24 and 30). Furthermore, students in this factor held moderately positive perceptions of their teacher's ability to guide them and provide helpful explanations in times of difficulties (9, 15, 21 and 27).

Participant 5 was quite explicit*:*

"I am actually satisfied with my teacher."

Participant 24 said:

"*My teacher helps me a lot.*"

Acknowledging that her LD was responsible for her schoolwork struggles, Participant 14 said:

"*I don't actually blame my teacher. She is doing all she can do to help me. It's just that dyslexia that I have!*"

Table 7: Statements at Positive and Negative Ends of Factor III

No.	Statements participants "strongly agree with"	Factor Score
12	*My teacher tells me what to do during lessons*	+ 4
1	My teacher cares about me	+ 3
24	*My teacher handles differences and harassing behaviour among children well*	+ 3
5	My teacher spends enough time to help me	+ 2
13	My teacher listens to what I have to say	+ 2
19	My teacher shows understanding for my struggles	+ 2
27	*My teacher provides good suggestions when I am struggling with my work*	+ 2
No.	**Statements participant "strongly disagree with"**	**Factor Score**
11	*My teacher never sees me when I need help*	-4
23	*My teacher seldom comes to me when I need help*	-3
22	My teacher assigns tasks that make me nervous or anxious	-3
6	My teacher and I plan lessons together	-2
8	My teacher allows me to make choices in my schoolwork	-2
17	My teacher spends more time with other pupils than with me	-2
29	My teacher almost never manages to give me sufficient help with my schoolwork	-2

Note. Statements in italics are distinguishing statements.

Students in this factor were uncertain about whether their teachers were able to figure out students' proficiency level in schoolwork and how to make adjustments or accommodate assignments accordingly (4 and 16). Students also reported that they received tasks and assignments beyond their proficiency level and ability to manage them. On the other hand, these students were still satisfied with their workloads (22 and 10). They seemed to feel that their desires, interests, needs and choices were not properly understood and utilised (2, 8, 14 and 26).

Participant 14 explained his academic struggles:

> "*When I sit with my homework, I can't concentrate. Instead of concentrating on my tasks, I just feel like dragging out time and doing something else.*"

Participant 18 expressed his frustration with schoolwork:

> "*Doing schoolwork is no fun at all. Learning at school really sucks. It is not fun at all being at school. I don't feel that I am learning much at all!*"

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore how students with LDs perceive teacher support in regular classrooms. The findings of this study suggest that three major constellations of viewpoints or varieties of perceived teacher support prevail among students with LDs. Each variety or constellation accommodates a unique set of viewpoints that distinguish it from the others, and at the same time, each variety shares certain aspects of teacher support with the rest.

Consensus on Inadequate Autonomy Support, Manageable Workload and Time Spent to Help Students

The findings in this study showed that all three identified factors accommodated a generally negative view of autonomy support. These viewpoints were not limited to any specific types of learning difficulties, gender or age differences or emotional and behavioural functioning. It must be noted, however, that it is beyond the scope of this study to describe the nature of correlations between the background variables of the significant loaders and factors they define. Previous studies involving students with LDs have focused on the relationships between autonomy support and outcome variables (e.g., motivation, learning outcomes and behavioural adjustments) (Deci et al., 1992) and students' desire for autonomy support (Klingner & Vaughn, 1999; Lloyd, 1995). The results of this study suggest that students across all three factors perceive inadequate autonomy support from their teachers, such as involving students in planning schoolwork and lessons and utilising their interests, strengths and choices in instructions. These findings indicate that teachers give little priority to autonomy support or are not concerned with or conscious of it.

In addition to consensus on autonomy support, students across all three factors conveyed converging viewpoints on receiving manageable workloads, and they expressed the view that their teachers spent enough time with them. As students with LDs usually spend more time completing their schoolwork compared to their peers without LDs, adapting manageable workloads is important for instructional adaptations.

Mixed Views on Guidance Support
Students across all three factors maintained negative views regarding how well teachers encouraged and supported them to do well at school. Furthermore, students in Factors II and III held negative perceptions of how well teachers provide advice, suggestions and explanations when students are facing difficult times. Numerous studies have documented that many students with LDs find school experiences very frustrating and distressing. These students are not always aware of the reasons for the difficulties with schoolwork and how to adequately cope with these troubling issues (Gibson & Kendall, 2010; Glazzard, 2010; Ingesson, 2007; McNulty, 2003; Nielsen, 2011). Previous studies have shown that many students with LDs feel relieved when they understand that conditions of LD are the source of their inexplicable and seemingly insurmountable problems with academic learning and performance (Goldberg, Higgins, Raskind & Herman, 2003; Ingesson, 2007; McNulty, 2003). Furthermore, guidance involves providing encouragement and suggestions to solve problems in a more adaptive and effective way (Newman, 1990; Newman & Goldin, 1990).

Findings from this study suggest that students with LDs perceive teachers' guidance support in two main ways. Factors II and I are characterised by a negative perception of teachers' ability to guide and support students, whereas Factor III accommodates positive views of these issues. Students sharing viewpoints accommodated in Factor III perceive their teachers to be caring, understanding and supportive. The interview data revealed that students defining Factor III were generally satisfied with their teachers and had tendencies to "blame" the conditions of LDs for the difficulties and hardships they experience in schoolwork. In contrast, students who perceived teachers as insufficiently supportive to guide and encourage them to understand and solve problems expressed that teachers were not able to connect well with their feelings and mindsets. The results of the present study revealed no distinct patterns regarding how background variables (e.g., gender, LD type and emotional and behavioural functioning) relate to these two main varieties of perceptions.

Varieties of Perceived Emotional and Social Support
The results of this study indicate that students perceive emotional and social support from teachers in several ways. Some students (Factor I) were very appreciative of their teachers' emotional sensitivity and support and enjoy their relationships with teachers, whereas others (Factor II) seemed disappointed, frustrated and upset with their teachers; they may even have felt they were being neglected or disdained by teachers. This latter group of students perceived their teachers to be inconsiderate, unfair and bothersome. In phenomenological studies, Nielsen (2011) and Gustafsson et al. (2010) have documented similar experiences among students with LDs regarding their relationships with teachers and the ways in which they perceived emotional support from them. There is a third group of students (Factor III), who expressed ambivalent feelings about their teachers' emotional support. These students felt that teachers were caring and showed understanding for their struggles; nevertheless, they experienced that teachers were not patient enough with them. Impatient teachers can be a source of psychological distress for the students. In addition, these students seemed uncertain about whether they felt safe being with their teachers. As the conditions of LDs constrain efficiency in schoolwork and solving academic tasks, students with LDs are particularly likely to perceive teachers who are patient and allow them sufficient time to complete their work as considerate, emotionally sensitive and supportive (Glazzard, 2010; Llyod, 1995; Nielsen, 2011). The life stories documented in Nielsen (2011) and students' voices presented in Gustafsson et al. (2010) illustrate that the relationship

patterns and the nature of perceived emotional support are subject to change, such as when students change schools or teachers are shifted out. This insight invites us to conceptualise these three varieties of perceptions of emotional support in a dynamic way, suggesting that the perceptions of emotional support and relationships are subject to change in any direction depending on the nature and quality of changes introduced in communication, relationships and emotional sensitivity.

Three Ways of Perceiving Instructional and Curricular Adaptations

Findings from the present study suggest that students seem to hold three different viewpoints on curricular and instructional adaptations. Some students (Factor I) affirmed that they were generally satisfied with teachers' efforts to make instructional and curricular adaptations to fit their needs and proficiency levels. In contrast, another category of students (Factor II) were upset and disappointed with their teachers and their lack of sensitivity to understand and attend to their helping needs during lessons. The third identified category of students (Factor III) were not sure about whether teachers understood their proficiency levels and instructional adjustment needs. The interview data suggested that students who share these viewpoints found schoolwork and academic tasks very difficult, frustrating and troubling. Previous studies have shown that many students with LDs try to perform better or do their best in schoolwork (Glazzard, 2010; Ingesson, 2007; Klingner & Vaughn, 1999). These frustrations seemed to be aggravated by impatient teachers who lacked understanding of students' needs for more time to complete their schoolwork. Similar experiences have been documented in life-story narratives; some students with LDs were very articulate about a strong desire to receive enough time to complete their schoolwork, and they emphasised that it is crucial for them that their teachers understand this and show patience (Gibson & Kendall, 2010; Glazzard, 2010; Ingesson, 2007). The findings in the current study suggest that students' perceptions of academic support are integrally interrelated with other aspects of teacher support, such as teachers' sensitivity, understanding, emotional availability and ability to adapt and adjust instructions.

Structure and Environmental and Behavioural Support

Students in this study held various perceptions of instructional structure, classroom climate and behavioural support in several ways. Some students (Factors I and 3) seemed to find classroom climate and behavioural support managed well, whereas others (Factor II) possessed a neutral view on the issue, indicating either they were less conscious of or concerned about this area of teacher support. Similarly, students varied in their perceptions of teachers' effort to create structure and predictability for students. For instance, some students felt that teachers made sure students knew what they were supposed to do and followed up to ensure that they actually were doing well during lessons (Factors I and III). The result patterns reflect that many students seemed to have a lower degree of concern about this area of support when they were forced to make judgements and evaluate different aspects of teacher support.

Emotional and Behavioural Problems in Students with LDs

The results of screenings for emotional and behavioural problems echo patterns reported in previous studies (Heiervang, Lund, Stevenson & Hugdahl, 2001; Meltzer et al., 2000; Nelson & Harwood, 2011). The underlying message is straightforward: an alarmingly high number of students with LDs exhibit psychological distress and symptoms of behavioural and emotional problems. The results of this study did not show a distinct associative pattern between LD types and symptoms of emotional or behavioural problems. This might suggest that conditions of LDs create vulnerabilities to psychological distress in children and adolescents. Furthermore, emotional and

behavioural outcomes in individuals most likely result from complex dynamics involving interactions between several mechanisms in their lives, which may affect their motivation, adaptation, coping, development and subjective well-being.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore how students with LDs perceive different aspects of teacher support in regular classrooms. The findings suggest there are three main constellations or varieties of viewpoints about teacher support among students with LDs. One of the constellations reflected satisfaction in almost all the areas of teacher support, except autonomy support. The second constellation emphasised teachers' lack of emotional and relational bonding and sensitivity to understand students' emotional and learning needs. Finally, the third constellation of viewpoints conveyed students' need for more time, better instructional and curricular adaptations and more help to manage well during lessons.

Like any other method or research design, Q methodology has strengths and weaknesses. Previous studies employing other research designs have explored how students with LDs experience different areas of teacher support as isolated constructs. Q methodology's strength lies in its ability to reveal the coherent and dynamic constellations of different aspects of teacher support that are uniquely experienced and emphasised by individual students. Furthermore, another strength lies in its ability to elicit subjective responses that reflect students' personal experiences and the things that matter most to them. These responses invite researchers to be more aware of the dynamic interrelationships involved in various aspects of teacher support and to be careful not to study each construct (i.e., different aspects of teacher support) as an isolated phenomenon.

References

Achenbach, T. M. (2003). *Assessment data manager (ADM)*. Burlington, VT: ASEBA.

Achenbach, T. M., Becker, A., Dopfner, M., Heiervang, E., Roessner, V., Steinhausen, H. C., & Rothenberger, A. (2008). Multicultural assessment of child and adolescent psychopathology with ASEBA and SDQ instruments: Research findings, applications, and future directions. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines, 49*(3), 251-275. doi: 10.1111/j.1469-7610.2007.01867.x

Achenbach, T. M., & Rescorla, L. A. (2001). *Manual for the ASEBA school-age forms & profiles*. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, Research Center for Children, Youth, and Families.

Ainscow, M., & César, M. (2006). Inclusive education ten years after Salamanca: Setting the agenda. *European Journal of Psychology of Education, 21*(3), 231-238. doi: 10.1007/BF03173412

Avramidis, E., & Norwich, B. (2002). Teachers' attitudes towards integration/inclusion: A review of the literature. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 17*(2), 129-147. doi: 10.1080/08856250210129056

Brown, S. R. (1980). *Political subjectivity: Applications of Q methodology in political science*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Bru, E., Stornes, T., Munthe, E., & Thuen, E. (2010). Students' perceptions of teacher support across the transition from primary to secondary school. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 54*(6), 519-533. doi: 10.1080/00313831.2010.522842

Bruggink, M., Meijer, W., Goei, S. L., & Koot, H. M. (2013). Teachers' perceptions of additional support needs of students in mainstream primary education. *Learning and Individual Differences, 30*, 163-169. doi: 10.1016/j.lindif.2013.11.005

Bryan, T., Burstein, K., & Bryan, J. (2001). Students with learning disabilities: Homework problems and promising practices. *Educational Psychologist, 36*(3), 167-180. doi: 10.1207/S15326985EP3603_3

Buell, M. J., Hallam, R., Gamel-McCormick, M., & Scheer, S. (1999). A survey of general and special education teachers' perceptions and inservice needs concerning inclusion. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education, 46*(2), 143-156. doi: 10.1080/103491299100597

Chen, J. J.-L. (2005). Relation of academic support from parents, teachers, and peers to Hong Kong adolescents' academic achievement: The mediating role of academic engagement. *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs, 131*(2), 77-127. doi: 10.3200/MONO.131.2.77-127

Cook, B.G. (2001). A comparison of teachers' attitudes toward their included students with mild and severe disabilities. *The Journal of Special Education, 34*(4), 203-213. doi: 10.1177/002246690103400403

Cornelius-White, J. (2007). Learner-centered teacher-student relationships are effective: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research, 77*(1), 113-143. doi: 10.3102/003465430298563

Danielsen, A. G., Breivik, K., & Wold, B. (2011). Do perceived ccademic competence and school satisfaction mediate the relationships between perceived support provided by teachers and classmates and academic initiative? *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 55*(4), 379-401. doi: 10.1080/00313831.2011.587322

Deci, E. L., Hodges, R., Pierson, L., & Tomassone, J. (1992). Autonomy and competence as motivational factors in students with learning disabilities and emotional handicaps. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 25*(7), 457-471. doi: 10.1177/002221949202500706

Dunkel-Schetter, C., Folkman, S., & Lazarus, R. S. (1987). Correlates of social support receipt. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 53*(1), 71. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.53.1.71

Dziopa, F., & Ahern, K. (2011). A systematic literature review of the applications of Q-technique and its methodology. *Methodology: European Journal of Research Methods for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 7*(2), 39. doi: 10.1027/1614-2241/a000021

Florian, L. (2008). Inclusion: Special or inclusive education: Future trends. *British Journal of Special Education, 35*(4), 202-208. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8578.2008.00402.x

Forlin, C., & Chambers, D. (2011). Teacher preparation for inclusive education: Increasing knowledge but raising concerns. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 39*(1), 17-32. doi: 10.1080/1359866X.2010.540850

Fuchs, D., Mock, D., Morgan, P. L., & Young, C. L. (2003). Responsiveness-to-intervention: Definitions, evidence, and implications for the learning disabilities construct. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 18*(3), 157-171. doi: 10.1111/1540-5826.00072

Fulk, C.L., & Smith, P. J. (1995). Students' perceptions of teachers' instructional and management adaptations for students with learning or behavior problems. *The Elementary School Journal*, *95*(5), 409-419.

Gibson, S., & Kendall, L. (2010). Stories from school: Dyslexia and learners' voices on factors impacting on achievement. *Support for Learning, 25*(4), 187-193. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9604.2010.01465.x

Glazzard, J. (2010). The impact of dyslexia on pupils' self-esteem. *Support for Learning, 25*(2), 63-69. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9604.2010.01442.x

Goldberg, R. J., Higgins, E. L., Raskind, M. H., & Herman, K. L. (2003). Predictors of success in individuals with learning disabilities: A qualitative analysis of a 20-year

longitudinal study. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 18*(4), 222-236. doi: 10.1111/1540-5826.00077

Gustafsson, J.-E., Allodi, M. W., Alin Åkerman, B., Eriksson, C., Eriksson, L., Fischbein, S., Granlund, M., Gustafsson, P., Ljungdahl, S., Ogden, T., & Persson, R. S. (2010). *School, learning and mental health: A systematic review.* Stockholm: The Royal   Swedish Academy of Sciences, The Health Committee.

Hall, A. (2008). Specific learning difficulties. *Psychiatry, 7*(6), 260-265. doi: 10.1016/ j.mppsy.2008.04.009

Hamre, B. K., & Pianta, R. C. (2001). Early teacher–child relationships and the trajectory of children's school outcomes through eighth grade. *Child development, 72*(2), 625-638. doi: 10.1111/1467-8624.00301

Heiervang, E., Lund, A., Stevenson, J., & Hugdahl, K. (2001). Behaviour problems in children with dyslexia. *Nordic Journal of Psychiatry, 55*(4), 251-256. doi: 10.1080/ 080394801681019101

Ingesson, S. G. (2007). Growing up with dyslexia: Interviews with teenagers and young adults. *School Psychology International, 28*(5), 574-591. doi: 10.1177/014303430 7085659

Kavale, K. A., Holdnack, J. A., & Mostert, M. P. (2006). Responsiveness to intervention and the identification of specific learning disability: A critique and alternative proposal. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 29*(2), 113-127. doi: 10.2307/30035539

Kerres Malecki, C., & Kilpatrick Demary, M. (2002). Measuring perceived social support: Development of the child and adolescent social support scale (CASSS). *Psychology in the Schools, 39*(1), 1-18. doi: 10.1002/pits.10004

Kidger, J., Araya, R., Donovan, J., & Gunnell, D. (2012). The effect of the school environment on the emotional health of adolescents: A systematic review. *Pediatrics, 129*(5), 925-949. doi: 10.1542/peds.2011-2248

Kirby, A., & Kaplan, B. J. (2003). *Specific learning difficulties.* Oxford, UK: Health Press Limited.

Klem, A. M., & Connell, J.P. (2004). Relationships matter: Linking teacher support to student engagement and achievement. *Journal of School Health, 74*(7), 262-273. doi: 10.1111/j.1746-1561.2004.tb08283.x

Klingner, J. K., & Vaughn, S. (1999). Students' perceptions of instruction in inclusion classrooms: Implications for students with learning disabilities. *Exceptional Children, 66*(1), 23-37. doi: 10.1177/001440299906600102

Kogan, S., & Rueda, R. (1997). Comparing the effects of teacher-directed homework and student-centered homework on return rate and homework attitudes of minority learning disabled students. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.

Lamm, O., & Epstein, R. (1992). Specific reading impairments - Are they to be associated with emotional difficulties? *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 25*(9), 605-615. doi: 10.1177/002221949202500910

Lloyd, S. R. (1995). Teacher traits students find helpful or bothersome: Implications for the inclusive classroom. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Council for Exceptional Children, Indianapolis.

Martinez, R. S. (2006). Social support in inclusive middle schools: Perceptions of youth with learning disabilities. *Psychology in the Schools, 43*(2), 197-209. doi: 10.1002/ pits.20142

McIntyre, D. (2009). The difficulties of inclusive pedagogy for initial teacher education and some thoughts on the way forward. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*(4), 602-608. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2009.02.008

McKeown, B., & Thomas, D. (1988). *Q methodology* (Vol. 66). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

McKinney, J. D. (1989). Longitudinal research on the behavioral characteristics of children with learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 22*(3), 141-150. doi: 10.1177/002221948902200302

McLeskey, J., & Waldron, N. L. (2002). Inclusion and school change: Teacher perceptions regarding curricular and instructional adaptations. *Teacher Education and Special Education: The Journal of the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children, 25*(1), 41-54. doi: 10.1177/088840640202500106

McNulty, M. A. (2003). Dyslexia and the life course. *Journal of learning disabilities, 36*(4), 363-381. doi: 10.1177/00222194030360040701

Meltzer, H., Gatward, R., Goodman, R., & Ford, T. (2000). *Mental health of children and adolescents in Great Britain*. London, England: TSO.

Nelson, J. M., & Harwood, H. (2011). Learning disabilities and anxiety: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 44*(1), 3-17. doi: 10.1177/0022219409359939

Newman, R. S. (1990). Children's help-seeking in the classroom: The role of motivational factors and attitudes. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 82*(1), 71. doi: 10.1037/0022-0663.82.1.71

Newman, R. S., & Goldin, L. (1990). Children's reluctance to seek help with schoolwork. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 82*(1), 92. doi: 10.1037/0022-0663.82.1.92

Nielsen, C. (2011). The most important thing: Students with reading and writing difficulties talk about their experiences of teachers' treatment and guidance. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 55*(5), 551-565. doi: 10.1080/00313831.2011.555921

O'Rourke, J., & Houghton, S. (2008). Perceptions of secondary school students with mild disabilities to the academic and social support mechanisms implemented in regular classrooms. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education, 55*(3), 227-237. doi: 10.1080/10349120802268321

Poulsen, A. A., Rodger, S., & Ziviani, J. M. (2006). Understanding children's motivation from a self-determination theoretical perspective: Implications for practice. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal, 53*(2), 78-86. doi: 10.1111/j.1440-1630.2006.00569.x

Roeser, R. W., Eccles, J. S., & Sameroff, A. J. (2000). School as a context of early adolescents' academic and social-emotional development: A summary of research findings. *The Elementary School Journal, 100*(5), 443-471. doi: 10.1086/499650

Roeser, R. W., Eccles, J. S., & Strobel, K. R. (1998). Linking the study of schooling and mental health: Selected issues and empirical illustrations at the level of the individual. *Educational Psychologist, 33*(4), 153-176. doi: 10.1207/s15326985ep3304_2

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2006). Self-regulation and the problem of human autonomy: Does psychology need choice, self-determination, and will? *Journal of Personality, 74*(6), 1557-1586. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6494.2006.00420.x

Sabol, T. J., & Pianta, R. C. (2012). Recent trends in research on teacher–child relationships. *Attachment & Human Development, 14*(3), 213-231. doi: 10.1080/14616734.2012.672262

Schmolck, P. (2014). PQMethod (version 2.35). Retrieved from http://schmolck.userweb.mwn.de/qmethod/

Sharma, U., Loreman, T., & Forlin, C. (2012). Measuring teacher efficacy to implement inclusive practices. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 12*(1), 12-21. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-3802.2011.01200.x

Skinner, E. A., & Wellborn, J. G. (1997). Children's coping in the academic domain. In S. A. Wolchik & I. N. Sandler (Eds.), *Handbook of children's coping with common stressors: Linking theory and intervention* (pp. 387-422). New York, NY: Plenum Press.

Snowling, M. J. (2005). Specific learning difficulties. *Psychiatry, 4*(9), 110-113. doi: 10.1383/psyt.2005.4.9.110

Stephenson, W. (1953). *The study of behavior: Q-technique and its methodology*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Svetaz, M. V., Ireland, M., & Blum, R. (2000). Adolescents with learning disabilities: Risk and protective factors associated with emotional well-being: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 27*(5), 340-348. doi: 10.1016/S1054-139X(00)00170-1

Thomas, G., & Loxley, A. (2007). *Deconstructing special education and constructing inclusion*. Berkshire, England: McGraw-Hill International.

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (1994). *The Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education*. Salamanca, Spain: UNESCO.

Vaughn, S., Schumm, J. S., Klingner, J., & Saumell, L. (1995). Students' views of instructional practices: Implications for inclusion. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 236-248. doi: 10.2307/1511045

Watts, S., & Stenner, P. (2005). Doing Q methodology: Theory, method and interpretation. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 2*(1), 67-91. doi: 10.1191/1478088705qp022oa

Watts, S., & Stenner, P. (2012). *Doing Q methodological research: Theory, method & interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Whinnery, K. W., King, M., Evans, W. H., & Gable, R. A. (1995). Perceptions of students with learning disabilities: Inclusion versus pull-out services. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth, 40*(1), 5-9. doi: 10.1080/1045988X. 1995.9944643

World Health Organization (1992). *The ICD-10 classification of mental and behavioural disorders: Clinical descriptions and diagnostic guidelines*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization.

World Health Organization (1993). *The ICD-10 classification of mental and behavioural disorders: Diagnostic criteria for research*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization.

World Health Organization (2012). *International classification of diseases (ICD)*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization.

Yuen, M., Westwood, P., & Wong, G. (2005). Meeting the needs of students with specific learning difficulties in the mainstream education system: Data from primary school teachers in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Special Education, 20*(1), 67-76.

Appendix: Factor Arrays

No.	Statements	I	II	III
1	My teacher cares about me	+2	**-2**	+3
2	My teacher asks me what I like to work with during lessons	-1	0	-1
3	My teacher talks to me about how to handle things better at school	-1	-1	-1

No.	Statements	I	II	III
4	My teacher gives me manageably difficult tasks	**+3**	**0**	**-1**
5	My teacher spends enough time helping me	+1	+2	+2
6	My teacher and I plan lessons together	-2	-2	-2
7	I feel secure with my teacher	+4	+2	0
8	My teacher allows me to make choices in my schoolwork	-3	-2	-2
9	My teacher explains to me why I am struggling with my schoolwork	-1	-2	**+1**
10	My teacher gives me a manageable workload	**+1**	+2	+1
11	My teacher never sees me when I need help	**-2**	**+3**	**-4**
12	My teacher tells me what to do during lessons	0	+1	**+4**
13	My teacher listens to what I have to say	+1	**0**	+2
14	My teacher utilises my interests in schoolwork	0	-1	-1
15	My teacher makes it easier for me to learn	0	+1	+1
16	My teacher knows about the types of tasks that I can manage	**+2**	0	0
17	My teacher spends more time with other pupils than with me	-3	**+4**	-2
18	My teacher has a good and clear set of rules about how to behave with each other	+2	0	0
19	My teacher shows understanding for what I am struggling with	+1	**-2**	+2
20	My teacher allows me to utilise working methods that I prefer	-1	0	0
21	My teacher explains things well	0	+1	+1
22	My teacher assigns tasks that make me nervous or anxious	-2	**0**	-3
23	My teacher seldom comes to me when I need help	**-1**	**+3**	**-3**
24	My teacher properly handles differences and harassing behaviour among children	0	0	**+3**
25	My teacher is patient	**+3**	**-3**	**-1**
26	My teacher shows respect for my desires and needs	+1	-1	0
27	My teacher provides good suggestions when I am struggling with my schoolwork	**-2**	**-4**	**+2**
28	My teacher makes schoolwork fun to learn	0	**-3**	0
29	My teacher almost never manages to give me sufficient help with my schoolwork	-4	**+2**	-2
30	My teacher makes sure that I am doing OK during lessons	+2	**-1**	+1

Numbers in bold are the distinguishing statements for each factor