

Championing the rights of Adult Dyslexics in the work place

How the emotional experience with dyslexia impacts upon work self-efficacy among working adults with dyslexia.

Professor Julie Logan, Fellow of 2011



Why This Study?

- Building upon existing studies suggesting Emotional Experience with Dyslexia (EED) affects many areas of adult life.
- Anecdotal evidence – anxiety / stress in workplace.
- Gap in literature on how dyslexia and EDD affects work self efficacy, and hence job satisfaction.
- Building upon small amount of work about reframing and taking control leading to success (Leather 2011).



Emotional Experience with Dyslexia

- The public perception of AWD often includes stereotypes and misunderstanding.
- AWD often experience a complex array of emotions that begin with their early school experience with dyslexia and continue throughout the life span.
- Emotional experience with dyslexia can include but is not limited to exhaustion, being overwhelmed, disappointment, stress, anxiety, shame, sadness, anger, depression, low self-esteem, and self-consciousness.



Self-efficacy

- Defined as an individual's belief that they have the skills and ability to execute a particular set of tasks, their self-confidence.¹ Linked to job satisfaction and career choice.
- It is task specific.
- Self-efficacy intention \Rightarrow behavior.
- It can be increased by personal mastery experiences, peer encouragement, positive feedback.
- It can be decreased by anxiety, negative feedback, task failure.



Hypothesis

- Negative EED (e.g. more anxiety and sadness directly related to one's experience with dyslexia) would negatively predict work self-efficacy above and beyond background contextual factors including age, gender, educational attainment, relationship status, dyslexia symptoms, and mental health diagnosis.



Survey Development

- Web-based survey hosted on Qualtrics
- Nonprobability sampling methods
- 173 individuals (89.6%) completed the survey

Sample Characteristics

- 71% UK, 24% USA
- 83.2% had a specific diagnosis of dyslexia
- Female (56.6%)
- 18 to 85 years ($M = 43.5$)
- Master's/doctoral degree 35.8%, bachelor's 34.7%,
- 78.6% working full or part time

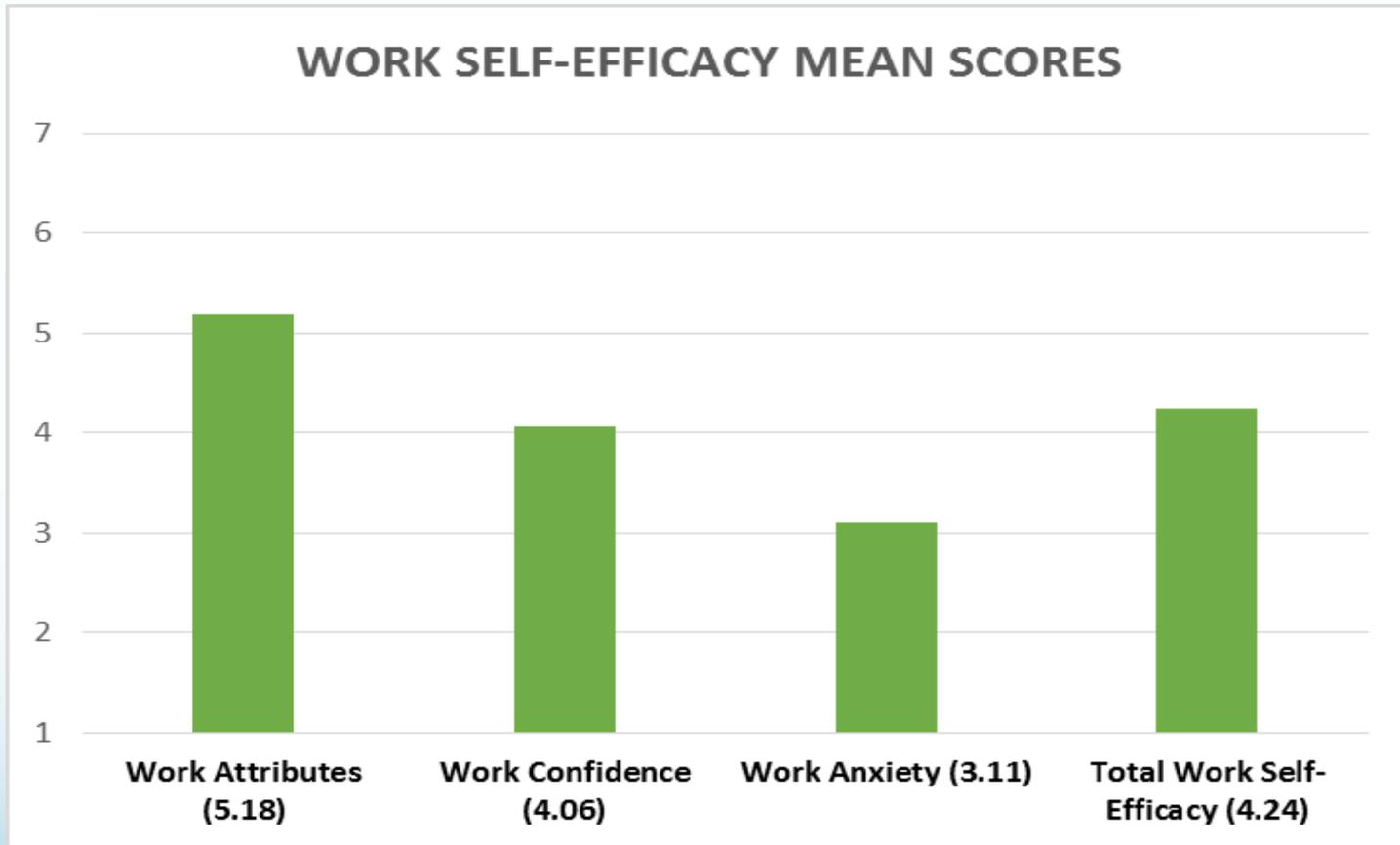


Measures: Control Variables

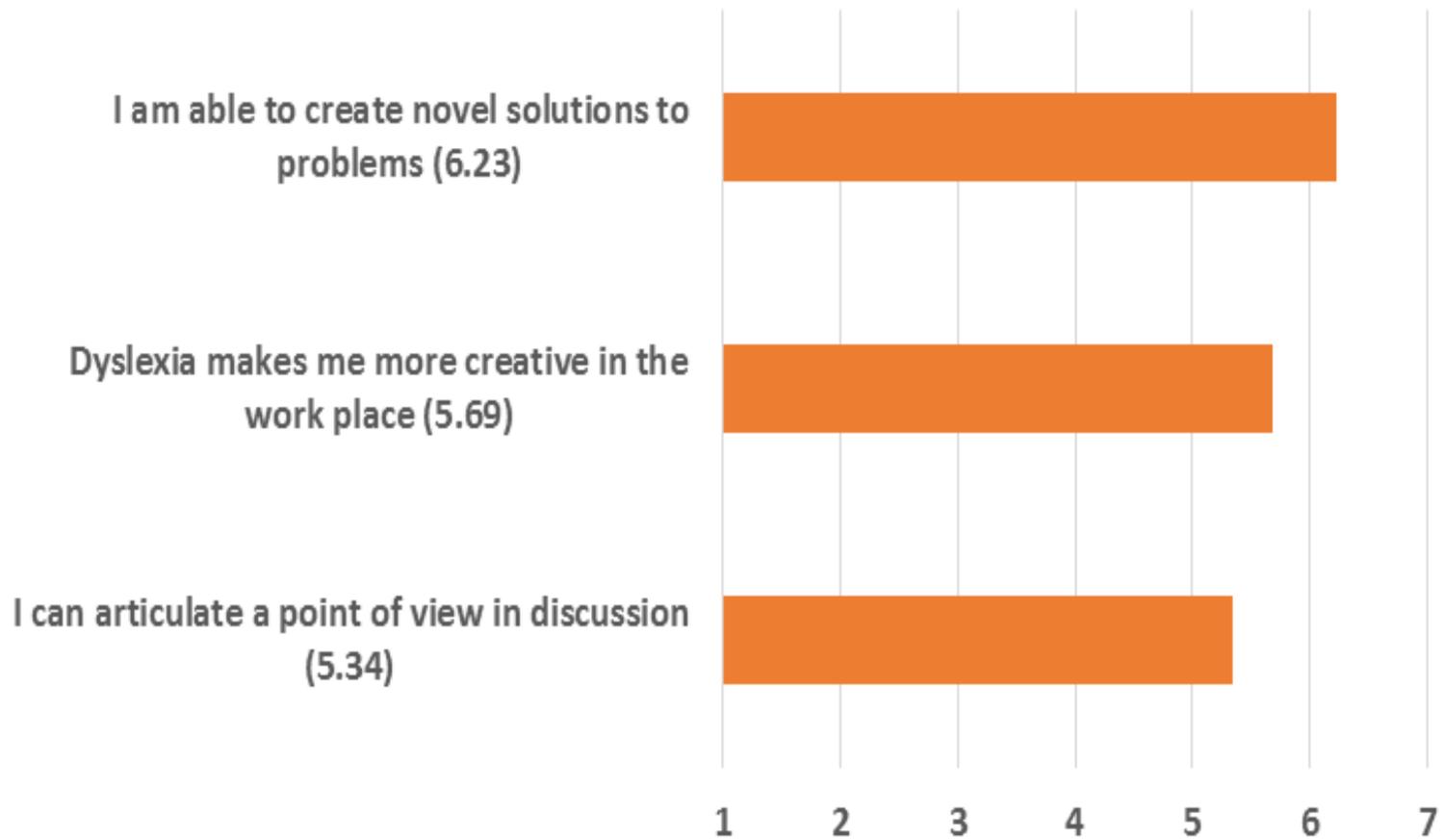
- Age
- Gender
- College Background
- Relationship Status
- Mental Health Diagnosis of Anxiety/Depression
- Dyslexia symptoms



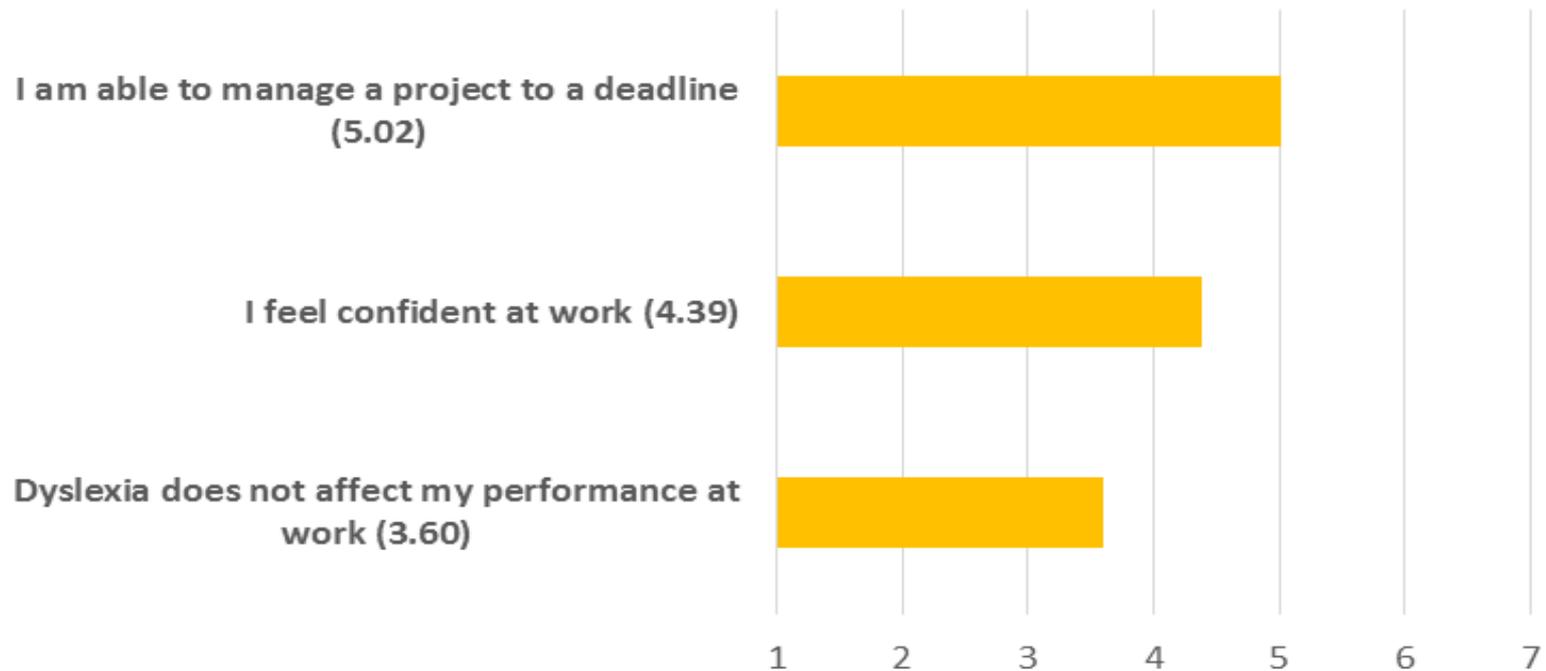
Findings



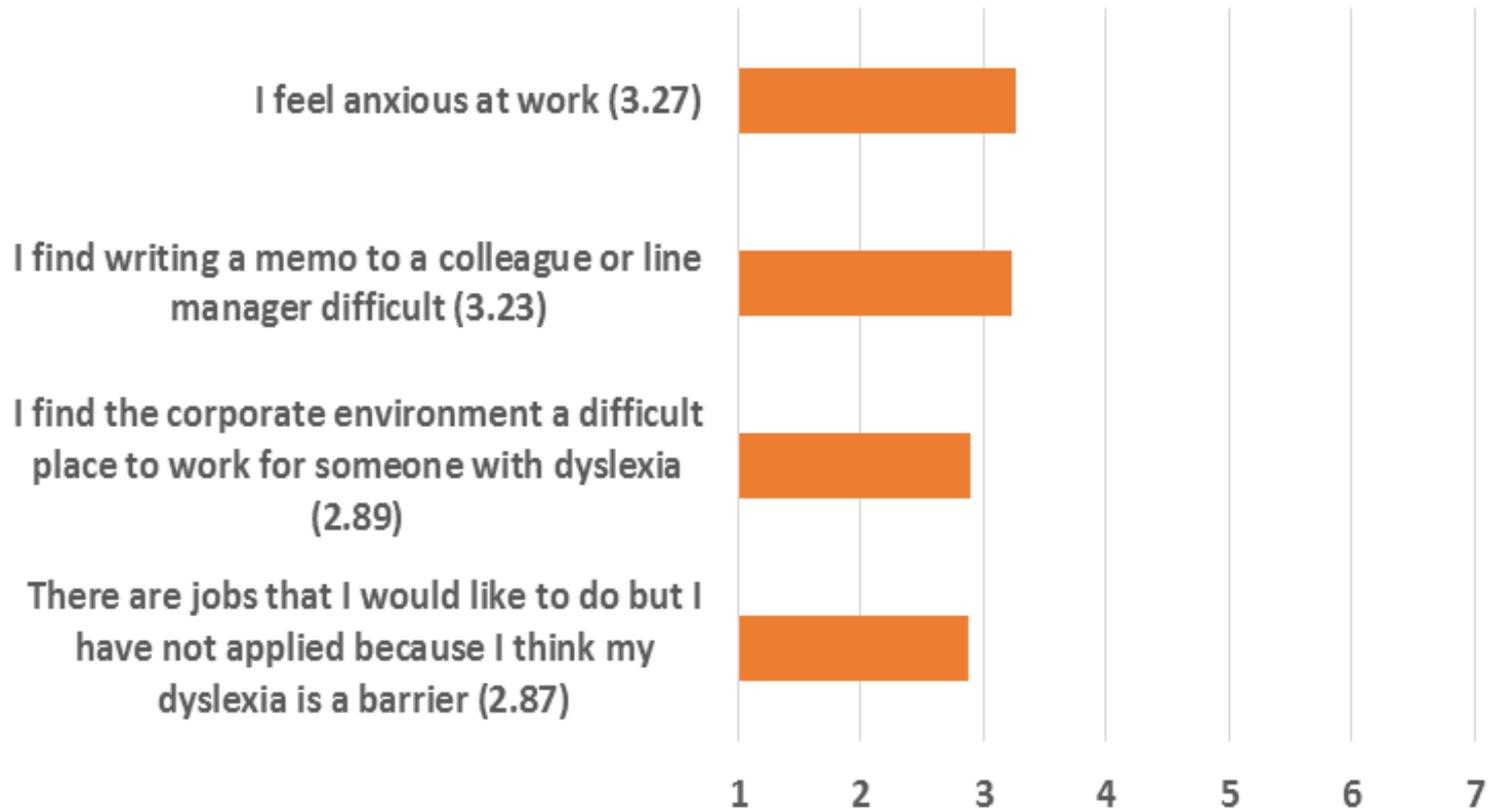
Work Attributes: Statement Means



Work Confidence: Statement Means



Work Anxiety: Statement Means



Discussion

- **Work Attributes:** AWD endorse being creative and innovative.
- **Work Confidence:** AWD can find it challenging to gain confidence on the job.
- **Work Anxiety:** Our study supports prior research suggesting considerable work anxiety reported by AWD.^{4,5,6,7,8}
- Despite the high incidence of a diagnosis of anxiety/depression, EED appears to be the most compelling predictor of work self-efficacy.

How to improve the situation

- **Can universities/colleges help?** Students with dyslexia often report that colleges do not provide sufficient support to help them cope with the emotional challenges associated with their learning differences.^{9, 10} **Mentoring and coaching schemes**
- **AWD and Self-Awareness:** The individual needs to understand how dyslexia may influence their work performance.

Work Place

- **Coaching:** Has been found to help particularly where working adults take control of their own learning with a goal of bringing awareness and improvement to their work-related skills.¹¹
- **Jon Kabat-Zinn's Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction:** Focuses the human brain on what is being sensed at each moment, instead of on its normal rumination on the past or on the future. Mindfulness has proved to be effective also in enhancing people's capacity to self-regulate.

Questions

Contact

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Independent Variable: Emotional Experience with Dyslexia (EED)

- Higher scores reflect elevated levels of negative emotions associated with dyslexia.

Example statements:

'I experience a lot of anxiety and stress regarding my dyslexia'

'Even as an adult I experience sadness about my dyslexia'



Dependent Variable: Work Self-Efficacy

- Three scales: work attributes, confidence and anxiety
- Higher scores = more positive work self-efficacy and work experience associated with dyslexia

Example statements:

'I am able to create novel solutions to problems'

'I feel confident at work'

'I feel anxious at work'

