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THE EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES IN PARTICIPATING IN AN ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAM

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Abstract

Learning difficulties can affect academic achievement and lead to a lack of self-confidence, a loss of motivation, or challenges in managing study time. This study aims to understand the experiences of students who face learning difficulties while participating in an academic support program. A qualitative approach with a case study design was employed, involving three eleventh-grade students at a high school in Banda Aceh. Participants were selected purposively based on their experiences with learning difficulties and their participation in academic support. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. The interview results indicate that each participant faced different challenges. The first participant struggled to understand Mathematics and Physics material and felt embarrassed to ask questions in class. The second participant felt left behind in their studies following an illness and continued to experience nervousness when facing examinations. Meanwhile, the third participant primarily struggled with time management and overcoming the habit of procrastination. Throughout the support program, all three participants reported positive changes, such as increased confidence in asking questions, a better grasp of the subject matter, and the development of consistent study habits. Nevertheless, some obstacles persisted, particularly anxiety leading up to exams and the tendency to procrastinate on assignments. These findings suggest that individual learning needs vary, and therefore, academic support must be tailored to the specific difficulties each student encounters.

Keywords*: adaptability, psychological assessment, learning difficulties, academic support, secondary school students*

INTRODUCTION

This study stems from the experiences of three eleventh-grade students at a high school in Banda Aceh who participated in an academic support program. Each student faced distinct learning challenges rooted in different circumstances. The first participant struggled to grasp increasingly complex material in Mathematics and Physics, and felt too embarrassed to ask questions when they did not understand the lessons. The second participant fell behind in Chemistry and Mathematics after a prolonged absence from school due to illness; this situation caused them to feel anxious when facing examinations. Meanwhile, the third participant encountered difficulties in managing study time, particularly due to the need to balance schoolwork, extracurricular organizational commitments, and the completion of assignments. A tendency to procrastinate led to an accumulation of tasks, making them difficult to complete.

These three experiences demonstrate that academic obstacles are not always rooted in the same issues. For the first participant, difficulty in understanding the material was compounded by a lack of confidence to ask questions. For the second participant, falling behind on course material was linked to anxiety regarding academic evaluations. As for the third participant, the challenges were primarily related to procrastination and time-management skills. In this study, the obstacles encountered by the participants are understood as academic difficulties that arise during the learning process, rather than as diagnoses of specific learning disabilities or clinical disorders.

One of the approaches employed by the three participants to address these challenges is academic support. In the context of this study, academic support is understood as a learning-related intervention that helps students grasp course material, discuss the difficulties they encounter, and develop more organized study habits. The participants' experiences indicate that this support provides a space for asking questions and engaging in small-group discussions, receiving step-by-step explanations, and learning how to create study schedules and summarize course content. This form of support aligns with the specific needs of each participant, although their individual experiences during the support process were not entirely identical.

The changes experienced during the mentoring process can be understood through the concepts of adaptability, self-efficacy, and self-regulated learning. Adaptability refers to an individual's capacity to adjust their cognitive, behavioral, and affective responses when facing change or adversity (Martin et al., 2012). Self-efficacy pertains to an individual's belief in their own ability to tackle tasks and achieve goals (Bandura, 1997). Meanwhile, self-regulated learning relates to the ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate one's own learning activities (Zimmerman, 2002). These three concepts help in understanding the participants' experiences—ranging from the courage to ask questions and efforts to manage academic anxiety, to the development of more structured study habits..

Given these conditions, this study aims to understand the experiences and perspectives of three eleventh-grade students participating in an academic support program. Specifically, it examines how the participants interpret the learning obstacles they encounter, the changes they perceive throughout the support process, and the factors that either facilitate or hinder their adjustment to learning. By focusing on the participants' experiences, this study seeks to provide insight into how academic support is perceived by students who face learning challenges and have diverse needs.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design, chosen because the research objective is not to test relationships between variables, but rather to gain an in-depth understanding of how students interpret their experiences with learning difficulties and the process of receiving

academic support. This approach allows the researcher to capture the complexity of the subjects' experiences without reducing them merely to numbers or scores. As noted by Selian (2023), an understanding of children's learning difficulties should not rely solely on formal test results; rather, it should also take into account their daily context, their relationships within their learning environment, and how they adapt to the academic demands they face on a day-to-day basis.

The subjects of this study consist of three eleventh-grade students at a high school in Banda Aceh who are currently participating in, or have previously participated in, an academic support program. The three subjects were selected using a purposive sampling technique based on the following criteria: (1) a history of learning difficulties in one or more subjects; (2) participation in an academic support program for at least one semester; and (3) a willingness to participate in the study voluntarily.

The characteristics of the three participants differ based on the subjects in which they experience difficulties and the underlying circumstances contributing to these challenges. The first participant struggles with Mathematics and Physics due to the increasing complexity of the material at the high school level, combined with a teaching pace perceived as too fast. The second participant has fallen behind in Chemistry and Mathematics as a result of a prolonged illness. Meanwhile, the third participant faces difficulties in English, stemming from challenges in balancing time between school activities, organizational commitments, and independent study. The characteristics of the participants are presented in the Table.

Table 1. Characteristics of Research Participants

Participant Code	Gender	Age	Class	Subjects	Difficulties Encountered
P1	P	16 years	XI	Mathematics and Physics	Experiencing difficulty in grasping increasingly complex material, coupled with the feeling that the teacher’s pace of instruction is too fast. This situation leaves the participant feeling insecure and reluctant to ask questions.
P2	L	16 years	XI	Chemistry and Mathematics	Falling behind on coursework due to a prolonged illness, feeling anxious when facing exams, and lacking the confidence to ask questions.
P3	L	16 years	XI	English	Having difficulty managing time between school activities, organizational commitments, and independent study, which leads to a habit of procrastination and an accumulation of unfinished work and assignments..

As shown in Table 1, the three participants have different backgrounds regarding their academic difficulties. These differences serve as a basis for understanding each participant's experience while participating in the academic support program. The limited number of participants aligns with the focus of qualitative research, which prioritizes an in-depth understanding of individual experiences.

The participants' identities have been anonymized using the codes P1, P2, and P3 to ensure confidentiality.

Research data were collected through face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with three participants in 2026. The interviews followed a guide developed based on aspects such as learning difficulties, experiences during the academic support program, and perceived changes in the learning process. The interview questions were designed to explore the participants' experiences prior to the support program, their experiences while participating in the program, and the changes they perceived in their understanding of course material, management of learning activities, and approaches to overcoming academic challenges.

The interviews were conducted in a relaxed atmosphere to ensure the participants felt comfortable while sharing their experiences. The data obtained were then examined to identify similarities and differences in the experiences of the three participants. Subsequently, the data were analyzed using a thematic analysis technique to identify patterns of experience related to learning difficulties and the adjustment process during their participation in academic support.

The research data were analyzed using a thematic analysis technique, following the stages proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The analysis was conducted through several steps: reading the data repeatedly to understand the participants' experiences, assigning initial codes to relevant segments of the data, grouping codes that share similar meanings, reviewing the emerging themes, and finally defining and naming the themes.

During the coding phase, the researcher identified statements from the participants that pertained to their experiences with learning difficulties and the process of receiving academic support. For instance, a statement expressing a fear of being perceived as slow when asking questions could be categorized under the code "hesitation to ask questions." Statements regarding falling behind on coursework due to illness or experiencing anxiety about upcoming exams could be grouped under the theme of "experiencing academic setbacks." Meanwhile, statements concerning the tendency to procrastinate on assignments or the process of creating a study schedule could be classified under the theme of "time management and study habits." This categorization was used to help the researcher understand the similarities and differences in the experiences of the three participants.

Subsequently, the themes that emerged were reviewed to ensure their alignment with the interview data. The researcher compared the experiences of P1, P2, and P3 to identify both common patterns and distinct experiences. The interpretation of the analysis is presented with reference to the participants' statements, ensuring that the discussion remains grounded in the experiences they shared. This process was employed to understand how each participant perceived their learning difficulties and their experiences while receiving academic support.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. General Overview of Participants and the Implementation of Academic Mentoring

The three participants in this study had different backgrounds regarding their academic difficulties, though all experienced obstacles in their learning process prior to receiving academic support. The first participant struggled to grasp increasingly complex material in Mathematics and Physics, and also felt that the teacher’s pace of instruction was too fast. The second participant fell behind in Chemistry and Mathematics following a prolonged illness. Meanwhile, the third participant had difficulty managing time between school activities, extracurricular organizations, and independent study, which frequently led to assignments being delayed and piling up.

Based on the experiences shared by the participants, these difficulties affected their learning processes in different ways. For the first participant, the struggle to understand the material was compounded by feelings of insecurity and a reluctance to ask questions, stemming from a fear of being perceived as slow by peers. The initial text also notes that this participant’s mathematics grades fell below the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM). For the second participant, falling behind on the material led to concerns about being unable to answer questions during examinations. The third participant struggled to complete assignments consistently due to a habit of procrastination. As the initial grades for the second and third participants were not specifically detailed in the text, the discussion regarding them focuses on their reported learning experiences.

To help participants overcome these difficulties, they took part in an academic mentoring program. Based on experiences shared during interviews, the mentoring sessions involved small groups, offering students opportunities to ask questions, engage in discussions, and receive step-by-step explanations of the course material. Participants referred to their mentors as "kakak pendamping" (older-sibling mentors). Beyond assisting with the comprehension of subject matter, the mentoring experience also helped students develop study habits, such as creating schedules and summarizing course content. Nevertheless, the text does not provide detailed information regarding the program organizers, the backgrounds of the mentors, or the frequency and duration of the sessions.

The characteristics, academic difficulties, initial impacts, and changes reported by the three participants following their participation in the support program are presented in the Table. 1.

Table 2. Characteristics, Difficulties, and Academic Impacts of Participants

Participants	Subjects	Difficulties Encountered	Impact Prior to Assistance	Changes Reported After Mentoring/Support
P1	Mathematics and Physics	They struggle to grasp increasingly complex material and feel that the teacher's pace of instruction is too fast. Furthermore, the participants feel self-conscious about asking questions.	Experiencing difficulty in understanding the material and lacking the confidence to ask questions. Initial records show a Mathematics grade below the minimum mastery standard (KKM).	They report feeling more confident in raising their hand when the teacher asks a question, and note that their Mathematics grades have improved, meaning they no longer need to take remedial sessions.
P2	Chemistry and Mathematics	Falling behind on coursework due to a prolonged illness, compounded by anxiety about upcoming exams and a lack of confidence to ask questions.	There is a concern about being unable to answer exam questions because some material is not yet understood. The initial grade data is not specified in detail.	They claim to have a better grasp of the material they had previously fallen behind on and are able to maintain grades above the minimum passing standard (KKM). Nevertheless, they still feel nervous as the exams approach.
P3	English	Difficulty balancing time between school activities, organizational commitments, and independent study, combined with a habit of procrastinating on tasks.	Tasks are piling up, and participants find it difficult to determine which work should be completed first. The initial baseline data is not specified.	Feeling more disciplined after learning to create schedules and summarize study material, and finding it easier to catch up on previously delayed tasks.

Source: Research data as presented in the original manuscript.

Based on Table 2, all three participants reported changes following their participation in academic support, though the nature of these changes varied. For P1, the change was reflected in an increased willingness to participate in class and improved results in Mathematics. For P2, the support proved helpful in grasping missed course material and maintaining academic performance, although

some test-related anxiety persisted. Meanwhile, P3 highlighted changes in how they manage their study activities, organize their schedules, and complete outstanding assignments.

This experience demonstrates that the impact of academic difficulties extends beyond grades, affecting self-confidence, exam preparedness, and study management habits. Academic support appears to have helped participants address their individual learning needs by providing opportunities to ask questions, offering step-by-step explanations of course material, and facilitating the use of more structured study strategies. However, these changes should be understood as experiences reported by the participants themselves. Since the manuscript does not yet present report card data or confirmation from teachers as a point of comparison, the changes in the grades of P1 and P2 cannot be considered independently verified results.

Overall, the experiences of the three participants demonstrate that the learning adjustment process unfolds differently depending on the specific challenges encountered. While the support provided does not entirely eliminate all obstacles, it creates space for participants to grasp the material, gain the confidence to ask questions, and develop more structured study habits.

2. Psychological Condition Prior to Receiving Support

All three subjects consistently described an unfavorable psychological state prior to participating in the academic mentoring program. Respondent 1 revealed how a sense of inferiority led them to withdraw, preventing them from taking opportunities to ask questions in class.

> *"Dulu tuh kalau nggak ngerti, aku milih diam aja. Takut dibilang lambat sama teman-teman, padahal sebenarnya banyak yang mau aku tanyain, terutama soal rumus-rumus Fisika yang menurutku ribet." (N.A./P1, wawancara, 12 Juli 2026).*

This statement reveals that the learning obstacles experienced by Respondent 1 do not stem solely from difficulties in understanding the material, but also from a concern regarding social evaluation by peers. This aligns with the findings of Klorina & Juandi (2022), who noted that low self-efficacy in learning mathematics often leads students to avoid situations where their shortcomings might be exposed to others.

These findings indicate that the experience of learning difficulties impacts not only academic aspects but also the psychosocial well-being of students. In the context of psychological assessment, understanding a learner's emotional and social state is crucial for identifying appropriate intervention needs. Psychosocial assessment enables educators and support personnel to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how negative experiences affect an individual's psychological functioning. Therefore, the feelings of inferiority, anxiety, and self-doubt experienced by the three

respondents should be understood as an integral part of their learning experience that requires specific attention, rather than merely as academic obstacles (Aulia & Selian, 2026).

A similar pattern is also evident in Respondent 2, albeit with a different trigger. Falling behind on coursework due to illness causes them to feel distressed whenever they face an academic evaluation.

> *"Pas balik sekolah lagi, rasanya kayak ketinggalan jauh banget. Tiap mau ujian jadi deg-degan sendiri, takut nggak bisa jawab karena banyak yang belum aku pahami." (A.F./P2, wawancara, 12 Juli 2026)*

The anxiety experienced by Respondent 2 reinforces the argument put forward by Jamaludin et al. (2023) that anxiety toward specific subjects—particularly those in the exact sciences—can arise not only from a student's limited ability but also from a perception of falling behind, which creates an emotional burden. Meanwhile, Respondent 3 interprets their initial situation in a more reflective manner, recognizing that the root of the problem lies not in their ability, but rather in their own study habits..

> *"Sebenarnya aku ngerasa bisa aja materinya, cuma keseringan nunda. Ada aja alasannya, capek habis kegiatan lah, besok aja lah, sampai akhirnya numpuk dan bingung sendiri mau mulai dari mana" (R.D./P3, wawancara, 12 Juli 2026).*

This type of reflective awareness is important because addressing learning difficulties becomes more effective when students themselves are able to recognize the behavioral patterns that hinder their learning process, rather than relying solely on interventions from external parties(Anggreni et al., 2025).

3. Adaptation Process During Academic Mentoring

Although they began with different issues, all three subjects exhibited a relatively similar pattern of adaptation throughout the mentoring program: the development of a sense of security that allowed them to ask questions, a gradual strengthening of their understanding, and the restoration of their self-confidence. Respondent 1 described how the small-group environment within the mentoring program transformed their approach to learning difficulties.

> *"Enak sih belajar kelompok kecil gini, jadi nggak malu lagi kalau mau tanya. Kakak pendampingnya juga sabar jelasinnya, pelan-pelan sampai aku paham, nggak buru-buru kayak di kelas." (N.A./P1, wawancara, 12 Juli 2026).*

This shift indicates that smaller study group sizes can reduce the social pressures that previously hindered student participation. These findings reinforce the results of Fauziah (2022), which assert that academic support involving more personal interaction is more effective in helping students catch

up than traditional classroom-based instruction. For Respondent 2, the adaptation process was largely facilitated by the quality of the relationship with the supporting teacher, which made the student feel more comfortable opening up about their difficulties.

"Kakak pendampingnya enak diajak diskusi, nggak bikin aku ngerasa bodoh kalau salah jawab. Jadi lebih berani nyoba lagi walau sempat gagal, dan pelan-pelan mulai ngerti bagian yang dulu ketinggalan." (A.F./P2, wawancara, 12 Juli 2026)

This expression illustrates the importance of an emotionally secure relationship as a prerequisite for the learning process itself; the restoration of a child's motivation to learn is heavily influenced by the quality of the relationship between the child and their mentor throughout the process (Tohani & Janati, 2023). A supportive relationship between a mentor and a student is a crucial factor in facilitating a successful adaptation process. A humanistic approach to the assessment and mentoring of children establishes non-judgmental acceptance as the foundation for creating a sense of psychological safety (Kamalia & Selian, 2026). In this study, all three respondents demonstrated an increased willingness to ask questions and to try again after experiencing failure, as they felt accepted and valued throughout the mentoring process. Respondent 3, however, underwent a slightly different adaptation process, as the mentoring they received placed greater emphasis on developing self-regulation skills.

"Yang paling kerasa itu diajarin bikin jadwal belajar sama rangkuman materi. Awalnya males banget nyusunnya, tapi lama-lama jadi kebiasaan, dan aku jadi lebih gampang ngejar tugas yang sempat tertunda." (R.D./P3, wawancara, 12 Juli 2026).

The changes in Respondent 3's study patterns demonstrate that learning adaptation is not always directly linked to content mastery; rather, it also involves the ability to manage the learning process independently. This is consistent with the view Madini et al. (2025) Effective intervention for learning difficulties must address the underlying root causes; in the case of Respondent 3, these causes lie in self-management skills rather than cognitive capacity.

4. Outcomes Experienced After Receiving Mentoring/Support

All three subjects reported positive changes after undergoing the mentoring program, though the extent and nature of these changes varied. Respondent 1 experienced a significant improvement in their Mathematics grades, as well as greater confidence to participate in regular classes.

"Sekarang udah berani angkat tangan kalau ada yang ditanya guru. Nilai Matematika juga naik, nggak remedial lagi kayak sebelumnya." (N.A./P1, wawancara, 12 Juli 2026).

Meanwhile, Respondent 2 still faces several challenges, particularly regarding time management and nervousness leading up to exams, although, overall, they consider the mentoring program to be very helpful for their learning recovery process.

> *"Masih suka gugup kalau mau ujian, tapi udah nggak separah dulu. Yang penting sekarang nilai bisa dijaga di atas KKM, dan aku ngerasa lebih paham materi yang sempat aku lewatin." (A.F./P2, wawancara, 12 Juli 2026)*

Respondent 3 emphasized that the most significant change for them was not merely about grades, but rather the development of a sense of responsibility toward their own learning process.

> *"Yang berubah itu bukan cuma nilai doang, tapi jadi lebih disiplin. Aku jadi ngerti kalau hasil belajar itu bergantung sama kebiasaan, bukan cuma soal pintar atau nggak." (R.D./P3, wawancara, 12 Juli 2026).*

These three narratives demonstrate that the outcomes of the academic support program are multidimensional, encompassing cognitive aspects—such as improved understanding of course material—affective aspects—such as strengthened self-confidence—and behavioral aspects—such as changes in study habits. These findings broaden the perspective Ramadhani et al. (2024) which highlights the importance of sustained intervention in addressing learning difficulties, as the recovery observed in the three subjects did not occur instantly, but rather through a gradual process that requires consistency from both the students and those supporting them.

5. Similarities and Differences in the Experiences of the Three Participants

Upon closer examination, the pattern emerging from the experiences of the three subjects can be understood as a process of adaptability—an individual's capacity to adjust their ways of thinking and acting when faced with changing demands. This adaptability does not arise spontaneously; rather, it is cultivated through repeated interactions between the student and their mentor within a non-judgmental environment. This perspective aligns with the principles for assessing children with special needs as developed by Selian (2024), which emphasize that understanding a child's challenges requires considering how they adapt to their learning environment, rather than merely evaluating the limitations visible on the surface. Although the three subjects in this study are not clinically classified as children with special needs, the same principles remain relevant, as every student inherently possesses unique learning needs that require an approach tailored to their individual circumstances.

Interestingly, all three subjects demonstrated that the adaptation process unfolds more optimally when a support program is not solely oriented toward the mastery of subject matter, but also provides space for students to feel accepted—without being judged for their shortcomings. This finding reinforces the argument made by Anfasa & Selian (2025) regarding psychological support for

children with special needs: that the presence of a supportive mentor or guide is a key factor in determining how meaningful the support process becomes for the individual receiving it. Consequently, the success of an academic support program is inextricably linked to the quality of the relationship cultivated throughout the process—an aspect often overlooked when program evaluations focus exclusively on academic grades or achievement scores.

The differences in the sources of learning difficulties among the three subjects underscore that academic support programs should not be designed in a uniform manner. For Respondents 1 and 2, the support focuses more on strengthening conceptual understanding, whereas for Respondent 3, it is oriented toward developing time-management skills and study discipline. This variation in needs demonstrates that an effective support program must be flexible and responsive to the individual characteristics of each student, rather than merely adhering to a generic curriculum. This perspective aligns with the views of Klorina & Juandi (2022), who emphasize that strengthening students' self-efficacy in learning mathematics must be tailored to the specific sources of difficulty faced by each individual, rather than being treated as a uniform issue.

6. Factors Supporting and Hindering the Learning Adaptation Process

Based on the experiences of the three participants, there are several factors that both facilitate and hinder their adjustment process while participating in academic support. Facilitating factors include a comfortable learning environment, the supportive attitude of the mentor when explaining material, and study strategies that help participants manage their academic activities. Conversely, hindering factors include a lack of self-confidence, test anxiety, and a tendency to procrastinate. These factors are not experienced in the same way by every participant; rather, they vary according to the specific learning challenges each individual faces.

Table 3. Factors Supporting and Hindering the Learning Adaptation Process

Aspect	Factor	Evidence from Participant Experiences	Impact on the Learning Process
Supporters	A comfortable and non-judgmental learning environment	P1 feels more comfortable asking questions in a small group. P2 also feels able to participate in discussions without the fear of being perceived as foolish for providing an incorrect answer.	Participants felt more at ease asking questions, trying again, and sharing the difficulties they encountered.
Supporters	Explaining the material patiently and in a step-by-step manner	P1 relates that the tutor explained the material slowly until they understood the lesson.	Helping participants understand material that they previously found difficult.
Supporters	A more organized study strategy	P3 shared that the guidance helped them create a study schedule and summarize the material.	Assisting P3 in organizing study activities and catching up on pending assignments.
Inhibitor	Lack of confidence to ask	P1 previously chose to remain silent for fear of being perceived as slow by their peers.	Difficulties that are not yet understood are not always immediately communicated, which limits the opportunity to receive an explanation.

Inhibitor	Anxiety about facing exams	P2 still feels nervous when facing exams, even though they feel they have a better grasp of the material they had previously fallen behind on.	Anxiety remains a challenge, even though the understanding of the material is perceived to have improved.
Inhibitor	The habit of procrastinating and difficulty managing time	P3 admits to frequently putting off work until tasks pile up, leaving them feeling unsure of where to begin.	The completion of tasks is being hindered, and there is a need to establish more consistent study habits.

Source: Interview data from the three participants as presented in the research manuscript.

Based on Table 3, a comfortable learning environment and the attitude of the facilitator are key supporting factors evident in the experiences of P1 and P2. P1 felt more confident in asking questions when learning in a small group and receiving explanations in a step-by-step manner. Meanwhile, P2 felt more at ease participating in discussions, as they did not feel belittled when making mistakes. Both experiences demonstrate that a supportive relationship can help students feel more secure when encountering learning difficulties.

For P3, a notable supporting factor relates to the use of more organized study strategies. Creating schedules and summaries helps P3 manage tasks that were previously often left until later. This demonstrates that the need for support does not always take the form of re-explaining course material; it can also pertain to the habits involved in organizing one's study activities.

On the other hand, the three participants still face distinct challenges. P1 previously struggled to express a lack of understanding, fearing negative judgment from peers. P2 continues to feel nervous when facing exams, while P3 still needs to maintain consistency to ensure that the habit of procrastination does not once again hinder the completion of tasks. These experiences demonstrate that the changes occurring during the mentoring process are gradual and do not immediately eliminate all the difficulties encountered.

Overall, the participants' experiences indicate that academic support is perceived as helpful when students are provided with a comfortable learning environment, explanations tailored to their specific needs, and strategies for managing their study activities. However, issues such as test anxiety, hesitation to ask questions, and a tendency to procrastinate still require attention. Therefore, academic support should take into account the individual circumstances of each student, ensuring that the assistance provided aligns with the specific challenges they face.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study indicates that while the three participants experienced different learning difficulties, they all underwent positive changes during the course of academic support. These changes include an increased willingness to ask questions, a gradual improvement in understanding course material, and the development of more organized study habits. Nevertheless, some challenges persist, such as test anxiety and a tendency to procrastinate on assignments. These findings suggest that academic

support should be tailored to the specific needs of each student—both in terms of mastering course material and in cultivating better study habits.

This study is limited to three participants from a single school in Banda Aceh; therefore, the findings cannot be broadly generalized. Future research should involve a larger number of participants from different schools to capture a more diverse range of experiences. For schools and organizers of academic support initiatives, programs should be designed with flexibility to address the specific challenges faced by each student, while also providing ongoing support to ensure that positive changes in the learning process can be sustained.

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