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Developing a support website for postsecondary students with learning difficulties in academic life in Indonesia

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Introduction: The number of postsecondary students experiencing difficulties in academic life is increasing. In Ireland, the UK, and Japan, it was reported that several percentage of postsecondary students have specific learning difficulties or experience learning difficulties in their academic life. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, there is no statistical prevalence data of postsecondary students with learning difficulties or disabilities, ADHD, and ASD. Even though the government has policies concerning the implementation of special education at the university level, there is no guidance to support students. This study aim is to develop a support website consisting of a self-checklist and practical tips collection tools for postsecondary students who experience learning difficulties in their academic life in Indonesia.

Approach: To develop this new tool, we followed the medical device development process, as Maresova et al. (2020) reported. In the first phase, to identify the concept and feasibility, reported and published checklist tools and support examples in various countries were reviewed, and then appropriate ones for this study were selected. The PubMed, Web of Science, CiNii, and Ichu-shii databases were searched for this study with keywords “learning difficulties” AND [university students OR adults]. Then, in the second phase, items from the existing checklist or assessment tools were verified. Six occupational therapists checked and selected items and made self-checklists. After finalizing the items, the practical tips were rounded up from an occupational therapy perspective. There is no conflict of interest.

Result & Discussion: A total of nine questionnaires were adapted as questions for self-checklist for learning difficulties. Then a total of 102 initial items were collected and selected. After examining the applicability of this study, 58 final items for asking the learning difficulties condition were generated. The support practical tips for each learning difficulty were suggested from an occupational therapy perspective. As an example, it is suggested to use universal design font and immersive function for reading difficulty.

Conclusion: This study is to develop a support website for postsecondary students with learning difficulties in academic life, considering the Indonesian context. As further develops, this information will be launched online, considered user-friendly and accessible for people with disability/difficulties.