

Support for learning- goes beyond academic support

– voices of students with Asperger’s disorder and ADHD

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to describe and explore the experiences of support at school among young adults with Asperger’s disorder (AS) or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and also to examine what support they, in retrospect, described as influencing learning. Data were collected through interviews with thirteen young adults aged between 20-29 years. The findings indicated that the participants experienced difficulties at school academically, socially and emotionally, all of which could influence learning. Useful support for learning included small groups, individualized teaching methods, teachers who cared, and providing practical and emotional support. These findings highlighted that effective support for learning aligns academic and psychosocial support. In conclusion, academic support combined with psychosocial support at school seems to be crucial for learning among students with AS and ADHD.

Keywords: Autism Spectrum Disorders, ADHD/ADD, psychosocial support, education, educational provision, services, qualitative research, special needs students