# Understanding Students' Self-Management Skills at State Islamic University in Indonesia

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## Abstract

The success of students in undertaking their studies depends, among others, on their ability to manage and organize their activities and time. This qualitative research examined students' self-management skills in the English Language Education Department, Ar-Raniry State Islamic University, Aceh, Indonesia. We looked at students' motivational and behavioral strategies and scrutinized their time management, emotion, effort, and social and learning environments, and the impacts on their academic performance and social involvement. Three areas closely related to students' self-management skills, namely academic achievement, academic awards, and social involvements were explored to understand factors contributing to their achievement. To gather the data, the researchers used the semi-structured interview with five female students from the 2017/2018 cohort, selected by using purposive sampling with certain criteria, such as their GPA, TOEFL score, and social involvements. These criteria were imposed to distinguish high-achiever students from the average one. Findings showed that students with outstanding management skills adopt motivational and behavioral strategies in their daily lives. Setting goals, finding relevant activities (worshipping, writing, and reading) were mentioned as motivational strategies; while prioritizing, self-observing, as well adaptation to the surrounding environment were crucial in their behavioral strategies. They also practiced positive and supportive illustrations in developing a good self-management system, such as setting up and executing academic priorities and evaluating how activities were done.

## Keywords

qualitative study, outstanding students, self-management skills, motivational strategies, behavioral strategies

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## Acknowledgements

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The success of students in undertaking their studies depends, among others, on their ability to manage and organize their activities and time. This qualitative research examined students' self-management skills in the English Language Education Department, Ar-Raniry State Islamic University, Aceh, Indonesia. We looked at students' motivational and behavioral strategies and scrutinized their time management, emotion, effort, and social and learning environments, and the impacts on their academic performance and social involvement. Three areas closely related to students' self-management skills, namely academic achievement, academic awards, and social involvements were explored to understand factors contributing to their achievement. To gather the data, the researchers used the semi-structured interview with five female students from the 2017/2018 cohort, selected by using purposive sampling with certain criteria, such as their GPA, TOEFL score, and social involvements. These criteria were imposed to distinguish high-achiever students from the average one. Findings showed that students with outstanding management skills adopt motivational and behavioral strategies in their daily lives. Setting goals, finding relevant activities (worshipping, writing, and reading) were mentioned as motivational strategies; while prioritizing, self-observing, as well adaptation to the surrounding environment were crucial in their behavioral strategies. They also practiced positive and supportive illustrations in developing a good self-management system, such as setting up and executing academic priorities and evaluating how activities were done.

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## Introduction

One of the most important skills needed to succeed is the ability to self-manage. This particular skill is vital in all aspects of life, including in the field of education. In relation to academic success, Dembo (2004, p. 4) stated that,

It was thought that intelligence was the main factor determining academic success. After years of research in learning and motivation, educators have found that students can learn how to become more successful learners by using appropriate strategies to manage their motivation, behavior, and learning.

Likewise, Choi and Chung (2012) agreed that the development of self-management skills tends to be a useful strategy for students who may lose confidence in their ability to succeed and tend to blame external circumstances for their performance. Research

consistently shows that improving student self-management skills in learning is crucial in improving student achievement.

According to Zimmerman and Risemberg (1997) and Zimmerman and Schunk (2013), there are three areas of self-management that one should observe to succeed; these are motivation, behavior, and learning and study strategies. Motivation means the ability to motivate oneself, manage to set goals, define objectives, develop and keep the motivation high to get things done. Motivational strategies mean the capacity to manage and cope with stress and conflict. The absence of this strategy often results in emotional instability, especially when things do not work out as intended. As with motivational strategy, behavioral strategy means the ability to have a positive attitude, self-control, and good time management. Learning and study strategies relate to learners' ability to maximize their time to get the best out of their study (Choi & Chung, 2012).

Experts in educational psychology have conducted a number of studies related to students' self-management skills to examine phenomena taking place within educational institutions. One example of such a study was conducted by Teichmann et al. (2008). Their study was carried out to address the high percentage (40%) of first-year students dropping out at one university in Estonia as a result of poor time and financial management factors. Their undertaking was aimed at decreasing first-year students' drop-off percentage by proposing individual assistance, guidance, and advice. A study by Hijriati (2012) on students' self-management highlighted the relation between self-esteem and English students' academic achievement. In this regard, self-esteem is defined as "the disposition to experience oneself as being worthy of happiness" (Rubio, 2007, p. 5).

A more recent study conducted by Chudari (2017) points out how self-management contributes to the improvement of bad habits into better emotional state and good conducts. This was reflected in the result of the study showing considerable progress on students' punctuality in class attendance and the successful submission of assignments which were extensive before a quasi-experiment in the form of a cognitive-based program was conducted on Indonesian Education University (UPI) Campus, Serang.

After years of teaching and motivation studies, educators have discovered that by using suitable approaches and strategies, students would be able to become more effective learners by controlling their motivation, behavior, and study. Having said that, this qualitative research was designed to investigate students' self-management skills, especially their motivational and behavioral strategies, scrutinizing the influence of their goal-setting strategy, emotion and effort, time management, and physical and social environments on academic achievement.

## Review of Literature

### Self-Management

According to Bandy and Moore (2010), self-management is one of the five social-emotional areas of learning which is identified by the collaboration for academic, social, and emotional learning (CASEL). They suggested that the ability to control the emotions and consequential manners that are socially suitable is what self-management is. It enables students to deal with undesirable results, perseveres when facing difficulties, and sets goals for the best achievement.

Zimmerman and Risemberg (1997) as cited in Dembo and Seli (2012) stated that there are three categories of motivational, behavioral, and learning and study strategies related to the academic self-management model. These three categories can be recognized by six components, namely motivation, methods of learning, use of time, physical and social

environment, and performance. In the context of this study, two of the three components of academic self-management, motivational and behavioral strategies, served as the premise for coordinating and organizing the discussion throughout this article.

## Motivational Strategies

Motivational strategy comprises fundamental conducts of setting goals and managing emotion and effort. Motivational strategy is the ability to guide internal processes that give students the power and direction to pursue and achieve self-determined objectives. Yusuf (2011) emphasizes that the need to have self-efficacy and self-regulated learning strategies are central to students' academic achievement Besides setting up goals, managing emotion and efforts is vital for students to cope with the pressures of academic and social issues. As one of the three components of academic self-management skills, successful adoption of motivational strategy would lead to the attainment of determined learning goals.

Educational researchers have acknowledged that there are many different patterns of beliefs and behaviors that can limit academic success. Adopted from Pintrich (1994, 2003), student motivation involves three interactive components: personal and socio-cultural factors, classroom environment, and students' beliefs. Personal and socio-cultural factors refer to individual characteristics, such as attitude and values. These values are acquired by students from their prior personal, family, and cultural experiences. The factor of classroom environment often contributes to students' enjoyable instructional experiences. A supportive and positive classroom environment such as the availability of various media like pictures, props, or games will also motivate students to take risks, ask questions, and take part in the learning process. Internal factors or students' beliefs and perceptions also play a significant role in fostering students' motivation which in turn results in the improvement of students' achievement.

## Behavioral Strategies

Just as the motivational strategy has its essential elements; behavioral strategy consists of time management and management of physical & social environment. To be able to succeed in their study, students must manage their time wisely, and control their physical and social environment in a way that helps them achieve their goals.

> Motivated behavior can be achieved by evaluation in the beginning. A person might begin by evaluating their choice of behavior, level of activity and involvement, and persistence and management of the effort. (Dembo, 2004, p. 54)

These will help individuals identify factors or reasons that can improve their self-management skills which in turn help them manage their time, and the physical and social environment they are in.

## Time-Management

Time management is essentially the core of self-management (Dembo & Seli, 2007; Maitland 1999,). Lawrence and Rombe (2016, p. 205) stated that "Time management is self-management, organizing oneself to better manage time-consuming activities. Structuring, developing to-do-list, overcoming procrastination, and develop time management techniques for effective time use." There are strategies and management systems involved in the efforts

to reduce procrastination and to use time effectively. In order to be aware of this, an individual needs to analyze his or her use of time by self-observation: assessing the use of time and timewasters, which can be the basis for adopting appropriate strategies to manage time effectively. The ability to recognize timewasters would be fundamental in the effort to plan activities and manage time more effectively. It often materializes in setting a regular study period, making a list of tasks, setting a weekly priority schedule, and so on.

Positive results in different fields, including in the education sector, are triggered by the ability to manage time wisely. Although it is argued that time management can be developed at any age (Indreica et al., 2011), time management focuses more on the effort to use time as a resource to reach the goals efficiently (Cemaloğlu & Filiz, 2010). Furthermore (Smith, 1994, p. 20) believes that time control is very important because it means a lot in controlling the events in your life.

## Management of Physical and Social Environment

One other aspect of self-management skills is, "the ability to restructure or modify one's physical and social environment when it is necessary to learn more effectively" (Dembo, 2004, p. 165). Therefore, it is important to know and understand what impacts do environmental and social factors have on the learning process and how one can make necessary changes in his or her environment. It means that one can always decide to adapt to his/her environment and change his/her environment to fit his/her needs. The ability to adapt to one's surroundings and adopt appropriate steps to benefit from the situation is crucial for individuals who want to succeed in their study, and in other areas for that matter. It means that even when someone cannot accomplish the best learning atmosphere, he/she can still take steps to adapt or modify his/her behavior to suit the physical environment.

Similarly, the social environment is as much important as the physical environment. According to Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997 (cited in Dembo, 2004, p. 166),

> Self-management of the social environment relates to the ability to determine when you need to work alone or with others, or when it is time to seek help from instructors, tutors, peers, and nonsocial sources such as a reference book, additional textbooks, or the Internet.

Therefore, knowing how and when to work with others is also an important aspect of self-management skills.

## The Study

Before elaborating the research design, we would like to describe the context of the authors of this paper. Safrul Muluk, Habiburrahim, and Saiful Akmal are senior lecturers at English Language Education Department at Ar-Raniry State Islamic University (UIN Ar-Raniry) in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Desi Adriana and Muhammad Safwan serve as teaching assistants at the university. We conducted this research to look at factors contributing to the success of high-achieving students in both academic and social life. It is expected that the results of this study provide the readers with important insights from the respondents' experiences that can be used as references, either in academic or social spheres.

**Research Design**

In conducting research, the need to find the strategy to put together different components of the project design is inevitable. Creswell (2009, p. 3) considers research design as "detailed plans and procedures of data collection and analysis." The reason why research design is crucial is twofold. First, the research design will help the data collection process. Second, it will ensure that the collected data is correctly answered the research questions and avoid any uncertain aspects of the research.

In this research, to address and understand the issue of outstanding students' self-management, the researchers used a qualitative approach. As we wanted to investigate students' self-management skills and how they perform in academic and social life, a qualitative approach would suit the researchers' intention to examine a dimension of the social world, the texture of life, understanding experience, and relationship (Mason, 2002). In addition, as the nature of the data gathered in this study is characterized by descriptive data, the qualitative approach is the most suitable approach that can be utilized. By doing so, the qualitative research method can provide data, craft analysis, and communicate the impact (Tracy, 2019).

To ensure the trustworthiness of the current study, we made sure that bias on the part of research members were clarified, and, during data collection, we conducted a peer review to make sure that the data have been thoroughly covered and presented in the most objective way possible. The effort to establish the consistency during the inquiry was of great importance to prevent the risk of missing and addressing serious threats to the reliability and validity (Moore et al., 2002).

**Participants**

The population of this study was the fourth-year undergraduate students of the English Language Education Department at an Islamic university in Aceh, Indonesia. These undergraduate students enrolled in the 2017/2018 academic year comprising of 120 students. Purposive sampling was used to select the research participants. For the purpose of this research, several criteria were used as a guideline for respondent recruitment. Students selected as research respondents were those who had a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.5 on the scale of 4, achieved a TOEFL score of a minimum of 500, won academic awards either on or off-campus, and have contributed to social activities outside the campus. These criteria were used to distinguish students who were able to perform well in academic and social life, from those who have average achievement. Based on those criteria, only five female students out of 120 students fulfilled the requirement as respondents. All respondents were in the same age bracket, 20 to 21 years of age.

Creswell (2012, p. 234) stated, "It is better to select a few, rather than many, individuals or sites to study, to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon." The fact that only five out of 120 students who were eligible to be included as respondents in this research showed the difficulties faced by students in implementing self-management skills. In this case, homogenous sampling, as proposed by Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016) within purposive sampling methods is used in order to get information-rich participants with expected precise similarity (students, academic year, and life experiences). No specific ethic approvals were required to conduct the study, and names of research participants remained anonymous.

Having set the criteria for research participants, five female students were eligible as respondents of the study. All of them achieved high GPA (above 3.5) and TOEFL scores (above 500). They also involved in off-campus activities contributing to their academic

achievement. In addition, they managed to get involved in social activities that support their future career. Not all students from the population (120 students) with high GPA and TOEFL scores were eligible as research participants as they were not involved in meaningful social activities supporting their studies.

## Data Collection

To answer the question of how students with outstanding self-management skills can excel in both the academic realm and social sphere, researchers employed semi-structured interviews, conducted in English, as a data collection technique. We believed that this data collection technique provided us with in-depth data needed to examine and understand the issue under investigation. Fontana and Frey (2000, p. 645) as cited in Creswell (2012, p. 46) stated, "semi-structured interview is one of the most powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow human beings." Participants were allowed to express their thoughts in Indonesian when they were not sure how to express their ideas in English. The participants' responses were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. This would allow researchers to scrutinize students' motivational and behavioral strategies of self-management skills. The interviews lasted approximately thirty to sixty minutes.

## Data Analysis

The data from interview sessions were transcribed by the researchers in order to find relevant information. The data were then categorized into specific categories and analyzed by using three interrelated coding techniques: open coding, axial and selective coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Common emerging themes from the interview data were identified by the researchers, coded and classified accordingly, to produce conceptual framework (Habiburrahim et al., 2021). The process of this thematic analysis, through a coding process, was an important step in the data analysis stage. These themes were then discussed and elaborated on by referring to the literature. This means that the data collected from in-depth interview, having been transcribed in detail, were carefully examined using open coding, as suggested by Corbin and Strauss to find common emerging themes in the data.

## Findings

Based on the result of the interviews, the researchers learned that all interviewees emphasized the importance of self-management. They realized that self-management is vital to their success. Those five outstanding students stated that they always based their actions and decisions on the awareness of priorities. They believed that they needed to do self-management, as well as to evaluate factors that may affect their chances to succeed.

The findings of this research were divided into several themes emerging from the interviews (goal setting, management of emotion and effort, time management, and management of physical and social environment). The data were classified according to 2 main topics; motivational and behavioral strategy along with the strategies implemented by participants in each topic.

## Cognition Strategy

Previous knowledge, schemata, has been considered as one of the cognitive tools that often helps students in their learning. This is in line with Bandura's (1989) argument stating that students' behavior with their surroundings were influenced by their previous knowledge.

Respondents of this study stated that they used previous knowledge and experiences in adopting strategies to cope with obstacles and found ways to excel. With regard to utilizing knowledge in dealing with challenging situations, respondents 2 stated that,

> Based on my own experiences, I think that it is very important to manage time wisely and to have a good plan. If you do not have a good plan, then the time will be wasted. It will just pass, and you do nothing

In a similar vein, respondent 5 suggested that,

> There have been many real-life examples of the importance of time management. For me, the knowledge I get, either from readings or from lecturers' explanation, has been influential in the way I make decisions.

**Motivational Strategy**

As one of the self-management skills, motivational strategy plays a crucial part in students' success. The researcher found out that all respondents had their motivational strategies to keep them motivated in their study and the pursuit of other academic credentials. This suggests that having a motivational strategy has certainly helped these students in setting their goals and managed their emotions and efforts in pursuing their goals.

**a.     Goal-setting**

As one self-management motivational strategy, goal setting plays an important role in students' success. It serves as the basis of motivation because it influences how an individual allocates his/her resources, how hard he/she works, and how long he/she persists at undertaking tasks in hands. From the interviews, it was clear that all student respondents acknowledged the importance of setting up goals. This was evident from their habits of planning their academic and social activities. The interviewees realized that goal setting played a pivotal role in their success. During an interview, it was revealed that all respondents set aside time to plan their activities by making a "to-do list" in the order of priority. Here, respondent 1 said:

> I always set goals for myself. I set targets that I have to achieve in a year. For example, in 2018, I made 10 targets in my study and social life that I wanted to achieve. I had a "things to do list" to make sure that I work towards those goals.

Interview data show that all five students had their own specific strategies in setting goals. Some had journals, resolution goals, and some others created visions with the mission on their "to-do list." Some of them had similar ways of planning or setting goals, indicating the use of goal setting as a self-management strategy.

**b.     Management of emotion and effort**

Managing emotion and efforts is also part of motivational strategies. This self-management skill plays important role in ones' life. It is inevitable that high-pressure situations commonly experienced by mankind often result in stressful conditions that may lead to conflict, anxiety, irrational thinking, and self-defeating beliefs. If an individual is

unable to manage emotion and effort, he will not be able to achieve stability and perform well in their daily activities.

Individuals have their own way of dealing with and managing emotion and effort in order to achieve emotional stability. To minimize tensions from anxiety and frustration, many would use relaxation strategies such as self-talking, sharing with certain people, worshipping, singing, meditating, etc. Based on the result of the interview, the interviewees also had a different type of relaxation strategies. Besides sharing with people that they trust, reading a novel, writing, watching TV or movies, the most common answers given by all interviewees was worshipping Allah (God), whether in the form of reciting the Qur'an or praying. In this case, respondent 3 said:

> When I'm in a stressful situation, I think that maybe I have done something wrong, or perhaps disobey the teaching of my religion. So, I try to get close to the Almighty by worshipping or something like that to have peace of mind. It often helps me to calm down my anxiety.

When dealing with their emotion such as anxiety and frustration, the respondents suggested that have various ways of dealing with these emotions. The above illustration indicates how respondent 3 managed and handled her emotions. One of the strategies used was to turn to a spiritual connection with the Almighty. It is considered as one of the areas of self-management that helps people to cope with pressures in their life. Involving and relying on the higher power in every aspect of life, influences someone to have a positive perspective in life and avoid the feeling of self-pity or despair. All respondents suggested that they set aside time for worshipping Allah. It was apparent from their responses to the question that reads, "Do you set aside time for worshipping Allah and having quality time with family and friends? Are those influencing your use of time?"

Besides worshipping or other religious rituals, another common answer of relaxation strategies when they were in stressful situations was watching YouTube videos, TV program, and writing. In this case, respondent 3, out of her interest in writing, stated: "When I feel stress, the productive activity that I do is writing, so I'll write a poem, I'll write a diary, and I'll write everything that I feel relieved about."

## Behavioral Strategy

The interviews with the students reveal that in addition to using motivational strategies, they also use behavioral strategies to improve their self-management skills. There are several important areas influencing students' successful execution self-management, which include time management, prioritizing, and self-observation and evaluation

### a. Time-management

Our interviews with all these five students revealed important information that to be successful learners they have to think ahead of time, such as do the planning and also organizing their time well. In so doing, some of them grouped their schedule into two categories: social and academic activities. They intentionally set aside time for academic purposes, but also give some time for their leisure activities.

With regard to time management, student 1 stated that:

> When it comes to time management, I intentionally allocate and dedicate time to review my courses, work on my assignments, and prepare for the next study

materials. I can only feel relaxed once I am sure I am on top of my academic tasks.

Other students, while recognizing the importance of time management, admitted that there were times when they failed to immediately work on tasks in hand. On this note, respondent 3, for example, stated that,

I tend to postpone some of the task I have. It is not because I do not have the time and ability to attend it, but I just postpone it for later. I know it is not a good habit, but when I feel a bit down, I cannot help but delay some of my to do list.

The above statements show that despite realizing the importance of time management, some respondents admitted that they occasionally procrastinate their tasks.

### b. Prioritizing

Prioritizing, putting important matters first, is also a significant factor affecting students' successful academic life. The interviews suggest that the students make an effort in prioritizing their activities. As revealed during the interviews, all 5 students asserted that academic-related activities are their top priorities. Only after the academic agenda has been accomplished come other social and leisure activities. Weighing up the benefits from academic and social activities that they can get also one of the factors of their prioritizing strategies, as stated by student 2:

In some cases, I postpone my academic agenda. For example, if an urgent social activity comes up, and its degree of urgency is high. I would skip class for one meeting. In doing so, I weigh up the benefits it brings to my development.

The quotes show that students do not always spend their time studying or focusing on their academic program, they sometimes take time to do some leisure activities. Doing social and leisure activities will energize students to learn better.

### c. Self-observation and evaluation

Doing self-observation and evaluation is another behavioral strategy that serves as an inquiry mechanism towards planned activities. It is through self-observation and evaluation that one can get feedback on his/her performance, which in turn can be used for future undertakings. When utilized properly, the feedbacks can be of great use to improve areas that need enhancement. On this note, one of the students, for instance, said:

After I work on something, I usually check and evaluate my performance. I look at how I did my work, what can I do differently to make it better, do I benefit from it, and whether it gives me maximum results. I also write down my assessment and evaluation of my activities for future use and reference.

The quote indicates that the participants reflect on their activities. It is important to note that regardless of these students' understanding of the reflective practices, they have in a way done it and these reflective practices have yielded a positive impact on their academic

achievement. These students also stated that they would work hard to keep up with their timeline as scheduled, as one of them said "My positive thing is I will hold my agenda, I mean I will hold my timeline."

## Discussion

The current study was conducted at the English Language Education Department, UIN Ar-Raniry. It investigated students' self-management skills and their impacts on their academic and social life. Five out of 120 English Language Education Department students from the 2017/2018 academic year, at Ar-Raniry State Islamic University, were selected as respondents. They were chosen based on their academic achievement and social involvement. While the context of this study was limited to specific group of students, we believed that it can be used as comparison for the same phenomenon of high-achieving students in other Higher Education settings.

Our findings point out that these five outstanding students use a handful of strategies in their self-management. They set goals ahead of time, manage their emotions and efforts, manage their time, and adapt to the physical and social environment. The result indicated that they all have the ability to restructure or modify their physical and social environment. They know when it needs to work alone or in a group, when to seek help from others, and how to adapt to their environment and make acceptable changes in their environment.

This finding has revealed important insights into high-achieving students' attitudes and beliefs toward learning. They realize that successful learning starts from within, from their own personality (Freudenberg et al., 2011). From within and from their own personality means they should be able to be creative, innovative, and proactive on what they want and how to get what they want. In doing so, they have to self-manage and monitor factors contributing to their success or/and failure to achieve their goal. They believe that obstacles inhibiting their goal achievement should be eliminated and they should be committed to tackling the barriers. This is similar to what Bandy and Moore (2010) believe that the ability to engage in self-management is very much connected with their success in managing their emotional states.

One of the key factors for their academic success is the ability to manage their learning anxiety. As the result, they have strong learning motivation, which is referred to as motivational strategies. This attitude toward learning is very much influenced by their significant others, the immediate families, which is also known as the first socialization zone for all children. This suggests that earlier childhood education in the family is very much influential for the development of learning attitudes of children beyond their first socialization zone. This is in line with the theory put forward by Pintrich (1994) suggesting three interactive components involve in students' motivation: personal and socio-cultural factors, classroom environment factor, and internal belief and perception. These three factors unconsciously have played important roles in building the outstanding students' motivated behavior. In addition, the result also pointed out how they decide the choice of behavior, level of activity and involvement, and persistence which are identified as motivated behavior (Dembo, 2004).

In addition to motivational strategies, the findings also revealed that the students use goal setting, emotional management, and self-management system. They indicated that there are resolution goals in their to-do list strategy served as the basis for the follow-up activities, reduced procrastination, and resulted in priority checklists. This reflects that one of the most important factors influencing the attainment of goals is the efficient use of time, the need to have it planned and organized well (Dembo, 2004). Also, they use relaxation strategies in the management of emotion. They did self-talking, sharing with certain people, reading a novel,

and most of them believe that asking God's help for their success is another important attempt they took to be successful. Choi and Chung (2012) show similar instances that students having strong self-management skills will most likely be successful in their academic achievement. In addition, students' strong learning attitudes, known as behavioral strategies, help student gain their academic achievement.

The results, furthermore, demonstrated the students' positive and negative behaviors toward the time in general. Student's positive behaviors towards time are hard workers in which they showed discipline and persistence in their study (i.e., assignments, accomplishments) and became more reliable in making a decision. On the other hand, negative behaviors toward time can be seen from the fact that some (though very few of them) are still procrastinating the time. To this end, positive adjustment behavior among university students, as Turki et al., (2018) argue, can further improve their emotional and social learning for greater chance of success. On the other hand, although, negative behaviors are somewhat difficult to be completely erased, self-management practices among students can significantly reduce the negative behaviors in a university context. The responses from this study explained two aspects of self-management: motivational and behavioral strategies, with four components of goal setting, management of emotion and efforts, time-management, and management of the physical and social environment. Good practices from this study of high-achieving students reveal several interesting information. The five participants agreed that a positive attitude towards learning is one of the fundamental factors triggering students' academic achievement. It is important to note from the finding that these positive learning attitudes, such as self-management strategies and behavioral strategies are shaped from their first socialization zone, such as education received from their immediate families.

These all five students showed the use of strategies to reduce anxiety and setting goals called motivational strategies. They indicated that there are resolute goals in their to-do list and priority checklists which serve as the basis of motivation for them. Also, they use relaxation strategies to manage their emotion such as self-talking, sharing with certain people, reading a novel, including worshipping/praying, and writing diaries.

Next, they have strategies to develop a good time-management system such as doing self-observation and self-appreciation and making their deadlines before the actual deadlines to reduce procrastination and to use the time more effectively.

All in all, they have serious consideration on their self-management system in which how they build their own behavior based on their cognition. They believe that they need to be self-managed and to monitor the factors contributing to the success by removing the obstacles, finding a way to excel, using their knowledge effectively, and changing the behavior when learning does not occur.

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**Article Citation**

Muluk, S., Akmal, S., Andriana, D., Habiburrahim, H., Safrul, M. S. (2021). Understanding students' self-management skills at State Islamic University in Indonesia. *The Qualitative Report, 26*(7), 2333-2346. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2021.4817