

BEYOND SCHOOL ACCESS: EDUCATIONAL VULNERABILITIES AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT AMONG CHILDREN IN POST-DISASTER ACEH

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji kerentanan pendidikan dan dukungan masyarakat pada anak-anak di komunitas pascabencana di Aceh, dengan perhatian khusus pada kesenjangan antara pulihnya akses sekolah dan pemulihan pendidikan yang bermakna. Menggunakan desain deskriptif kualitatif, penelitian ini melibatkan 90 partisipan yang terdiri atas 60 anak berusia 13–18 tahun, 20 orang tua atau wali, dan 10 tokoh masyarakat di Desa Beutong Ateuh, Nagan Raya. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, observasi lapangan, catatan lapangan, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis secara tematik melalui tahap familiarisasi, pengodean, kategorisasi, pengembangan tema, dan interpretasi. Empat tema muncul. Pertama, akses sekolah tidak menjamin keamanan pendidikan karena anak-anak masih menghadapi keterbatasan sumber belajar, kesulitan transportasi, kendala finansial, lemahnya akses internet, dan hambatan terkait jarak. Kedua, kerentanan tersembunyi meliputi penurunan motivasi, kesulitan konsentrasi, kecemasan, kurangnya kepercayaan diri, dan tekanan emosional. Ketiga, dukungan keluarga memperkuat resiliensi pendidikan melalui dorongan, pemantauan, bantuan belajar, penyediaan sumber daya, dan keberlanjutan aspirasi pendidikan. Keempat, dukungan masyarakat berfungsi sebagai jaring pengaman pendidikan melalui dorongan kolektif, bantuan belajar informal, kepemimpinan lokal, dan ruang belajar bersama. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa pemulihan pendidikan pascabencana dibentuk oleh interaksi kondisi material, psikososial, keluarga, dan masyarakat, bukan hanya oleh akses sekolah. Penelitian ini menegaskan perlunya strategi pemulihan yang menangani kesinambungan belajar anak, kesejahteraan emosional, kapasitas keluarga, dan dukungan berbasis masyarakat bersamaan dengan pemulihan pendidikan formal. Dengan mengintegrasikan pengalaman anak dengan perspektif keluarga dan masyarakat, penelitian ini memberikan gambaran sosial yang tertanam secara lebih utuh dan kontekstual mengenai kerentanan pendidikan di lingkungan pedesaan pascabencana di Aceh.

Kata kunci: akses sekolah; dukungan masyarakat; kerentanan pendidikan; pendidikan pascabencana; resiliensi pendidikan

ABSTRACT

This study examined educational vulnerabilities and community support among children in a post-disaster community in Aceh, with particular attention to the gap between restored school access and meaningful educational recovery. Using a qualitative descriptive design, the study involved 90 participants comprising 60 children aged 13–18 years, 20 parents or guardians, and 10 community leaders in Desa Beutong Ateuh, Nagan Raya. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, field observations, field notes, and documentation, and analyzed thematically through familiarization, coding, categorization, theme development, and interpretation. Four themes emerged. First, school access did not guarantee educational security, as children continued to face limited learning resources, transportation difficulties, financial constraints, weak internet access, and distance-related barriers. Second, hidden vulnerabilities included declining motivation, concentration difficulties, anxiety, lack of confidence, and emotional distress. Third, family support



strengthened educational resilience through encouragement, monitoring, learning assistance, provision of resources, and sustained educational aspirations. Fourth, community support functioned as an educational safety net through collective encouragement, informal learning assistance, local leadership, and shared learning spaces. The findings show that post-disaster educational recovery is shaped by the interaction of material, psychosocial, familial, and community conditions rather than school access alone. The study highlights the need for recovery strategies that address children's learning continuity, emotional well-being, family capacity, and community-based support alongside formal educational restoration. By integrating children's experiences with family and community perspectives, the study provides a socially embedded account of educational vulnerability in rural post-disaster settings in Aceh specifically.

Keywords: community support; educational resilience; educational vulnerability; post-disaster education; school access

INTRODUCTION

Education occupies a critical position in post-disaster recovery because recovery involves more than reopening classrooms or returning children to formal attendance. Schools provide continuity in learning, social interaction, communication, and community support, making them important institutions within broader disaster recovery systems (Marzban et al., 2026). However, the restoration of educational infrastructure does not necessarily mean that children have regained the conditions required to learn effectively. Post-disaster recovery may remain constrained by disrupted learning resources, transportation barriers, financial difficulties, limited connectivity, emotional distress, and weakened support systems. Consequently, educational recovery needs to be understood not only in terms of whether children can return to school, but also whether they can participate in learning safely, continuously, and meaningfully.

Disaster recovery is shaped by the interaction of infrastructure, information, institutional capacity, and community response. Research has examined disaster communication, warning systems, and information delivery as important components of recovery and risk reduction (Arai, 2013; Okamoto & Kikkawa, 2014; Luht-Kallas et al., 2026; Yadav et al., 2026). Other studies show that digital platforms, social media, artificial intelligence, and network-based systems increasingly influence how disaster information, public responses, and recovery needs are identified and managed (Chaudhari et al., 2026; Dinesh et al., 2026; Herrera & Gjøsæter, 2026; Liu & Kam, 2026; Manikandan & Valliyammai, 2026). Nevertheless, the availability of formal systems and information does not automatically guarantee that affected populations can access or benefit from essential services.

This distinction is relevant to education. Peña-Vargas et al. (2022) found that disaster exposure could disrupt access to essential services even when those services remained formally available. Similarly, Hamidi et al. (2026) identify communication-related vulnerability as a multidimensional problem associated with digital exclusion, affordability, language barriers, and limited access to information. Broader studies on disaster recovery also emphasize the importance of institutional coordination, public-service continuity, policy learning, and adaptive recovery planning (Blagojević & Baker, 2026; Mai & Butts, 2026; Qian et al., 2026; Romano & Albrecht, 2026; Skrimizea et al., 2021). In the educational context, these conditions suggest that children may be formally enrolled and attending school while still experiencing barriers that limit their ability to benefit from educational services.

Educational vulnerability in disaster-affected communities is therefore multidimensional. It involves material conditions as well as psychosocial and social factors that influence children's ability to remain engaged in learning. Inyang-Ogim et al. (2026)

demonstrate that socioeconomic conditions and access to knowledge and resources are closely connected to community adaptive capacity. Davariniamotlaghquchan et al. (2026) further show that climate- and disaster-related pressures can contribute to psychological distress, socioeconomic disruption, and weakened social networks. Studies of disaster impacts have also documented disruptions in health, care, and other social services, particularly among vulnerable populations (Benjamin et al., 2026; Panda & Barik, 2026; Rad et al., 2026; Şimşek & Kaya, 2026). These findings indicate that vulnerability extends beyond physical exposure and includes the material, emotional, and social resources available to affected populations.

The psychosocial dimension requires particular attention because disaster experiences can influence children's motivation, concentration, confidence, and capacity to sustain everyday learning. Recent research has documented persistent emotional and psychological consequences following disasters (Brenner et al., 2026; Özşahin et al., 2026). Public responses to disasters also reveal complex emotional patterns involving distress, solidarity, collective memory, and perceptions of institutional response (Chang et al., 2026; Meydanoğlu et al., 2026; Perrino, 2018). However, these studies primarily focus on broader psychological, social, or communication outcomes rather than examining how such conditions become educational vulnerabilities among school-aged children.

Recent studies have also examined the role of schools and education within disaster risk management. Marzban et al. (2026) demonstrate that schools have broader functions in disaster preparedness, communication, coordination, and community engagement, while Chien and Yu (2026) highlight the importance of integrating disaster-related learning into educational processes. Other studies discuss curriculum-based capacity development and the institutionalization of disaster risk reduction (Tatsuki, 2026), as well as broader trends in disaster management research and professional preparedness (Çevirme et al., 2026; Terzi et al., 2026). Research has also addressed disaster cycles and planning across environmental contexts, including wildfire and other long-term risks (Isaba et al., 2026). Nevertheless, this body of research provides less insight into children's everyday educational experiences after a disaster, particularly when formal schooling has resumed but material, psychological, and social barriers remain.

Family and community support represent another important dimension of recovery. Durmus et al. (2026) demonstrate the importance of family and community engagement in disaster preparedness, while Zhang et al. (2026) show that community resilience is associated with the capacity of social networks to respond to crisis conditions. Munyaka et al. (2026) further demonstrate the value of integrating local knowledge and community-based systems with formal institutions. Studies of disaster response networks also emphasize the importance of collaboration among organizations and local actors in sustaining collective action during recovery (Mai & Butts, 2026). These findings indicate that resilience is not produced by formal institutions alone but is also supported through relationships, local knowledge, social networks, and collective capacity.

However, existing research generally examines family and community support in relation to preparedness, communication, health, institutional response, or general resilience rather than its specific contribution to maintaining children's educational continuity. Likewise, studies of crisis management often focus on information systems, technological applications, policy development, or service delivery (Li et al., 2010; Dinesh et al., 2026; Romano & Albrecht, 2026), whereas children's experiences of learning after disasters remain comparatively underexplored. As a result, there is still limited understanding of how material

barriers, psychosocial conditions, family capacity, and community support interact in shaping children's everyday educational experiences after formal schooling resumes.

The existing literature therefore reveals an important gap. First, much research examines disaster preparedness, risk management, communication, and institutional recovery, while less attention is given to children's experiences after returning to school (Chien & Yu, 2026; Marzban et al., 2026; Tatsuki, 2026). Second, studies frequently address material vulnerability, psychological effects, information access, and community resilience as separate dimensions, making it difficult to understand how these factors collectively shape children's educational experiences (Davariniamotlaghchuchan et al., 2026; Hamidi et al., 2026; Inyang-Ogim et al., 2026; Zhang et al., 2026). Third, family and community support are increasingly recognized as components of resilience, but their role in sustaining children's learning when educational recovery remains incomplete has received comparatively limited attention (Durmus et al., 2026; Munyaka et al., 2026).

The present study addresses this gap by shifting the analytical focus from school access to meaningful educational recovery. Rather than assuming that school attendance represents successful recovery, this study examines the conditions that remain behind formal access, including learning resources, transportation, financial constraints, internet connectivity, motivation, concentration, emotional well-being, family involvement, and community support. The study also integrates the perspectives of children, parents or guardians, and community leaders to understand educational vulnerability as a socially embedded phenomenon.

The novelty of this study lies in its integrated and child-centered conceptualization of post-disaster educational recovery. Educational vulnerability is examined as the interaction between material barriers, psychosocial conditions, family capacities, and community support rather than as a problem of school access alone. This perspective is particularly significant for rural Aceh, where geographic conditions, household resources, local social relationships, and community structures may jointly influence children's ability to sustain educational participation during uneven recovery.

The Indonesian context makes this issue particularly important. Research on the 2025 Sumatran flash floods illustrates how disaster impacts extend across infrastructure, communication, public response, and community-based networks (Rahmat et al., 2026). These conditions reinforce the need to understand recovery not merely as the restoration of physical infrastructure but as a process involving the social conditions that enable affected populations to resume everyday activities. However, the educational implications of these interactions, particularly their effects on children's learning continuity and educational well-being in rural post-disaster communities, remain insufficiently documented.

Accordingly, this study aims to examine educational vulnerabilities and community support among children in a post-disaster community in Aceh, with particular attention to the gap between restored school access and meaningful educational recovery. The study explores the material and psychosocial barriers experienced by children and examines how families and communities contribute to educational resilience. Through this approach, the study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the conditions that enable children not only to return to school but also to sustain meaningful learning after disaster.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design to examine educational vulnerabilities and community support among children in a post-disaster community in Aceh. The design was selected because the study sought to describe participants' experiences,



perceptions, and everyday educational conditions following a disaster without testing causal relationships or evaluating a particular intervention. The approach enabled the study to examine educational access, learning conditions, psychosocial experiences, family support, and community involvement as interconnected aspects of post-disaster educational recovery.

The study was conducted in Desa Beutong Ateuh, Kabupaten Nagan Raya, Aceh. The site was purposively selected because children's educational experiences in the area were influenced not only by formal schooling but also by household conditions, geographic accessibility, connectivity, community resources, and the broader post-disaster recovery context. The participants consisted of 90 individuals, including 60 children aged 13–18 years, 20 parents or guardians, and 10 community leaders. Children were selected as the primary participants because they could directly describe their experiences of school access, learning activities, motivation, concentration, emotional conditions, and educational needs. Parents or guardians provided information concerning home learning conditions, economic constraints, parental involvement, and educational expectations, while community leaders provided information regarding local educational conditions, community resources, collective support, and post-disaster challenges. Participants were recruited through purposive sampling based on their relevance to the research objectives. Children were eligible if they lived in the study area, were aged 13–18 years, and had experienced schooling during the post-disaster period. Parents or guardians were selected if they had school-aged children living in the study area, while community leaders were selected based on their involvement in or knowledge of local community and educational affairs.

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, field observations, field notes, and documentation. Separate interview guides were prepared for children, parents or guardians, and community leaders. Interviews with children focused on school access, learning resources, learning engagement, motivation, concentration, emotional experiences, and family and community support. Parent interviews addressed home learning conditions, economic circumstances, educational assistance, parental involvement, and educational aspirations. Interviews with community leaders focused on local educational conditions, community resources, forms of collective support, and post-disaster challenges affecting children's education. Observations were conducted to examine learning environments, availability of books and school supplies, home study conditions, community facilities, infrastructure, and other contextual conditions relevant to educational continuity. Field notes were used to record contextual information, participant responses and expressions, interview situations, and observations that were not fully captured in the interview transcripts. Relevant photographs and local documents were used as supplementary evidence.

Data analysis was conducted thematically through five stages: familiarization with the data, initial coding, categorization, development of themes, and interpretation. Interview transcripts, observation notes, field notes, and supporting documentation were read repeatedly to identify information relevant to the research objectives. Initial codes were assigned to segments concerning educational access, learning resources, transportation, financial constraints, internet access, motivation, concentration, emotional experiences, family support, and community involvement. Related codes were subsequently grouped into broader categories and developed into themes based on recurring patterns and their relevance to the research focus.

The numbers presented in the results tables represent the number of participants who mentioned or described a particular issue or form of support during the data collection process, rather than statistical frequencies or prevalence estimates. Because participants could mention more than one issue, the totals across categories do not represent mutually exclusive groups and

therefore may exceed the total number of participants. The counts were obtained by systematically reviewing the coded interview data and recording whether each participant referred to a particular issue or support mechanism. These counts were used only to indicate the recurrence of themes and were interpreted alongside the content, context, and depth of participants' accounts. They were not used for statistical inference or to generalize prevalence to populations outside the study setting.

Trustworthiness was strengthened through triangulation of data sources and collection methods. Accounts from children, parents or guardians, and community leaders were compared to identify converging and contrasting perspectives. Interview findings were also compared with observations, field notes, and documentation. Themes were retained and interpreted when they were supported by sufficient evidence from the collected data and demonstrated consistency across relevant sources or methods. Participation was voluntary, participant identities were kept confidential through the use of respondent codes, and informed consent was obtained from adult participants. For participants under 18 years of age, parental or guardian permission was obtained before data collection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings were organized into four themes that describe educational vulnerabilities and sources of support among children in the post-disaster context of Beutong Ateuh, Nagan Raya, Aceh. The analysis was based on interviews with 60 children aged 13–18 years, 20 parents or guardians, and 10 community leaders, supported by field observations and documentation. The findings are presented according to the issues most frequently described by participants and the forms of support identified during the fieldwork.

Educational Access Does Not Guarantee Educational Security

The first theme concerns the difference between physical access to school and the conditions required for children to learn continuously and safely. Most children reported that they could physically attend school, but their learning conditions outside school remained constrained by limited educational resources, transportation difficulties, financial limitations, internet access, and distance.

The categories presented in Table 1 represent the number of participants who mentioned or described each issue during the interviews. Because participants could report more than one issue, the categories are not mutually exclusive.

Table 1. Educational Access Constraints Reported by Participants

Educational constraint	Number of participants reporting the issue
Limited learning resources	52
Transportation difficulties	38
Financial constraints	35
Limited internet access	31
Distance from school	24

Table 1 shows that limited learning resources were the most frequently reported constraint, mentioned by 52 participants. Transportation difficulties were reported by 38 participants, followed by financial constraints reported by 35 participants. Limited internet access was mentioned by 31 participants, while 24 participants described distance from school as an educational constraint. These responses were obtained from participants' descriptions of their everyday learning and schooling conditions.

One child explained:

"I can still go to school, but sometimes it is difficult to study at home because I do not have enough books."

Another participant described transportation as an additional difficulty:

"Sometimes I have problems getting to school, especially when transportation is difficult."

Parents also described limitations affecting children's learning outside school. One parent stated:

"The children can attend school, but learning at home is not always easy because we have limited learning materials."

Field observations also documented differences in the availability of learning resources and access to supporting facilities among children.

Hidden Educational Vulnerabilities Among Children

The second theme concerns difficulties that were not always visible through children's school attendance. During interviews, children described changes in motivation, concentration, emotional condition, confidence, and learning engagement. These experiences were reported even when children continued to attend school.

Table 2 presents the number of participants who described each of these experiences during the interviews. The figures indicate recurrence within the coded interview data rather than the prevalence of psychological or educational conditions among the participants.

Table 2. Educational and Psychosocial Difficulties Reported by Participants

Educational or psychosocial difficulty	Number of participants reporting the issue
Decline in learning motivation	35
Difficulty concentrating	33
Anxiety or worry	29
Lack of confidence	24
Emotional distress	21

As shown in Table 2, a decline in learning motivation was mentioned by 35 participants and difficulty concentrating by 33 participants. Anxiety or worry was reported by 29 participants, while 24 participants described reduced confidence in learning. Emotional distress was mentioned by 21 participants. These accounts appeared in participants' descriptions of their experiences of learning and adapting after the disaster.

A child described the change in learning experience as follows:

"Sometimes I want to study, but it is difficult to concentrate because I keep thinking about what happened."

Another child stated:

"I still attend school, but sometimes I do not feel as confident as before."

Parents similarly observed changes in their children's learning behavior. One parent explained:

"The child still goes to school, but at home the motivation to study sometimes decreases."

These accounts were also consistent with field observations concerning children's participation, concentration, and engagement during learning-related activities.

Family Support as a Determining Factor of Educational Resilience

The third theme emerged from participants' descriptions of the role of families in maintaining children's educational activities. Family support included encouragement,

monitoring of school activities, provision of learning materials, assistance with homework, and maintaining children's educational aspirations.

Table 3 presents the forms of family support reported by participants. The counts indicate the number of participants who referred to each form of support during the interviews.

Table 3. Forms of Family Support for Children's Education

Form of family support	Number of participants reporting the support
Encouragement and motivation	49
Monitoring school activities	45
Providing learning materials	41
Helping with homework	36
Maintaining educational aspirations	34

Table 3 shows that encouragement and motivation were the most frequently described forms of family support, reported by 49 participants. Monitoring children's school activities was mentioned by 45 participants, while 41 participants described the provision of learning materials. Assistance with homework was reported by 36 participants, and 34 participants referred to efforts by family members to maintain children's educational aspirations.

One child stated:

"My parents always remind me to study and encourage me when I feel tired."

A parent explained:

"We try to monitor the children's school activities and make sure they continue studying even when the situation is difficult."

Another parent described the importance of providing learning materials:

"If there is something needed for school, we try to provide it, even though sometimes our resources are limited."

The interviews therefore documented family involvement through both direct assistance with learning and everyday encouragement to continue schooling.

Community Support as an Educational Safety Net

The fourth theme concerns support provided beyond the immediate family. Children, parents, and community leaders described several forms of community involvement, including encouragement, informal learning assistance, educational activities, support from community leaders, and shared learning spaces. Table 4 summarizes the forms of community support reported by participants.

Table 4. Forms of Community Support for Children's Education

Form of community support	Number of participants reporting the support
Community encouragement	42
Informal learning assistance	31
Educational activities	27
Support from community leaders	24
Shared learning spaces	19

Table 4 indicates that community encouragement was the most frequently reported form of support, mentioned by 42 participants. Informal learning assistance was reported by 31 participants, followed by participation in educational activities reported by 27 participants. Support from community leaders was mentioned by 24 participants, while 19 participants described the availability or use of shared learning spaces.

A community leader explained:

“The community tries to encourage children to continue their education and not lose their motivation after the disaster.”

Another participant described informal learning support:

“Sometimes we help children study together because not every child has the same learning resources at home.”

Parents also described the contribution of community members:

“When children need help with schoolwork, sometimes other people in the community help them.”

Field observations documented several forms of interaction among children, families, and community members in educationally relevant activities. These observations complemented the interview accounts concerning the availability of informal support outside the home and school.

Overall, the results show that children's educational experiences after the disaster were shaped not only by their ability to return to school but also by learning resources, transportation, financial conditions, psychosocial experiences, family involvement, and community support. The four themes demonstrate the range of conditions and forms of support described by participants during the fieldwork.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that educational recovery after a disaster cannot be understood simply through children's physical return to school. Although school access remained available for many children in Beutong Ateuh, their educational security was affected by the availability of learning resources, transportation, financial conditions, internet connectivity, and distance. This finding suggests that access represents only one dimension of educational continuity, whereas meaningful participation in learning depends on the broader conditions surrounding children both inside and outside school. Recent research similarly emphasizes that post-disaster educational vulnerability is multidimensional and may persist even when formal educational services have resumed (Coto-Cedeño & Centeno-Morales, 2024; Gao et al., 2025; Sriram et al., 2025). Therefore, reopening schools should not be regarded as the final indicator of educational recovery.

The prominence of limited learning resources in the present findings further indicates that household learning environments are an important component of post-disaster educational resilience. Children who return to school may still experience interrupted learning when they lack books, appropriate study spaces, digital connectivity, or other educational materials. This condition is particularly important in disaster-affected communities where household resources may be redirected toward basic recovery needs. Nandakishore et al. (2025) and Gao et al. (2025) demonstrate that educational disruption following crises is closely related to unequal access to resources and the capacity of households and communities to sustain learning. In this context, educational policy should move beyond restoring school infrastructure and also address the material conditions that enable children to continue learning at home.

The second major finding concerns the presence of hidden educational vulnerabilities. Changes in motivation, concentration, confidence, anxiety, and emotional well-being were reported even among children who continued attending school. This finding is important because attendance-based indicators may underestimate the actual consequences of disaster exposure on children's education. A child can be physically present in the classroom while experiencing difficulties that reduce engagement and learning capacity. Recent studies have



increasingly highlighted the relationship between disaster experiences, psychosocial conditions, and children's educational participation (Peña-Vargas et al., 2022; Xie & Wang, 2022; Sriram et al., 2025). Thus, educational recovery requires attention not only to whether children return to school but also to whether they are emotionally and cognitively prepared to participate in learning.

The finding of reduced motivation and concentration also reinforces the need to integrate psychosocial considerations into educational recovery programs. Conventional post-disaster responses often prioritize physical reconstruction, restoration of school services, and provision of learning materials. However, the present findings indicate that these interventions may be insufficient when children continue to experience anxiety, emotional distress, or reduced confidence. Educational responses therefore need to include supportive classroom environments, opportunities for children to express their experiences, peer interaction, and appropriate psychosocial assistance. Such an approach is consistent with recent research emphasizing that children's recovery after disruptive events involves both educational and psychosocial dimensions (Coto-Cedeño & Centeno-Morales, 2024; Gao et al., 2025).

Family support emerged as an important protective factor in maintaining children's educational engagement. The findings show that parents contributed not only by providing material resources but also through encouragement, monitoring, assistance with schoolwork, and maintaining children's educational aspirations. This suggests that educational resilience is partly constructed within everyday family relationships. When formal educational systems are disrupted or weakened, families can provide continuity by maintaining routines, encouraging children to study, and reinforcing the value of education. Research on educational resilience in crisis contexts similarly identifies family involvement as an important source of support for children's adaptation and continuation of learning (Nandakishore et al., 2025; Sriram et al., 2025).

However, family support should not be interpreted as a substitute for institutional responsibility. The findings also show that families themselves operate under material and environmental constraints. Expecting families to compensate independently for deficiencies in educational services may increase inequalities because households differ in economic resources, educational capacity, and access to technology. Consequently, family-based support should be accompanied by institutional assistance that reduces the burden placed on households. This is particularly relevant in post-disaster settings where families may simultaneously manage housing, income, transportation, and children's educational needs.

Community support represents another important dimension of educational resilience identified in this study. Community encouragement, informal learning assistance, educational activities, involvement of community leaders, and shared learning spaces demonstrate that educational continuity can be supported through social networks beyond the school and household. This finding expands the understanding of post-disaster education from an institution-centered model toward a community-based model. Recent studies have similarly emphasized the contribution of social support, community participation, and local actors to resilience in disaster-affected populations (Sriram et al., 2025; Gao et al., 2025).

The role of community leaders is particularly relevant in rural and disaster-affected settings. Community leaders can facilitate communication between families, children, schools, and other local actors while mobilizing available resources. Informal learning activities and shared learning spaces can also provide alternatives when children face limitations in their home learning environments. Such support does not necessarily require sophisticated infrastructure; rather, it depends on the capacity of communities to organize existing resources



around children's educational needs. The present findings therefore suggest that community participation should be incorporated into disaster education planning rather than treated only as an informal or temporary response.

Taken together, the four themes reveal that educational vulnerability after a disaster is produced through the interaction of material, psychosocial, familial, and community conditions. These dimensions should not be addressed independently. Limited learning resources can interact with financial constraints; inadequate learning conditions can contribute to declining motivation; psychosocial difficulties can reduce children's engagement; and family and community support can partially buffer these challenges. The findings consequently support a multidimensional understanding of educational recovery in which school access is considered a necessary but insufficient condition for educational security.

The study also has implications for the design of post-disaster educational interventions in Aceh and comparable contexts. First, educational assessments should include indicators beyond school attendance, including learning-resource availability, learning conditions at home, children's motivation, concentration, and psychosocial well-being. Second, recovery programs should strengthen family capacity through learning materials, parental guidance, and mechanisms for communication between schools and households. Third, community-based educational initiatives should be formally recognized as part of disaster preparedness and recovery strategies. Such an approach can make educational recovery more responsive to children's actual experiences rather than relying exclusively on institutional indicators of school reopening.

Overall, the findings position educational resilience as a shared responsibility among schools, families, communities, and relevant authorities. The central implication is that children should not merely be returned to school after a disaster; they should be supported to learn under conditions that are materially adequate, psychosocially supportive, and socially connected. In this sense, moving beyond school access means shifting the focus of post-disaster educational policy from restoring attendance toward securing the conditions that allow children to continue learning and rebuilding their educational aspirations.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that educational vulnerability among children in post-disaster Aceh extends beyond physical access to school. Although children were able to continue attending school, their educational continuity was affected by limited learning resources, transportation and financial constraints, restricted internet access, and distance from school. In addition, educational vulnerability was reflected in less visible difficulties, including declining motivation, concentration problems, anxiety, reduced confidence, and emotional distress.

The findings further demonstrate that family and community support are important sources of educational resilience. Family encouragement, monitoring, learning assistance, and provision of educational resources help sustain children's engagement, while community encouragement, informal learning assistance, educational activities, and support from community leaders provide an additional safety net. Therefore, post-disaster educational recovery should move beyond restoring school access toward an integrated approach that addresses children's material, psychosocial, family, and community needs. Strengthening collaboration among schools, families, communities, and relevant authorities is essential to ensure that children not only return to school but also have the conditions necessary to continue learning and maintain their educational aspirations.



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