

Behavioral Depression for Children with Learning Disabilities: Cases during the Pandemic

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Abstract

There are certain drawbacks to distance learning, such as the fact that students have more work to complete and must do it on their own time at home, as well as the fact that they are restricted by the strength of their signal. This means that some students may develop stress, anxiety, or depression as a result of trying to keep up with the course load. The purpose of this research, conducted during the height of the COVID-19 epidemic, was to examine the effects of distant learning on students' mental health. There were a total of 220 students who volunteered to take part in the study, and it was of the descriptive quantitative kind. The sampling method is based on a straightforward application of randomness. Google forms are being utilized extensively throughout this data collecting procedure. The acquired data is analyzed by looking at the frequency distribution. Among those who participated in the study, 42.27% reported having experienced anxiety, 44.56% reported experiencing stress, and 23.18% reported experiencing depression. One of the most common mental obstacles for distance learners to face is stress. Therefore, it is crucial that guidance and counselling teachers provide more coaching and counselling programs to aid students in coping with the stress, worry, and depression that might result from studying at a distance.

Keywords: Depression • Behaviour • Learning Disability

Introduction

The implementation of processes for remote teaching and learning via the use of information and communication technology comes with both positive and negative aspects. This indicates that there are no restrictions placed on the teaching process with regard to either time or space. In addition, there is a lot of space for development in the ways in which both students and instructors utilize technology in the classroom. Obviously, this calls for the assistance of the internet to ensure that students are able to effectively study and get more comprehensive knowledge.

By enrolling in online classes, you may take advantage of the ability to study at your own speed and in your own time, both of which are completely flexible. Students who participate in online learning have much more opportunities to demonstrate initiative and responsibility in their academic work (learning autonomy) [1]. The disadvantages of distance learning include students losing their social soul because they will have to study alone with their parents, which can lead to boredom; the need for supplementary facilities and infrastructure, such as laptops, computers, and cellphones; and the inability to interact with friends or teachers directly. The benefits of distance learning include the ability for students to save time and

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money while still receiving an education [2].

Students who participate in distance learning run the risk of developing anxiety due to the increased amount of labor involved. Students' exposure to distance learning as a consequence of Covid-19, if it continues for an extended length of time, may have an affect on their psychosomatic health, which may result in symptoms such as anxiety, dread, and excessive worry, to name just a few [3].

People who are under a lot of stress are more likely to have psychosomatic symptoms, and chronic worry may raise the chance of developing depression [4]. The situation is more serious if the youngsters who are impacted are older than 12 years old. You've reached a stage in your life when you're ready to broaden the scope of your social circle to include people outside your immediate relatives. They will learn to empathize with their contemporaries and develop closer relationships with individuals who value them for who they are rather than only for what they bring to the table in terms of social opportunities [5].

Although there are many advantages to learning at a distance, it also has the potential to cause students stress and anxiety. This could be the result of a number of factors, including, but not limited to, students' perceptions that their learning assignments are too burdensome, students' persistent boredom at home, the monotony of the learning process, students' inability to interact face-to-face with their friends or teachers, students' signal difficulties that make it difficult for them to participate in online learning, students' inability to freely pursue their interests outside of school, and students' inability to pry open their parents' wallets for extracurricular activities.

When schools withdraw themselves from the classroom and require pupils to study alone, this may increase the probability that children and adolescents may struggle with mental health concerns such as anxiety and

depression. Children and adolescents spend more time on social media because they experience feelings of isolation and distance from their peers [6,7]. As a direct consequence of this, they engage in less physical activity and worry more about their academic achievement. Even though today's children and adolescents spend a significant amount of time with their families, it is essential for them to have chances to engage in social activities with other children their age.

In addition, adults often interfere with the games that children are playing in order to stop them from discovering their surroundings. The cognitive function and thinking of children are not the same as those of adults, and children's thinking is constrained in a number of different ways [8]. Adults' cognitive function and thinking are more developed. Adults, when put in a scenario in which they are trapped indoors for a significant amount of time, have a stronger knowledge of the circumstance because they have thought about the short-term and long-term ramifications of the situation.

During the current epidemic, it has been reported that some children have been subjected to violence by their parents while they were studying at home, which may lead youngsters to endure psychological stress [9,10]. Even though it may take a variety of forms, violence is nevertheless always regarded to be an aspect of aggression. The youngster is subjected to verbal abuse, which may take the form of belittling their capabilities, as is now the case. Squeezing, twisting, or striking the kid are three of the most severe kinds of physical abuse that may be inflicted on a child.

The results of a pilot study in which six students participated revealed that some children reported having difficulty understanding lessons on their own due to a lack of support from the teacher, not grasping the material that was assigned, and experiencing boredom as a result of the process of online teaching and learning. The investigation was conducted on children as its subjects. at home, anxious about being more and further behind, and yearning for interaction with their peers and instructors [11]. Some parents also participate in physical or verbal abuse towards their children, such as pinching, making fun of, or humiliating their child, or comparing their child to others in the same or other families. Abuse of any kind, including both the body and the mind, falls under this category. That could cause youngsters to become anxious and stressed out. When they have all of this information, the researchers will investigate the mental toll that receiving an education via a distant learning style has on students during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Methods

Within the framework of its methodology, this research makes use of a descriptive quantitative approach. During the course of the Covid 19 outbreak, this study was carried out with the objective of understanding how students' mental health was impacted as a result of their participation in distance learning programs. Both students enrolled in specific schools and students attending educational institutions as a whole took part in this investigation. There were a total of 220 people who took part in the study, and the kind of sampling that was carried out was known as simple random sampling. The DASS-21 questionnaire served as the major instrument of research that was used in this investigation (Depression Anxiety Stress Scale). Each of the 21 separate question questions that make up the DASS instrument is further subdivided into one of these three categories: behavioural, emotional/psychological, or physical.

Results and Discussion

When participating in distance learning, the majority of respondents (57.73%) exhibited usual levels of anxiety, as reflected in the data shown in (Table 1) below. Despite this, there is still a sizeable population that experiences some kind of anxiety, the severity of which may vary from light anxiety (21.36%), to moderate anxiety (13.64 %), to severe anxiety (5.91 %), and even very severe anxiety (0.1%) (1.36 %).

According to (Table 2), the majority of those who participated in the

study said they experienced typical levels of stress when engaging in distant education. However, there are still a lot of people that go through stress, which may be broken down into four different severity levels: light stress (18.64%), moderate stress (13.64%), severe stress (7.73%), and extremely heavy stress (4.55%).

The vast majority of respondents, or 76.6%, exhibited normal mental states when engaging in remote learning, as evidenced by the statistics shown in (Table 3), which can be seen at the very top of this page. Despite this, a large portion of the population still suffers from some kind of depression, ranging from mild depression (10.91%) to moderate depression (6.36%) to severe depression (4.55%) to even extremely severe depression (1.36%).

According to the results of the research that was done on the subject, the vast majority of respondents who are participating in the process of distance learning no longer exhibit any indications of anxiousness. This was found out by the investigation that was carried out on the subject. This statistic is now at 57.73% at the present time. The reason for this is that after coping with the aftereffects of the current flu epidemic over the last seven months, children have started to adjust to the new normal. Changes in behavior may be able to hint to the presence of anxiety if it is present. Anxiety is a response type that may happen anyplace and is often difficult to notice in the moment [12]. One might experience the feeling of anxiety in response to a wide range of distressing situations. Anxiety is a kind of emotion.

According to the findings of the study, there are a number of aspects associated with participating in the process of distance learning that may make a person more susceptible to experiencing feelings of anxiety. A lack of familiarity with the material that is being taught, an excessive number of assignments provided by the teacher, and apprehension about taking part in the learning process are some of the reasons that contribute to this outcome [13]. For a variety of reasons, students who take their classes online often experience feelings of anxiety. This is a widespread phenomenon. These include issues with understanding of the material, completion of assignments, access to the internet, limitations imposed by technology, and potential employment.

Students may be exposed to a stressful learning environment as a result of a number of factors, including the transition from traditional classroom instruction to online instruction, unstable connections during online lectures,

Table 1. Student anxiety levels during distance learning.

Level of Anxiety	Frequency	Percentage
Normal	127	57.73
Light	47	21.36
Moderate	30	13.64
Heavy	13	5.91
Very heavy	3	1.36

Table 2. Stress levels of students during distance learning

Level of Anxiety	Frequency	Percentage
Normal	122	55.45
Light Stress	41	18.64
Moderate Stress	30	13.64
Heavy Stress	17	7.73
Very heavy Stress	10	4.55

Table 3. Levels of depression in students during distance learning.

Level of Anxiety	Frequency	Percentage
Normal	169	76.82
Light Stress	24	10.91
Moderate Stress	14	6.36
Heavy Stress	10	4.55
Very heavy Stress	3	1.36

an increasing amount of work to be completed, and limited data packages during online sessions. As a direct consequence of this, children may feel an even larger amount of pressure to do very well in school. On the other hand, the findings of this study revealed that the overwhelming majority of students, 55.4%, did not exhibit any signs of stress in their day-to-day lives. This might be due to the fact that the pupils were already used to the myriad of different methods that individuals use to deal with stress. If the students were even somewhat capable of dealing with the amount of strain they had been put under.

According to the findings of the poll, over half of individuals who participated in online education techniques also experienced stress as a consequence of the coursework they were required to complete. To mention one specific example: Because just being as a human being is difficult in and of itself, the fact that humans also feel stress should not come as much of a surprise [14]. Seven months into their experience with distance learning, it was discovered that almost half of them no longer suffer from stress as a result of their ability to adapt to the new environment and develop effective coping strategies for dealing with the obstacles given by distance learning. This discovery was made possible by the fact that almost half of them no longer suffer from stress. This was due to the fact that after seven months of taking part in remote learning, they had begun to be able to acclimatize to the new environment and had developed effective coping methods for dealing with the challenges that they faced. It's possible that maintaining a positive attitude in the face of stressful situations can be beneficial [15]. No matter what age group they belong to (children, adolescents, adults, or senior citizens), the vast majority of people will, at some time in their life, be confronted with the sensation of being stressed (whether they are children, teens, adults, or elderly citizens). When it comes to children and teenagers, the source of their stress may be the child themselves, their family, their school, or the social environment in which they find themselves. Students who have not been adequately prepared for the changes that will occur in their learning environments may experience stress as a result of those changes [16]. The inability to learn new things, excessive drinking, feeling melancholy, or being unable to take in new knowledge are all examples of maladaptive reactions to stress [17].

The vast amount of weekly online assignments that students are required to do may be directly responsible for the high levels of stress that are often experienced by students. When it comes to the implementation and operation of distance learning, preparation is required on the part of a variety of various aspects, including time, morale, resources, media, instructors, and students. The way in which a person reacts to stress is determined by a number of factors, including the individual's own personality, the nature of the stressor, and the person's ability to adapt to or cultivate strategies for coping with stress [18]. Various individuals react in a variety of unique ways to the same amount of stress since there are so many different things that might cause it. Students may experience stress for a number of different reasons, some of which include the following: there is an excessive amount of subject matter to learn; the feedback given by the teacher to students is reduced; there is a lack of teacher quality in carrying out the distance learning process; and the teacher provides students with an excessive amount of assignments.

The monotony of the online learning process is one of the many factors that is contributing to the alarmingly high levels of stress that are being reported by students [19]. Depression is one of the most common unfavorable reactions that people have when they are under chronic stress. According to the conclusions drawn from the research conducted on the severity of depression, there were still pupils who suffered from depression. To be more exact, 23.18% of the students had signs of depression, the degree of which varied greatly from person to person. When one considers the fact that suicidal thoughts is a sign of depression that may be effectively treated, it is difficult to deny the veracity of this statement.

A person who is depressed will experience various disturbances in his moods, his motivation, his behavior, and his cognitive processes [20]. These symptoms might manifest themselves in a variety of ways. Depression may cause a person to feel hopeless, sad, powerless, unable to make decisions,

unable to concentrate, and lacking zest for life, all of which can lead to suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Suicidal ideation is a potential symptom of depression [21]. Eighty-two and a half percent of the students who were afflicted with the Covid 19 outbreak had symptoms of melancholy that varied from mild depression to severe depression. This is due to the fact that academic activities at school are often confusing, there is the anxiety of falling behind in school courses, and there is an inability to freely carry out activities in the surrounding surroundings.

Conclusion

The results of the research indicate that a sizeable proportion of students continue to struggle with negative emotions such as anxiety, tension, and depression as a direct result of the process of obtaining an education via independent study. Because of this, it is absolutely essential to enhance the coaching and counseling programs that are required to be carried out by all teachers, in particular guidance and counseling teachers in schools, in order to be able to reduce the levels of anxiety, stress, and depression that are caused by distance learning.

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