International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)
ISSN: 2319-7064
Impact Factor 2025: 7.089

Impact of Online Classes on Students with Learning Disabilities

Abdul Gafoor

Register No. 241MSCD00007 Fourth Semester

Abstract: ***This study examines the academic, behavioral, and emotional effects of online learning on students with learning disabilities in Grades 1–10. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 95 participants through standardized assessment tools and parent/teacher questionnaires. The study considered learning difficulties, academic performance, emotional and behavioral wellbeing, online learning readiness, and the roles of parental and teacher support. Student-reported learning difficulties were significantly associated with teacher observations ($\chi^2(1, N=95) = 20.5$, $p < .001$) and parent observations ($\chi^2(1, N=95) = 21.0$, $p < .001$). Student and parent reports of emotional and behavioral wellbeing were also positively correlated ($\rho(93) = .674$, $p < .001$). The report describes lower academic performance in online settings than in traditional classrooms, alongside challenges with attention, independence, time management, and technology use. Consistent parental and teacher support was associated with fewer learning and emotional challenges. The study concludes that online learning can provide flexibility and accessibility, but many students require structured, individualized support and accessible learning tools. The findings should be interpreted in light of the study's sample and cross-sectional design.***

Keywords: Online Learning; Learning Disabilities; Academic Performance; Emotional Wellbeing; Parental and Teacher Support

1. Introduction and Background

This project examines the academic, behavioral, and emotional impact of online learning on students with diagnosed learning disabilities in Grades 1–10. Learning disabilities may affect reading (dyslexia), mathematics (dyscalculia), or written expression (dysgraphia). Attention-related difficulties, including ADHD, may also create additional barriers. These difficulties are not a sign of low intelligence or lack of effort.

Online classes can offer flexible pacing, recorded lessons, accessibility tools, and alternative learning resources. However, students may face home distractions, screen fatigue, reduced peer interaction, limited immediate feedback, and less individualized teacher support. Online learning can also require sustained attention, self-regulation, time management, and independent technology use.

2. Research Problem and Objectives

The project focuses on whether online learning meets the varied needs of students with learning disabilities compared with traditional classroom instruction. Its objectives were to: (1) identify online learning challenges; (2) compare academic performance in online and classroom settings; (3) evaluate emotional and behavioral effects; (4) examine readiness and adaptability; and (5) consider the role of parental and teacher support.

3. Research Methodology

The study used a quantitative approach. Its instruments included the Learning Disabilities Checklist (LDC), Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), Online Learning Readiness Scale (OLRS), and a custom parent/teacher questionnaire. Responses were gathered through Google Forms, with parent/guardian consent and institutional permission described in the report. The results section reports a sample of N = 95. Analyses included descriptive and comparative methods and association/correlation tests.

4. Main Findings

- Students with learning disabilities commonly experienced difficulty focusing, understanding lessons, and completing tasks online.
- Student reports of learning difficulties were significantly associated with teacher observations: $\chi^2(1, N=95) = 20.5$, $p < .001$; $\varphi = .465$.
- Student reports were also significantly associated with parent observations: $\chi^2(1, N=95) = 21.0$, $p < .001$; $\varphi =$
- .471.
- Student and parent reports of emotional/behavioral wellbeing showed a strong positive correlation: $\rho(93) =$
- .674, $p < .001$. The report describes frustration, irritability, worry/anxiety, and social withdrawal.
- The study reports lower academic performance in online settings than traditional classrooms, linking this to distraction, reduced structure, limited supervision, and technological barriers.
- Most students reportedly struggled with independence, time management, self-regulation, and technology use; a smaller group adapted more successfully.
- Consistent support from parents and teachers was associated with fewer learning and emotional challenges.

5. Conclusion

The project concludes that online learning helped maintain instructional continuity and offered accessibility benefits, but did not adequately meet many learning needs of students with learning disabilities without specialized assistance. The findings point to challenges across academic performance, attention, adaptability, emotional wellbeing, and engagement. The project emphasizes structured support and collaboration between schools and families.

6. Recommendations

- Design inclusive online lessons with flexible pacing, clear step-by-step directions, visual supports, interactive activities, and accessible formats.
- Incorporate assistive tools such as text-to-speech, speech-to-text, captions, screen-reader compatibility, and audio support.
- Provide teacher training in inclusive pedagogy, assistive technology, differentiated instruction, and virtual classroom management.
- Offer regular individual check-ins, mentoring, structured routines, and timely feedback.
- Support parents with practical guidance and resources, and strengthen home–school communication.
- Improve equitable access to devices and reliable internet; consider blended models combining classroom structure with online flexibility.
- Provide appropriate emotional/behavioral support and fair assessment options, including additional time or alternate ways to demonstrate learning.

7. Limitations and Future Research

The report notes limitations including a relatively small and geographically/culturally specific sample, reliance on self-reported information, the limits of standardized tools for different disability profiles, and environmental factors such as home support and internet access. Its cross-sectional design captures one point in time and cannot establish long-term effects or causal conclusions. Future studies should use larger and more diverse samples, longitudinal designs, and direct comparisons of online, blended, and traditional learning. Research can also evaluate specific assistive technologies and forms of parental support.

8. Overall Summary

Online education can be useful when it is accessible and well supported, but a uniform online approach may leave students with learning disabilities behind. Personalized instruction, trained teachers, suitable technology, structured routines, and active family involvement are central to making digital learning more inclusive.

Prepared as a concise summary of the supplied project PDF. This document is a revised project summary, not the complete dissertation.