

Assessment of Parents' and Teachers' Perception Towards Assisting Children with Homework

O.J. Adelabu¹ and A.A. Oyelana^{2*}

¹*Faculty of Education University of Fort Hare, Alice, P.B. X1314, Eastern Cape, 5700, South Africa*

²*Department of Public Administration, University of Fort Hare, Alice, P.B. X1314, Eastern Cape, 5700, South Africa*

*E-mail: <201610448@ufh.ac.za>, <aoyelana@yufh.ac.za>

KEYWORDS Children. Homework. Parents Perception. Teachers Perception

ABSTRACT The children homework should not be handled with levity. Undoubtedly, children are the inheritance of their parents. Their educational careers and homework should be taken more seriously. The objectives of this paper are: to study the perception of parents and teachers towards assisting children with homework; to find the extent of how much parents contribute in assisting the children doing their homework; and to assess the parental and teacher perception about assisting children with the homework. The study utilised a systematic literature review approach to discuss and debates on some of the challenges facing parents' and educators in supporting their kids with assignments. The reviews of the study have identified that some parents and teachers act negatively to their children while assisting them with homework. Besides, these reviews have also shown that homework contributed to the development of responsibility. Doing homework, children become more responsible and independent. It completes and extends the school knowledge. The review unquestionably confirmed that homework facilitates compliance with the curriculum. The paper also identified the benefits of homework on children that are assisted by their parents and the benefits of parents who support kids with assignments. The paper suggested that both parents and teachers should be the endeavour to create extra time for their children by providing adequate support in term of assisting them with their homework as these would improve their performance.

INTRODUCTION

The main question for any educator is to know if his or her instruction will affect learners outside the school environment. Homework setting is a means by which educators can evaluate whether in-class learning is adopted. Epstein recognized six kinds of parental participation, which are "parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community". "When parents, teachers, students, and others view one another as partners in education, a caring community forms around students and begins its work" (Epstein 2010: 23).

Generally, Homework in Hong Kong has been seen as an imperative part of learning, particularly given the exceptional educational context. Homework has been observed to achieve two most important sets of purposes: "(i) learning-related purposes, including consolidating learning, preparing for tests and examinations, developing learning skills, assessing learning, and improving teaching; and (ii) purposes that were not

related to learning, including developing self-esteem and responsibility, encouraging collaboration, enhancing teacher-student communication, and avoiding punishment. Variations in attitudes toward homework and time spent on homework were reported among" (Vicky and Raymond 2010: 23).

It must be noted that homework should be considered as a day by day part of school life. To improve the academic career of learners at school, one or more assignments are usually given to be finished and returned to school the next day. Parmaswar (2014) noted that the significance of assignment is becoming more established and renowned. Macbeth (2003: 4) stated that homework is set by educators to combine with practical work done already in class or next class preparation. Realistically, assignments are given when teachers discovered that there is need for learners to go beyond work done in the class. It must be mentioned that assignment help slow pupils to hook up with the faster learners or to test the understanding of work done by learners or their competency and for learners to perform excellent-

ly in this task, there is urgent need for parents to make themselves available for their kids and participate actively.

It has been noted that in most of the time when parents are assisting their kids with assignment at home, they often ask questions in which answers are provided by their children thereby improving learning skills and critical thinking (Kuhlthau et al. 2015). Hence, parents' involvement is needed daily at home by ensuring that kids' assignment is thoroughly supervised.

Homework is an essential learning activity that helps the improvement of academic skills in school. Study has confirmed that school learners who do homework have regular high academic achievement than those who do not. Despite the relation between homework and academic achievement, evidence shows that children do not always complete their homework or do not spend sufficient time in completing them. It has also been reported that many school learners fail to complete their set homework adequately which could limit learning and affect academic attainment (Markow et al. 2007). Also, the degree of effort that learners invest in completing their homework is related to good grades. Homework is not only important to learners alone but parents' daily life as well and can be seen as a medium which home and school Interconnect (Moroni et al. 2015).

Parental help with homework is important because it is the most important type of parental involvement. Homework is the means which educators need to assess whether the learners embraced and used their learning within the classroom or outside of the classroom setting. A survey conducted in 2007 on parental involvement showed that parents take homework very important in which sixty percent (60%) said they always supervise their kid's assignment while one third did so occasionally. How parents supervise kids assignment is tied to school, however, parents help younger children frequently than those in the higher class (Boonk et al. 2018; Bempechat 2019).

The role of parents is very important in the educational success of their children. Thus children need positive learning experience which provides support, motivation, quality training to succeed in school (Tam and Chan 2010; Đurišić and

Bunijevac 2017; Patrician 2019). Despite a lot of pressure on parental participation in their kids' education beyond the school structure or infrastructure, there are many obstacles facing the parents. According to Swap (1993) cited in Đurišić and Bunijevac (2017: 139), many parents are confronted "with overwhelming and unpredictable schedules and circumstances while juggling school, sports, family situations, family time, work schedules, and other responsibilities, allowing minimal time to provide support in any one given area." Parents' assistance in improving kids' education starts from home by ensuring that good attitudes about schools are well informed, adequate safe and conducive healthy learning environment as well learning supporting systems are provided. Epstein (2009) emphasised that parental assistance play a vital role once there is cooperation between parents and educators.

One of the parents' responsibilities is to make sure that all their kids' assignments are thoroughly done and make sure they are attending their classes daily, but unfortunately, many parents find it difficult to assist their kids with their assignments because they are illiterate and cannot count correctly. The more parents assist in their children's homework at every level of fundraises, booster, volunteers and as home-teacher, the better the learners' achievement (McDonnall et al. 2012). Some parents work very late and very tired when they get home to make sure their kids have actually done their assignments correctly, while some parents, due to time constrain assisted their kids by doing it for them. It must be mentioned that doing assignments for children hindered them from acquiring knowledge on how the assignment should be done or finding correct answers to the questions.

Problem Statement

Assignment has been considered as a crucial part of learning. It has been reported to be seen by parents as a way of providing additional academic support for kids at home. It is a common exercise done in schools, particularly linked to scholarly accomplishment. However, parental participation in children homework changes the parents association with their kids (Vicky and Raymond 2010). Notably, parental assignment assistance has advantage and disadvantage as-

pects, depending on parents' behaviours (Cunha et al. 2015). Many academic studies have not been able to establish the realities behind the reason why there is a lack of parental assistance in assignment. It is therefore expedient to examine parents' and teachers' perceptions to comprehend their participation in kid's educational processes.

Objectives

1. To study the perception of parents and teachers towards assisting children with homework
2. To find the extent of how much parents contribute to assisting the children doing their homework
3. To assess the parental and teacher perception about assisting children with the homework.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper used a review of literature from journals, books, dissertations and internet sources (Oyelana and Thakhathi 2015; Oyelana 2017). The researchers' intuitive experience and understanding in educational, Public Administration, Government, newspapers to raise arguments and discourses on parents' and teachers' perception towards helping kids with assignment.

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

Education is been regarded as the most active path to economic and social advancement and the improvement of an individual. According to Chinese culture, learners embark on problems in academic achievement (Tam and Chan 2009). Homework is considered as a very important tool to aid and consolidate learning. Not shocking that Chinese parents in Hong Kong back the use of homework. Homework is out of school activity for Chinese children in Beijing and Taiwan and they devote more hours each day to their school work compared to Japanese and American counterparts. Thus Chinese elementary schoolchildren perceive homework to be important, useful, and enjoyable (Tam and Chan 2009).

According to Matei and Ciasca (2015) Romanian education see homework as a tradition, which is compulsory at the primary level, however, the

rate of homework required by the teacher from learners has drastically decreased as kids move to next levels of academic year. Study conducted by Matei and Ciasca pointed out that teachers often gives systematic assignments on Maths and Romanian Language to pupils throughout the academic year because they are the critical subjects for passing the senior school examination.

Homework is a means by which teachers, parents and other caregiver develop a relationship with their learners. Learning activities provided by the teachers as homework for the learners give the kids a clear idea and skills of what has been learnt in the class in which parents are also opportune to participate in what their kids have learnt at school by supporting and supervising them with their assignments. As a matter of fact, assignment given to learners shows an indication to the parents of what exactly their children have learnt in the class, informed the parents about the class learning methods. It informed them about what their kids have been doing in the class and lets them - to the extent of using their knowledge and availability- supervising and involve in the learning process by supporting their kids with assignments (Portier et al. 2013). Frankly speaking, findings from many studies conducted have shows that the learning importance of assignments increases when patents are participating in their kid's assignments.

Perception of Parents in Assisting Kids with Assignments

Assignment has been seen as the most acceptable, essential and common instructional tool utilised in home-based participation and it is a kind of learning activity that involved parents full participation in supporting kids learning (Katz et al. 2011; Wilder 2014). Recent studies had assessed different ways many parents participated in their kid's assignments from primary to secondary school.

The study conducted by Fan (2013) indicated that parents' vigilant observation while assisting kids with assignments has contributed immensely to the support of knowledge impacted to their children. There are different views of parents assisting their children with homework, some parents work late and could not help their kids with the homework, some see homework as additional

work for them and do complain that since they pay the teachers why bringing their duties to them as parents to solve again. Herrell (2011) also revealed that there are some parents who were willing to assist their children with their assignments but due to their high level of illiteracy and lack of confidence they could not. Hence, according to report, educators are wrong thinking that parents do not care. The findings from some studies conducted have also indicated that, there are many parents who are willing to but do not have the skills or know how. In fact, Herrell (2011) emphasised that these days, many parents have no spare time for their kids especially by assisting them with their assignments, they have been engaged with one activity or the other, kids have been abandoned to carry their own cross; some parents do not have basic knowledge

Some parents often believe that it is the responsibility of the teachers to assist learners with their assignments and as a matter of fact, some parents are very lazy in assisting their kids with assignments. It is also very imperative to mention that not many parents have the capability in assisting their kids. The parents in these categories specifically solve few exercises and are thankful that the kid's return to school with the assignment done because they have no time for them. It must be revealed that that some parents due to the fact they are too busy, do not ask their kids or check their notebooks if they are given assignment or not. Moreso, the kids often forget their assignment or not informing their parents about their assignments (Matei and Ciasca 2015). Parents who work may see homework as an unnecessary addition of class activity, thinking of comforting, watching a favourite TV programme vanish when attention is needed by their kids with assignment (Hampshire et al. 2014)

Teachers' Perception of Parents in Assisting Children with Homework

Teachers are the effectiveness of homework, their choices and perceptions in making the academic procedure impacts the broad subject on assignment (Tam and Chan 2010). When educators are preparing assignment, they must ensure that attention is focused on the characteristics of valuable assignment: ensuring that brilliant instructions are provided for learners; not too long;

be completed within a little time frame; use readily available information and materials; strengthen and allow the practice of previously taught skills; not just unfinished classwork interesting to students and lead to further examination and study (Airi et al. 2015). Stimulate creativity and imagination in the application of skills; encourage students to work willingly; and stimulate home and class discussion (Assigning Effective Homework) (Wyk 2011). Study showed that students spend more than 20 percent of their overall study time doing homework with their tutors or learning outside the school hours. Teachers as the leaders must try to keep the students study self-esteem, which is achieved to purpose-oriented homework, to increase the class learning productivity to its maximum capacity (Drobot and Rosu 2012; Ahmed and Qazi 2011).

An assignment is often use in some cases to introduce a topic. It is very interesting to also mention that some educators see it as one of the best tools that kids can use to learn (Airi et al. 2015). Airi et al. further indicated that the practice is the most traditional form of homework which allows for mechanical repetition. Though practice is necessary for mechanical repetition, there are fundamental errors in its execution (Airi et al. 2015). Airi et al. importantly noted that one of such error is that teachers believe that they give out homework in a form which allows the learner to practice what was taught in class, but in reality, the student has not understood the topic and homework time is spent getting familiar with the subject.

The Benefits of Assisting Children with Homework by Their Parents

Assignment should be seen as a necessity as it provides fundamental benefits. There is a host of learning and non-learning purposes that could be fulfilled through homework (Porter 2017). Firstly, parents believed that homework helped children in consolidating learning (Porter 2017), especially in promoting comprehension and enhancing recall. When asked why children had to do homework, "To join learning; to support learning". Secondly, the review of a study conducted by Rosário et al. (2018) shows that homework benefits learners by assisting them to prepare for tests and exam. Assignment assists in combining

learning in such that kids are able to get an easy time when preparing for exams. When a learner completes his homework by him or herself then it takes a shorter time for revision before exam and test. Thirdly, assignment has been seen helpful in obtaining learning skills.

In addition, assignment keeps kids occupy and away from unnecessary activities, become indolent and idle the whole playing games. Parents must push children to do their homework. Nevertheless, with the entire value of assignment, kids did not value its significance. What are the benefits of parents who support their kids with assignment? Homework contributed to the development of responsibility.

Doing homework children become more responsible and independent (Matei and Ciasca 2015): it keeps the student focused on the task; it develops student's initiatives, independence and responsibility; it completes and extends the school knowledge; it strengthens the family-school relation; it facilitates the compliance with the curriculum (Matei and Ciasca 2015). The opinions of Romanian teachers are in line with literature that highlights the merits of homework to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes in primary school students, respectively their contribution to student achievement. No respondent expressed doubts about the necessity or usefulness of homework, instead, most respondents plead for daily homework.

Benefits of Parents Who Support Their Kids with Assignment

The study conducted by Epstein (2009) indicated that from assisting children in homework at home activities by having a good knowledge of the program and abilities the kids are acquiring make it convenient to support kids with program related activities all through the academic period. Acquiring knowledge at home may result in debates within the home concerning school, and assignment. Schools, families, and communities that work together and share the responsibility for assisting children are likely to deliver improved agendas and openings for scholars. "When parents, teachers, and students, see one another as partners in education, a caring community forms around students and begins its work" (Epstein 2010: 81).

It can safely be concluded that through frequent interactions between parents' and schools, learners are more likely to understand the importance of school, of working hard and helping others, and of staying in school to continue their education (Epstein 2009). Parents who assist their children with homework contributed to the development of responsibility. Doing homework make children more responsible and independent (Matei and Ciasca 2015): it keeps the student focused on the task; it develops student's initiatives, independence and responsibility; it completes and extends the school knowledge; it strengthens the family-school relation; it facilitates the compliance with the curriculum.

CONCLUSION

Parents' assistance in improving their children academic career starts at home with them establishing a healthy and safe home, support, and good attitudes about school. The reviews specify that parental assistance is more helpful when seen as a co-operation between parents and educators. It is very imperative and glaring that the reviews of previous study showed that students spend more than twenty percent (20%) of their overall study time doing homework with their tutors or learning outside the school hours.

RECOMMENDATIONS

All parents should endeavour to create extra time for their children by providing adequate support in term of assisting them with their homework at home. Parents' should always make sure that none of their children is left alone with his or her homework undone. Teachers should always try as much as possible to mark all learners' homework and look for better measures to be taken in order to encouraging weak ones in improving or performing better in their assignments.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed I, Qazi TF 2011. Do students' personality traits moderate relationship of teacher's leadership style and students' academic performance? Empirical evidence from institute of higher learning. *International Journal of Academic Research*, 3(4): 1-8.
- Airi K, Raily R, Mari-Lils R, Sirje P 2015. Parents' opinion in 11 stage of primary school (Estonian

- example). *Procedia-social and Behavior Sciences*, 171: 134-144.
- Bempechat J 2019. The case for (quality) homework: Why it improves learning, and how parents can help. *Education Next*, 19(1): 36-44.
- Boonk L, Gijsselaers HJ, Ritzen H, Brand-Gruwel S 2018. A review of the relationship between parental involvement indicators and academic achievement. *Educational Research Review*, 24: 10-30.
- Cunha J, Rosário P, Macedo L, Nunes AR, Fuentes S, Pinto R, Suárez N 2015. Parents' conceptions of their homework involvement in elementary school. *Psicothema*, 27(2): 159-165.
- Drobot L, Rosu M 2012. Teachers' Leadership Style in the Classroom and Their Impact Upon High School Students. From <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Loredana_Viscu/publication/298714224_Teachers_leadership_style_in_the_classroom_and_their_impact_upon_high_school_students/links/56ea72c008ae95bddc2abc60/Teachers-leadership-style-in-the-classroom-and-their-impact-upon-high-school-students.pdf> (Retrieved on 6 November 2020).
- Durišić M, Bunijevac M 2017. Parental involvement as an important factor for successful education. *Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal*, 7(3): 137-153.
- Epstein JL 2009. *In School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action*. 3rd Edition. USA: Corwin Press.
- Epstein JL 2010. School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(3): 81-96.
- Fan Q 2013. *Parents' Perceptions and Practices in Homework: Implications for School-Teacher-Parent Partnerships*. Doctoral Thesis, Unpublished. Chicago: University of Illinois.
- Hampshire PK, Butera GD, Hourcade JJ 2014. Homework plans: A tool for promoting independence. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 46(6): 158-168.
- Herrell PO 2011. *Parental Involvement: Parent Perceptions and Teacher Perceptions*. PhD Thesis, Unpublished. United States: East Tennessee State University.
- Katz I, Kaplan A, Buzukashvily T 2011. The role of parents' motivation in students' autonomous motivation for doing homework. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 21(4): 376-386.
- Kuhlthau CC, Maniotes LK, Caspari AK 2015. *Guided Inquiry: Learning in the 21st Century: Learning in the 21st Century*. California: ABC-CLIO.
- Macbeth A 2003. Homework in Europe: A Discussion Paper Prepared For The European Parents' Association. In: S Parmaswar (Ed.): *The Involvement of Parents in Their Children's Homework at Public Secondary Schools in Theumlazi District, Mayville circuit, KwaZulu-Natal*. Master's Dissertation, Unpublished. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
- Markow D, Kim A, Liebman M 2007. *The MetLife survey of the American Teacher: The Homework Experience*. New York, NY: Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.
- Matei S, Ciasca L 2015. Primary Teachers Opinion about Homework. *Acta Didactica Napocensia*, 8(3): 29-36.
- McDonnall MC, Cavanaugh BS, Giesen JM 2012. The relationship between parental involvement and mathematics achievement for students with visual impairments. *The Journal of Special Education*, 45(4): 204-215.
- Moroni S, Dumont H, Trautwein U, Niggli A, Baeriswyl F 2015. The need to distinguish between quantity and quality in research on parental involvement: The example of parental help with homework. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 108(5): 417-431.
- Oyelana AA, Thakathathi DR 2015. Assessing the Role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Enhancing Employees' Performance in a Selected Local Government Administration (LGA) in South Africa. *Journal of Communication*, 6(1): 229-235.
- Oyelana AA 2017. Effects of increase in tuition fees in the tertiary institutions of learning. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, 17(1-3): 140-147.
- Parmaswar S 2014. *The Involvement of Parents in Their Children's Homework at Public Secondary Schools in the Umlazi District, Mayville Circuit, KwaZulu-Natal*. Master's Dissertation, Unpublished. Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- Patrician PPA 2019. *Rhetoric to Reality: Practices of Schools in Challenging Circumstances to Support Parent Engagement in Their Children's Mathematics Learning*. Doctoral Dissertation, Unpublished. Canada: University of Toronto.
- Porter S 2017. How Homework Can Help Your Students Consolidate Their Learning And Create More Enthusiasm For Science. From <<https://www.tes.com/blog/how-homework-can-help-your-students-consolidate-their-learning-and-create-more-enthusiasm>> (Retrieved on 6 November 2020).
- Portier CA, Peterson SS, Capitaio-Tavares Z, Rambaran K 2013. Parent perceptions and recommendations about homework involving wikis and blogs: Middle grades parents share their views of online homework assignments. *Middle School Journal*, 44(5): 6-14.
- Rosário P, Núñez JC, Vallejo G, Nunes T, Cunha J, Fuentes S, Valle A 2018. Homework purposes, homework behaviors, and academic achievement. Examining the mediating role of students' perceived homework quality. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 53: 168-180.
- Swap SM 1993. *Developing Home-School Partnerships: From Concepts to Practice*. New York: Teachers' College Press.
- Tam VC, Chan RM 2009. Parental involvement in primary children's homework in Hong Kong. *School Community Journal*, 19(2): 81-100.
- Tam VC, Chan RM 2010. Hong Kong parents' perceptions and experiences of involvement in homework: A family capital and resource management perspective. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 31(3): 361-370.
- Vicky CW, Raymond MC 2010. Hong Kong Parents' Perceptions and Experiences of Involvement in Homework: A Family Capital and Resource Management Perspective. From <https://repository.hkbu.edu.hk/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=educ_ja> (Retrieved on 6 November 2020).
- Wilder S 2014. Effects of parental involvement on academic achievement: A meta-synthesis. *Educational Review*, 66(3): 377-397.
- Wyk MMV 2011. The use of cartoons as a teaching tool to enhance student learning in economics education. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 26(2): 117-130.

Paper received for publication in August, 2020
Paper accepted for publication in September, 2020