

**ANALYTICAL STUDY OF EXISTING PRACTICES OF
HOME WORK AND ITS IMPACT ON STUDENTS
LEARNING AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL**

Dr. Saqib Shahzad

Dr. Safder Rehman Ghazi

Asad Ullah Shah

ABSTRACT:

Home work occupies integral part in schools in Pakistan, especially up to elementary level. Some of the educationists assume that home work enforces students' level of learning and their conceptualization but some of the educationists are not in favor of it. The opinion of parents about home work is also different. Some of the modern school system prefers doing homework of the students in the school and some of the school systems don't let the task of doing home work to students. Therefore, a study was conducted in order to investigate the "analytical study of existing practices of home work and its impact on students learning at elementary level" The main objectives of the study were (i) to identify the existing practices of assigning home work in elementary public schools, (ii) to identify the practices of checking home work in elementary public school, (iii) to obtain the opinion of parents and teachers about perspective role of home work at elementary level and (iv) to recommend better practicable strategies of using home work for better learning of students. The teachers, students and their parents of government schools of southern districts of KPK was the population of this study. The sample of the study was comprised 200 teachers, 400 students at elementary level and their parents. For collection of data the researcher used three questionnaires one for teachers, one for students and one for students' parents. The researcher personally visited all the respondents. Data gathered, was tabulated and interpreted with the help of statistical tools. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used for analysis of the data. Findings were made, conclusions were derived and recommendations were

elicited accordingly. It was concluded that that home work is mandatory towards the inculcation of learning zeal in the students by keeping them intact with studies through different pedagogical modalities and methodologies used by a teacher concerned after the class work. It is highly recommended that it may be made a planned scheduled activity as a part of micro and macro planner with a vision map to achieve desired learning objectives. Home work develops the student learning skill so it must be practices at all level. Home work must be included in the school schedule. Results of the study revealed that the school principals were not properly checked the home work given by the teachers to students, so it is recommended that proper instructions were given to the principals to check the home work given by the teachers and give proper feedback.

INTRODUCTION:

Homework is an important support mechanism contributing towards student's grades at different levels especially at middle and high levels during the course of their studies. It is an indicator of student's acquiring of refresh knowledge besides sharpening their vision (Silvis, 2002). The more the students advance in academic stages, the more its significance increases with respect to student's achievements.

Different opinions may be endorsed regarding home work and certain opinions are more contrary to the issue like it is said that in home work may affect sometimes student's positive inclination towards school (Begley, 1998). Students are often held responsible for not taking interest and a personal concern due to lack of motivation for home work (Glazer & Williams, 2001). Those students who pay less attention towards homework may fail in their school work.

The meaning of homework could to define in many ways, which identification will come with different explanation but still in the same meaning. As we know, different people will come out with different ideas or perspective. Mostly, an individual perception towards homework are based their experience and knowledge about it. For example, homework definition by Laconte, 1981, the out of class task that assigned as an extension of classroom work. The definition by Laconte, 1981 quite same with other researcher called Cooper, 1989 as the meaning homework term is task assigned to student by school teachers that are meant to be carried out during non-

school hours. Both of the researchers also mention about the purpose of homework that regarding to its type such as practice, preparations and extension.

While, for Kralovec and Buell, 2001, homework is referred as a “black hole in learning process, leaving teachers unaware of each student’s true educational level or progress and unable to scaffold new knowledge for the students”. They go on state that with an increase of pressure placed on teachers to improve result for their students; too much of the teaching is being left to the parents. Understanding students mistake become crucial part of the teaching process, when work gets done at home, teacher have little understanding of the mistakes that students have made on the material and little control over who does the work.

The main objectives of assigning homework to students are the same as schooling in general, to increase the knowledge and improve the abilities and skills of the students. However, opponents of homework cite homework as rote, or grind work, designed to take up children's time, without offering tangible benefit.(Cooper et al, 2001) Homework may be designed to reinforce what students have already learned (Gill and Schlossman, 2004) prepare them for upcoming (or complex or difficult) lessons, extend what they know by having them apply it to new situations, or to integrate their abilities by applying many different skills to a single task. Homework also provides an opportunity for parents to partici Student learning improves when homework serves a clear purpose and is matched to both the skills of each individual student and to the current topics being taught in class. Feedback improves the effectiveness of homework, especially when given in a timely manner (within 24 hours). Effective feedback improves student learning by correcting misunderstanding, validating process, and highlighting errors in thinking. Embedded comments provide much better feedback than a mere grade at the top of the paper. Homework must be concentrated to be effective: mastering takes days or weeks of practice. Fifty-percent mastery may be achieved after 4 practice sessions, but it takes 28 practice sessions to achieve approximately the eighty-percent mastery level (Hofferth and Sandberg, 2001).

Studies indicate that assigning home work contributes towards achievement as outcome and also helps students to learn new mechanism and modalities to use their intelligence positively in order to strengthen their learning. (Warton, 2001)

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- 1 To identify the prevalent practices of assigning home work at elementary level of schooling
- 2 To identify the convention of checking home work in these schools.
- 3 To get access to the opinions of parents regarding their children with respect to the impacts of home work

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY:

- 1 At present, no home work practices are here at elementary level.
- 2 Parents may not be in support of assigning home work
- 3 Teachers are fatigued and are not in a position to favor home work.
- 4 Teachers are not in any practice to check student's home work regularly.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study is descriptive survey type research to know the opinion of teachers, students and their parents about role of homework in learning. All the elementary school teachers, students and parents of southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan were constituted as the population of the study. Random sampling technique was used to select the sample of students and their parents. Four districts were selected randomly i.e. Bannu, LakkiMarwat, Karak and Kohat from each district 10 schools were selected randomly and from each school 10 students and their parents and 5 teachers were selected randomly and thus the sample of the study was comprised of 400 students, parents and 200 teachers of southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The researcher developed three questionnaires for data collection in the supervision of the experts. One questionnaire for students and one for their parents, and one for teachers to identify the practices of home work. The researcher personally collected the data from the sample.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA:

The collected data was entered in SPSS 17 and was analyzed and tabulated according to the objectives of the study using descriptive and inferential statistics to provide answers for the research hypothesis. Mean and Standard Deviation is determined as mentioned in tables.

It is further added that the responses of the teachers were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted in table No. 1 while the responses of the students were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted in table No. 02 and the responses of the parents were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted in table No. 3.

The mean scale for these questionnaires was as;

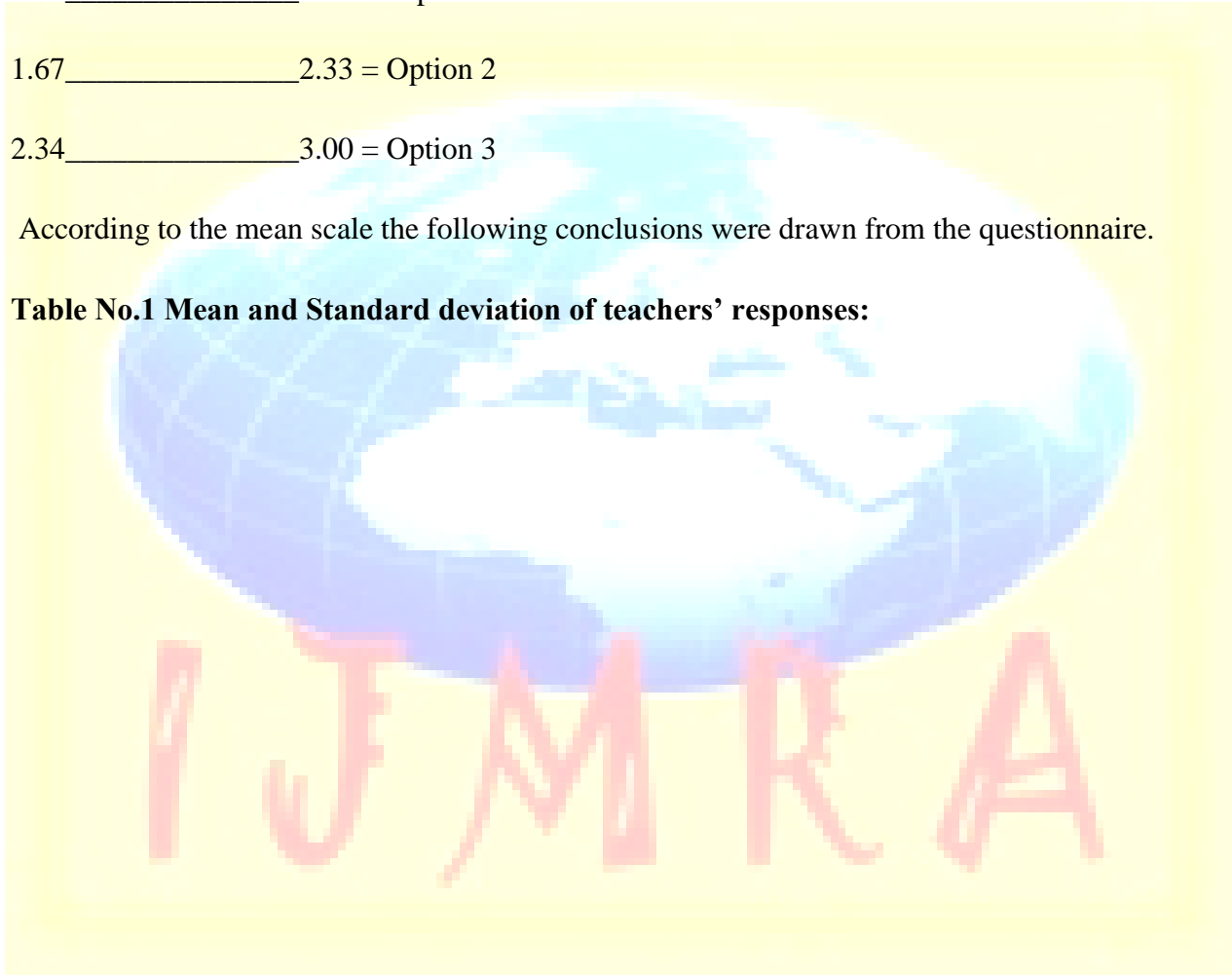
1.00 _____ 1.66 = Option 1

1.67 _____ 2.33 = Option 2

2.34 _____ 3.00 = Option 3

According to the mean scale the following conclusions were drawn from the questionnaire.

Table No.1 Mean and Standard deviation of teachers' responses:



NO	Statements	Opt.1	Opt.2	Opt.3	Mean	S. Dev
1	How much of the home work does your teacher ask you to do every night?	15-30 mint	30-60 mint	Never	1.41	0.59
2	How much of the home work usually you complete?	Complete	Max of it	Never	2.60	0.60
3	How often does your teacher tell you that in doing home work you will be in need of someone else at home?	Everyday	More than once in a week	never	2.29	0.70
4	How often you need yourself to ask your father, sister and brother etc to help you in solving your home work?	Every time	Often	Never	2.11	0.55
5	How many times your home work really becomes difficult by interruption of others?	Every time	Often	Never	2.24	0.65
6	How often someone else helps you what you have to do yourself?	Every night	More than once in a week	Never	2.21	0.67
7	Where often do you complete your home work?	School	Own room	Living room	1.80	0.76
8	Do you do your home work at a time when others are also present?	Yes	Often	Never	1.61	0.68
9	Does often TV remain OFF or ON when you sit to do home work?	Always ON	Often ON	Always OFF	1.69	0.82
10	Do your parents give you sufficient time in doing your home work?	Yes full time	Yes often	Never	2.35	0.62
11	How much time do you spend daily in watching TV?	I don't watch TV	I watch only 1 hour	more than 1 hour	2.24	0.57
12	How many times your teacher checks your home work?	Every time	Often	never	2.71	0.49
13	How many times your teacher corrects the errors in your home work?	Every time	Most of time	never	2.60	0.62
14	Do you receive some prize from your teacher on successful completion of home work?	Every time	Often	never	2.25	0.76
15	How many times your teacher gives you prizes on doing correct home work?	Every time	Often	never	2.23	0.77
16	Do you think home work help you in learning?	Much help	Little help	No help	2.74	0.48
17	Do you like home work?	More	Little	Dislike	2.57	0.62
18	Do you show your home work to your parents?	Yes daily	Often	Never	2.53	0.63
19	How do you go to school?	By car	By cycle	By walk	1.89	0.61
20	Do you have any family elder when come back from school?	Yes always	Often	never	2.50	0.62

Table No.2 Mean and Standard deviation of teachers' responses

No	Statements	Opt.1	Opt.2	Opt.3	Mean	S. Dev
1	How much of the home work does your teacher ask you to do every night?	15-30 mint	30-60 mint	Never	1.41	0.59
2	How much of the home work usually you complete?	Complete	Max of it	Never	2.60	0.60
3	How often does your teacher tell you that in doing home work you will be in need of someone else at home?	Everyday	More than once in a week	never	2.29	0.70
4	How often you need yourself to ask your father, sister and brother etc to help you in solving your home work?	Every time	Often	Never	2.11	0.55
5	How many times your home work really becomes difficult by interruption of others?	Every time	Often	Never	2.24	0.65
6	How often someone else helps you what you have to do yourself?	Every night	More than once in a week	Never	2.21	0.67
7	Where often do you complete your home work?	School	Own room	Living room	1.80	0.76
8	Do you do your home work at a time when others are also present?	Yes	Often	Never	1.61	0.68
9	Does often TV remain OFF or ON when you sit to do home work?	Always ON	Often ON	Always OFF	1.69	0.82
10	Do your parents give you sufficient time in doing your home work?	Yes full time	Yes often	Never	2.35	0.62
11	How much time do you spend daily in watching TV?	I don't watch TV	I watch only 1 hour	more than 1 hour	2.24	0.57
12	How many times your teacher checks your home work?	Every time	Often	never	2.71	0.49
13	How many times your teacher corrects the errors in your home work?	Every time	Most of time	never	2.60	0.62
14	Do you receive some prize from your teacher on successful completion of home work?	Every time	Often	never	2.25	0.76
15	How many times your teacher gives you prizes on doing correct home work?	Every time	Often	never	2.23	0.77
16	Do you think home work help you in learning?	Much help	Little help	No help	2.74	0.48

17	Do you like home work?	More	Little	Dislike	2.57	0.62
18	Do you show your home work to your parents?	Yes daily	Often	Never	2.53	0.63
19	How do you go to school?	By car	By cycle	By walk	1.89	0.61
20	Do you have any family elder when come back from school?	Yes always	Often	never	2.50	0.62

Table No.3 Mean and standard deviation of parents' responses:

No	Statements	Opt.1	Opt.2	Opt.3	Mean	S. Dev
1	How much of the home work your child is asked to do by his teacher every night?	30-60 mint	15-30 mint	Never	1.28	0.58
2	How much of the home work usually your child completes?	Complete it	Max of it	Doesn't do it	2.42	0.57
3	How often your child feels need of others in solving home work in a week?	Every night	More than once in a week	never	1.71	0.63
4	How many times your child takes your help in solving home work on account of facing problems in solving it?	Every time	Seldom	Never	1.95	0.45
5	How many times you or someone else helps your child in home work so that he soon may finish it?	Every time	Seldom	Never	2.16	0.54
6	How often you or someone else by interruption, really pose problems for your child in solving home work?	Every time	Sometime	Never	2.02	0.43
7	How often do you provide help in his H.W what he himself has to?	Everyday	More than once in a week	Never	2.14	0.67
8	Where does your child complete his H.W?	In school	In his room	Sitting among family	1.67	0.73
9	Do some others are also there where your child sit to do home work?	Yes	Often	Never	2.40	0.75
10	Does often TV remain OFF or ON when your child sit to do home work?	Always remain ON	often remain ON	Always remain OFF	1.53	0.81

11	How often do you keep sit your child in silence while doing home work?	Often	sometime	Never	1.97	0.55
12	How many hours your child spends in organized outdoor group activities like sports, religious gathering or scouts etc?	1-2 hours	5-10 hours	Never	2.32	0.90
13	How many hours does your child watch TV in the night?	Don't watch	Watch 1 hour	Watch more than 1 hour	2.54	0.64
14	What opinion would you like express about Home Work?	I very much like it	Like it to an extent	Dislike it	2.29	0.65
15	To what extent do you find home work helpful in sharpening your child's understanding?	Much helpful	Some help	No help	2.33	0.59
16	Do you think home work affects either to increase or decrease your child interest in studies?	Increase my child interest	It doesn't effect	Decreases interest	2.53	0.79
17	Do you think home work provide help in enhancing your child's skillfulness in studies?	Much help	Little help	No help	2.53	0.62
18	Do you think home work helps your child in understanding the right use of words?	Much help	Little help	No help	2.54	0.65
19	When your child gets back; does he find anyone at home?	Yes always	often	Never	2.51	0.78
20	How does your child go to school?	By car	By cycle	By walk	1.65	0.60

CONCLUSIONS:

It was found in the study that home work practices were not properly used in the class room. It was revealed that home work was not included in the school scheduled. Results of the study revealed that the school principals were not properly checked the home work given by the teachers to students. Findings revealed that extra marks were not given to the students for home work. Looking into the students feed back as well as their parent's involvement in facilitating their children, shows their level of recognition and the significance of home work to be strategic in sharpening the level of learning capacity of students. The study indicates that the provision of conducive environment to students as well as guidance of family elders regarding home work

helps in furthering their understanding whereas on contrary, due to lack of such input, their inclination towards studies in general and learning in particular shall adversely affect. Teachers like to ask about home work and parents also like home work for their children. The home work developed the students' skillfulness in studies and also students learn right use of words.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Looking into the learning advantages of home work, it is highly recommended that it may be made a planned scheduled activity as a part of micro and macro planner with a vision map to achieve desired learning objectives. It was found in the study that home work practices were not properly used in the class room. It is recommended that home work practices should be implemented in all level especially at elementary level. It was revealed that home work was not included in the school scheduled. It is recommended that home work must be included in the school schedule at elementary level. Findings revealed that extra marks were not given to the students for home work. It is recommended that 20% marks should be given to the students who have done home work. Findings revealed that study should be made available to authorities responsible for making educational policies and curriculum. Results of the study revealed that the school principals were not properly checked the home work given by the teachers to students, so it is recommended that proper instructions were given to the principals to check the home work given by the teachers and give proper feedback.

REFERENCES:

Bempechat, J. (2004,). The Motivational Benefits of Homework: A Social-Cognitive Perspective. *Theory Into Practice*, 43(3), 189-196.

Bryan, T. and Sullivan-Burstein, K. *Planning for Success*.

Checkley, K. (1997). Homework a new look at an age-old practice. *Education Update*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 7.

Cox, A. (1980) Copying words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs. Structures and techniques: multisensory teaching of basic language skills. Educators Publishing Service, Inc., p. 136.

Cooper, H. (1989). *Homework*. New York: Longman.

Cooper et al, 2001. The proportion of variance that can be attributed to homework is derived by squaring the average correlation found in the studies, which Cooper reports as +.19.

Epstein, J., Simon, B. and Salinas, K. (1997) Involving parents in homework in the middle grades. *Phi Delta Kappa Research Bulletin*, 18.

Gaillard, L. (1994) Hands off homework? Commentary, *Education Week*, December 14.

Hofferth, S.L., and Sandberg, J. F. (2001). *Changes in American Children's Use of Time, 1981–1997*. In T. Owens and S. Hofferth (Eds), *Advances in life course research series: Children at the millennium: Where have we come from, where are we going?* New York: Elsevier Science.

Keith, T.Z., & Cool, V.A. (1992). Testing models of school learning: Effects of quality of instruction, motivation, academic coursework, and homework on academic achievement. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 7, 207-226.

Kralovec, E., and Buell, J. (2001). End Homework Now, *Educational Leadership*, 58(7), 39–42.

Rolfe, S. and Benson, N. (1988) The study skills connection: A basic guide to study skills. Riverside Press. (Learning Unlimited, P0 Box 830121, Richardson, TX 7083).

Romain, Trevor. (1997) How to do homework without throwing up. Free Spirit Publishing. (400 First Avenue North, Suite 616, Minneapolis, MN 55401. www.freespirit.com)

Sharp, C., Keys, W. and Benefield, P. (2001). Review of Studies on Homework. Slough: National Foundation for Educational Research. Retrieved November 10, 2007.

Sullivan-Burstein, K. and Bryan, T. (1995) Sequenced study skills program. Phoenix, AZ: Planning for Success.

Vinnedge, M. (1998) The right time and place. Education Extra, Dallas Morning News, November 3.

Warton, P.M. (2001). The forgotten voices in homework: Views of students. Educational Psychologist, 36(3), 155-165.