

# A necessity to educational success or busy work?

[Psychology](#), [Success](#)



Formal education in the world began around 551-479 B. C in China. The philosopher Confucius is credited with opening the first public school which could be accessible to anyone at least in theory. Literature, music, conduct, and ethics etc were taught to the pupils. Once formal education had its birth its corollary homework too found its existence in the hemisphere of human activities. The concept of homework came in to being when home and learning began in separate places. The work assigned outside school with the purpose of enhancing the understanding of particular subject.

A whole corpus of activities can be termed as home work. Etiologically any work that is done at home can be termed as homework. The whole purpose behind the practice of giving homework is to raise the level of academic attainment. The objective of the concept giving work at home is multifaceted. The students are dependent on the instructor for gaining information and knowledge . Education doesn't comprise merely of passing down of skills and information . It is rather modification of behavior . The objective of giving work at home is to make them independent learners.

Like any other human endeavor homework also has multiple aspect ranging from academic excellence to bringing about a perceptible social change in the students. The efficacy of the practice of making students work at home has always been questioned by communities , teachers and parents who are interested in the prosperity and well being of those who are seeking knowledge . One the one hand we have researches who arguing that the practice should be stopped as it has a detrimental effect on students.

On the other hand we have individuals who consider it a necessary and aspect of the process of learning. This discord between the objectives of the homework has lead to studies being conducted to asses the advantages and the disadvantages of the practice . Students spend almost 20% of their learning hours slogging hard to do their doing their homework in United States. Harris Cooper defines homework as “ tasks that are assigned to students by school teachers that are intended to be carried out during non-school hours” (Cooper, 1989, p.

7) The whole discussion on how much homework should be given to a child has been researched and it has been case studied that students in their early child hood education require 10 minute of homework and as the child climbs up the grade 10 minutes of work is added in each grade and a maximum of two hours in grade twelve is required . The modern age has relied too much on succeeds and one wonders that are we giving precedence to success to progress. HYPOTHESIS

The issue of homework revolves around the question whether there is necessity of giving homework or it is a practice which is baseless and just keeps the students busy. The big problem is how far homework works does.

LITERATURE REVIEW The whole debate on the relevance and objectives of homework is pretty recent - it all started in 1990s. Harris Cooper a social psychologist whose area of research is applications of socialpsychologyto educational policy issues, homework, school calendars, after school programs has very comprehensively dealt with the issue of the efficacy of the practice of giving work to students at home.

He has defined the objective of the practice and explored the positive outcome of it . There are the immediate and long term academic effects and then there are other affects which has nothing to do with academics. The success of the students both in academics and in life depends on the fact that how much parental involvement. It is practice that help foster the involvement and appreciation of the parents. The works of Harris Cooper focuses on both the academic and the social aspect like around development and the parental co-operation.

The negative fall out of this human endeavor is that when there is lack of co-operation between the various faculty members and disregard of the capacity and the individual capability of the learner. Homework becomes an unbearable burden which not only defeats its very purpose but also hampers the involvement of the leaner in leisure activities. According to Cooper “ An activity can only be rewarding for so long If students are required to spend too much time on academic material, they are bound to grow bored with it” (Cooper, 2001, p. 35).

Similarly there are others like Connor who very precisely list both the positive and the negative aspect of homework. ( Connor 1991, n. p) John R Brender Higher, whose field is Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education, investigated the effects of out of class assignment on the success of teaching of Spanish language. He conducted research on the out come of home assignment on the test scores for 401 undergraduate students, 94 percent African American, at an urban university in 2 levels of introductory

Spanish. He gave small homework routinely and long and workbook assignment of 8 to 12 pages.

There was test conducted at the end of the course and a significant correlation was found between the results and the fact that who had done his home assignments or not. He also found that the Afro- American students fared much better when they were given home assignment. OBJECTIVES AND METHODS OF HOMEWORK Out of class assignment should be designed to reinforce what has been taught in the class. In fact it is a practice exercise of the concepts and facts delineated in the class. It is a common phenomenon that repetition acts as a reinforcement of the concepts and understanding of a subject.

The practice of giving home work is based on the assumption that there is strong connection between memorization and understanding. It should be kept in mind that concept should be very clear as mere repetition will not suffice. The most significant goal of the out of class assignment is to enhance and maximize the academic attainment. The grade of the student is very important in deciding what and how much assignments can be given to a learner. It has been researched that there is direct co-relation between the test scores and the homework .

At the high school level a significant half point of GPA can be improved with every addition of 30 minutes of homework . ( Keith, 1992 ) The students and teachers should ideally try and set goals of their daily assignments . The goals should be clearly defined but the problem with too much focus is that that it hampers the learning of additional information. The student's

involvement in the setting of the goals and personalizing the objectives of out of class has been documented to have positive effect on the learner's academic excellence.

The higher the grade the more important is fact there should be joint venture between the students and the instructor as far as homework is concerned. Out of school assignment and its completion by the students is not the only practice that is required for promoting educational achievement of the pupil. The assignment should be corrected by the instructor and wherever possible the teacher should write down his remarks. The positive points should be highlighted . This kind of feedback seen to produce more results according to studies conducted by Walberg Rewarding the students for completing the assignment can act as an encouragement.

Each student has unique personality and skills although it not realistic but if the instructor is able to match the assignment with the capabilities of the learner it would all the more effective Apart from the traditional goal of enhancing the scores and academic achievement of the learner, it transforms the students from a dependent to an independent learner. Confidence is very important life skill that is inculcated in the students as a result of these out of class assignment . Self confidence rids the students of a sense of inferiority and it develops the acumen to take initiatives in life.

A very interesting an important aspect that can be added to the method of prescribing work at home is that the students should be made accountable for the regularly assigned works . The sense of accountability is important behavioral aspect. Any student who is in possession of this trait is likely to

less undesirable traits which are harmful to the wellbeing of individual at society at large. The sense of responsibilities that is fostered will help them grow into adults who would be an asset to society. Home work can be used to help students replace their maladaptive habits with those that are more helpful.

Some of the students don't complete their work as they are lazy. A behavior modification therapy can be adopted so as to motivate the students to replace the old habits of the learner to make less effort on its own to one who actively participates in doing homework. If the students show that he has raised his effort level then he should be encouraged or praised in front of the class According to Rockwell (n. d, n. p ) “ see to it that pleasant situations occur as a result of that behavior”. The age old practice of homework provides themotivationto achieve in life.

The sense of achievement provides the thrust to work hard. Life is full of ups and downs and the tendency to cope wit failures. If it is proved that homework has no or negative effect on the academic success of the pupil even then the practice is worth while as it foster the skills to face the onslaughts of failures in life. This method of providing incentives is intrinsic and extrinsic. The intellectual satisfaction that is reaped as a result of successful completion of work provides intellectual satisfaction gives intrinsic motivation .

If this motivation is reinforced with positive encouragement from the teacher the behavior is not only modified but a general atmosphere of responsible learning permeates in the class. One of the off shoots of out of school

assignment is that it fosters parent teacher co-operation . It is well documented that if the parents play an active role in knowledge acquisition of their children the level of academic achievement is higher. The parent's involvement in their offspring's educational achievement has been long been accepted but it was empirically researched systematically in 1969 in U. S, A's Evaluation of the Head Start Program.

The research provided substantially proved the link between parent participation and academic output of children. (Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mod, Weinfeld, & York, 1966) Although some of the reaches refuted the positive effect of parental involvement on the academic performance the majority of the researches have documented progress in student's grades when the parents take keen interest in the homework or any other intellectual activity at home Mattingly and Jeynes have quantified the effect of parental involvement on the reading and the mathematical skills and science achievements.

(Mattingly, et al. 2002 and Jeynes 2005) Except in case of science where there was no statistical proof of improvement in children there considerable improvement in math and reading skills. The area of learning which showed maximum improvement under parental participation was reading skills Assignments that are given at home make the student learn to manage time . Time is a very precious entity and it has been seen that home work have a unique association with time . There is a positive outcome when the time invested in the out of school work is increased .



If the work is time consuming then the it doesn't enhance the progress of the academic achievement but rather impedes it. The limit to the number of homework was introduced for the first time by Piscataway New Jersey

**DISADVANTAGES OF HOMEWORK** The critics of out of class assignment see it as an intrusion into the leisure time of the student . Human beings are social animals and they need time to interact withfamilymembers and community to learn how to socialize . If a pupil is overburdened he will not have the time to mix and mingle with family and friends.

If the work assigned to the learner is not relevant and uninteresting and lacks innovation it is going to produce boredom . This in turn is going to lead to either not completing the work or it will be done for the sake of doing it.

The students sometimes apply wrongful means to complete their work . They take tocheating. Consequently a loss of interest is generated and in extreme case the student might try and miss out school. A study conducted on the public schools of Maine showed that the students who dropped out of school gave homework as the reason of their leaving the schools.

This can develop a escapist tendency. The other charge that the practice of homework is reeling under is that it is going to widen the gap between the students who come from a well to do background who have access to most of the facilities in life. The learners of the lower socio –economic background have to work after school and hence don't have time to complete their afterschool hour work. (Cooper and Valentine, 2001). In the present scenario where both the parents are working or that children are living with single parents homework can be a time consuming efforts .

Those who are unable to complete their work because of lack of parental supervision can develop a sense of inferiority complex and lack of self esteem can result in the child being unable to cope with the pressures in life . There fore it is imperative that those students who come from weaker background should be be given after school assistance in completing their work. Some of the studies like the one conducted by Kavaliauskiene & Uzpaliene, 2002 have shown that the students are not in the favor of work being given to them to be done at home as it stops them from pursuing those activities that are of interest to them.

**CONCLUSION** The real problem that has been debated by educationist and parents Motivating the students like creating an interest in the subject can solve this problem If there isn't a tremendous increase in the work that is being given and the teachers are able to co-operate with each other when giving work can to large extant solve this problem. This is very realistic solution to unburdening the students in lower grades but as the students reach higher grades and studies become specialized this becomes unrealistic. In any case the teachers should ensure the efficacy of the work they are giving.

There should be an emphasis on giving homework in manner that is interesting and creative. The answer to the question that whether Homework is a necessity to educational success or busy work lies in taking a middle path. The modern world with its emphasis on individual freedom and liberty has lead to regarding every thing in negative connotation even if there are documented proofs of the efficacy of giving out of school work. Moderation is

always beneficial. The instructor who motivates encourages and supports his seekers of knowledge is likely to receive appositive response even in case of homework .

An authoritarian teacher who more interested in prevailing his will is likely to evince a negative . A controlling behavior is negative impetus to not only homework but the entire process of learning. What is of foremost importance is theenvironmentof the educational institution and the attitude of the teacher and last but the least the method of education should be innovative and creative . Over burdening the child with a lot works deprives the participation of child in leisure activities and community programs . Thereby hampering the all round development of the child .

If out of class assignment are properly managed and if possible made according the acumen of individual child in manner that is interesting not only positively contributes to the academic progress but also leads to transformation of a child from being spoon-fed like a fledgling to being a confident flier into the vast horizon of knowledge exploring the huge canvass without The fear of the unknown . The vital life skills like confidence , understanding , vitality and diligence can be achieved and the real purpose of education i. e modification of behavior are accomplished.

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