

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN PRIMARY SCHOOL HOMEWORK: THE NEED FOR PARENTAL TRAINING

Gzim XHAMBAZI¹, Jasminka KOCHOSKA², Vesna STOJANOVSKA³

¹University of Tetova, Faculty of Pedagogy, ^{2,3}University „St. Kliment Ohridski“ – Bitola, Faculty of Pedagogy, North Macedonia

Corresponding author: gzim.xhambazi@unite.edu.mk

Abstract

If we wish to implement the curriculum successfully and achieve educational objectives, given that the amount of time available for students to be in school is limited, part of the learning process directed towards acquiring new and developing previously acquired knowledge, customs, and abilities is conducted outside the classroom, i.e., at home. For this reason, it is necessary that parents collaborate with their children during their homework assignments by supporting them and guiding them appropriately, since they are at an age when they lack the ability to solve problems or complete homework assignments independently. This study seeks to find out if teachers and parents share the same opinion about the need for special training for parents to assist their children in completing their homework, and whether parents ask teachers for advice on how to help their children. Our Hypothesis was that there were no significant differences among teachers and parents in the need for training on assisting their children with their homework. We began assuming no real difference between teachers' and parents' views. The data tell a different story: on an aggregated "need for training" measure, teachers showed partial agreement ($M = 3.25$ on a 1–5 Likert scale), whereas parents tended to disagree ($M = 2.43$); the difference is statistically significant ($t = 4.425$, $p < .001$). Given this gap, we argue that parents would benefit from targeted, practical training—especially around how much help to provide and how to give it—so that home support reinforces classroom learning rather than unintentionally undermining it.

Keywords: homework, parent training, primary education

Introduction

Active parental involvement in homework offers multiple benefits. Depending on the child's age and year group, parents adopt different approaches to providing support, motivation, and assistance. It is generally believed that pupils in the lower years require more support and help, whereas older pupils – especially those in secondary education – often have little or no need for parental assistance. Nevertheless, parental involvement in homework during the early years of primary education remains essential. This involvement requires ongoing cooperation until the child becomes capable of working independently and can understand assignments and the instructions provided by the teacher.

Parents face various challenges related to homework. Some believe that completing homework properly helps children develop positive character traits, including improved academic achievement. Others, however, hold opposing views and consider homework merely a waste of time. One of the main dilemmas parents face is how much help to provide and in what way. Teachers advise parents to support their children with homework, but not to complete the assignments for them. These issues often lead to misunderstandings between parents and teachers. Teachers are aware that there could be a large difference in what is perceived as beneficial or suitable for students from one parent to another. In addition, when teachers believe that they need additional parental support and/or that the parents should monitor their student's work (in addition

to the amount of time spent at school), many parents will be unable to assist with these expectations due to other factors.

An important aspect of parent–teacher interaction related to homework is parent meetings, particularly those organised by schools at the end of each term. Many times during this meeting the parent/teacher will discuss the student's homework assignments; and as such, there is an opportunity to share experiences regarding how the assignment was completed. Such public discussions can have a negative impact not only on children but also on parents, which is why some perceive parent meetings as undesirable.

Despite parents' divided opinions about homework, research indicates that their contribution is significant and that parental support during homework completion is important. Findings by Murray and colleagues (2006) show a positive association, particularly emphasising the social aspect and the role of maternal support. It is likely that younger children – including those in preschool – adapt more easily and cooperate better with women, as they have more frequent contact with them. Patal et al. (2008) find that engaged parents are associated with higher-quality homework and fewer problems during completion. Practical tips for parents are clear but not always easy to follow: set up a quiet, well-lit workspace; keep basics—rulers, compasses, colored pencils—within reach; aim for a loose daily routine without turning it into a drill; monitor progress and step in only when needed; contact the teacher if deeper issues arise. Small things matter. Some children focus better with soft background music (Hallam & Cohen, 1999); television is usually a distraction. Rewards can motivate if used consistently; punishment rarely helps learning. Bottom line: homework is complicated, and many parents end up unsure what the “right” approach looks like.

Methods

This study, explored teachers' and parents' perspectives on whether parents need special training to support homework and whether parents actively seek guidance from teachers. Our null hypothesis posited no significant difference between the two groups on perceived training needs. The study, carried out in April 2024, and included a sample of 75 teachers from first to fifth grade and 75 parents. The research method was a survey, in which respondents were asked to select one of the provided answers based on a Likert scale (1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – partially agree, 4 – agree, 5 – strongly agree). The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in the table below.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variable		N	f	%
Gender	Female	75	61	81.3
	Male	75	14	18.7
Teaching Experience	1 – 10	75	13	17.3
	11 – 20	75	24	32.0
	21 – 30	75	26	34.7
	30 years or more	75	12	16.0
Settlement Type	City	75	40	53.3
	Village	75	35	46.7

Analysis and Interpretation of Results

Homework serves as an important link between the family and the school. It enables ongoing communication between parents and teachers, reflecting not only students' efforts but also teachers' instructional practices and parental involvement.

In the first question, we asked teachers for their views on the need for parental training – specifically, whether parents require guidance on how much support to provide with their children's homework and in what ways. Respondents were asked to select one of the options on a Likert scale (1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – partially agree, 4 – agree, 5 – strongly agree). The responses from the surveyed teachers to this question are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Teachers' Perceptions of Parents' Need for Training on Supporting Their Children's Homework
Parents need training on how much and in what ways to assist their children with homework.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	8	10.7	10.7	10.7
	Disagree	9	12.0	12.0	22.7
	Partially Agree	13	17.3	17.3	40.0
	Agree	32	42.7	42.7	82.7
	Strongly Agree	13	17.3	17.3	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

According to the results in the table, the largest proportion of surveyed teachers indicated that they agree (42.7%) with the statement, while the smallest proportion selected strongly disagree (10.7%) that parents need training on how much and in what ways to help their children. The following table presents the mean value of these results.

Table 3. Arithmetic Mean of Teachers' Perceptions of Parents' Need for Training on Homework Assistance

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Parents need training on how much and in what ways to assist their children with homework.	75	1.00	5.00	3.4400	1.22187
Valid N (listwise)	75				

Based on this result ($M = 3.44$), it can be concluded that teachers partially agree that parents require training related to homework. The following table presents parents' requests for assistance with homework. The responses of the surveyed teachers to this question are shown in the table below.

Table 4. Teachers' Perceptions of Parents' Requests for Guidance on Homework Assistance
Parents seek guidance from teachers on how to assist their children in order to successfully complete their homework.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	6	8.0	8.0	8.0
	Disagree	20	26.7	26.7	34.7
	Partially Agree	17	22.7	22.7	57.3
	Agree	28	37.3	37.3	94.7
	Strongly Agree	4	5.3	5.3	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

The table shows that teachers have divided opinions on this issue, with the largest proportion (37.3%) agreeing that parents seek guidance from them. The following table presents the mean value of these responses.

Table 5. Arithmetic Mean of Teachers' Responses Regarding Parents' Requests for Guidance on Homework Assistance

Parents seek guidance from teachers on how to assist their children in order to successfully complete their homework.		
N	Valid	75
	Missing	0
Mean		3.05

The mean value is $M = 3.05$. Accordingly, it can be concluded that teachers partially agree that parents seek guidance on how much and in what ways to help their children with homework. The mean values of parents' responses to the following two variables – “I need training related to my child's homework in terms of how much and how to help” and “I seek guidance from teachers on how to help my child complete homework more successfully” – are presented in the following table.

Table 6. Arithmetic Mean of Parents' Perceptions of Training Needs and Requests for Guidance on Homework Assistance

		I need training on how much and in what ways to assist my child with homework	I seek guidance from teachers on how to help my child successfully complete their homework
N	Valid	75	75
	Missing	0	0
Mean		2.43	2.87

From the table, it can be seen that parents do not agree ($M = 2.43$) that they feel a need for training regarding their children's homework, and somewhat agree ($M = 2.87$) that they seek guidance from teachers on how to help their children complete their homework more successfully.

Statistical Significance of the Results

When testing the first pair of dependent variables, which relate to the teachers' responses, we obtained the following results.

Table 7. Results from Testing the First Two Questions for Teachers

		Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Parents need training regarding their children's homework. Parents seek guidance from teachers on how to assist their children.	.38667	.88369	.10204	.18335	.58998	3.789	74	.000

The results in the table are statistically significant ($p = .000$), indicating significant differences among teachers regarding the need to train parents about homework and parents' requests for guidance on assisting their children with homework. Additionally, there is a strong correlation between these two variables, as shown in the following table.

Table 8. Correlation Between the First Two Questions for Teachers

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Parents need training regarding their children's homework, specifically on how much and how to assist them, & Parents seek guidance from teachers on how to help their children successfully complete their homework.	75	.713	.000

The correlation is positive ($r = .713$) and can be interpreted as follows: the greater the parents' need for training regarding homework, the more they seek guidance from teachers on how to assist their children. This suggests that, according to teachers, parents require training and guidance on how to support their children with homework. The results for the statistical significance of the two variables related to parents' responses, along with their correlation, are presented in the following table.

Table 9. Correlation Between Parents' Perceptions of Parental Training Needs and Parental Guidance Seeking

		I need training on how much and in what ways to assist my child with homework	I seek guidance from teachers on how to help my child successfully complete their homework
I need training on how much and in what ways to assist my child with homework	Pearson Correlation	1	.527**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	75	75
I seek guidance from teachers on how to help my child successfully complete their homework	Pearson Correlation	.527**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	75	75

From the table, it can be seen that the correlation is moderate and positive ($r = .527$) and statistically significant ($p = .000$). This result can be interpreted as follows: as parents' need for training regarding their children's homework increases, their requests for guidance from teachers on how and to what extent they should help their children also increase. Regarding the independent variables – gender, work experience, and school location – no statistically significant results were found.

Results from Comparative Testing of Teachers' and Parents' Responses

To examine the differences in responses between teachers and parents regarding the need for parent training on homework, we compared the combined results of Question 1 and Question 2 from the Teachers' Questionnaire with those from the Parents' Questionnaire. This was done by creating a separate variable based on the arithmetic mean and standard deviation of the responses from both teachers and parents for Questions 1 and 2, which we named "Need for Training."

The results obtained are presented in the following table.

Table 10. Comparison of Teachers' and Parents' Perceptions of the Need for Parental Training on Homework

Variable		N	M	SD	t	Sig.
Need for Training	Teachers	75	3.25	1,070	4.425	.000*
	Parents	75	2.43	1,196		

*p< .05.

As shown in the table, the results from the summed t-test indicate statistically significant differences between teachers and parents in their views on the need for parent training regarding homework and parents' need for guidance from teachers. Teachers agree more strongly on this issue ($\bar{X} = 3.25$, $SD = 1.070$, $p < .05$) than parents ($\bar{X} = 2.43$, $SD = 1.196$, $p < .05$).

Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted: there are significant differences between teachers and parents regarding the need for parent training in relation to the support they should provide to their children when completing homework.

Conclusion

The results indicate that teachers believe parents need training regarding homework, which would enhance the effectiveness of students' mastery of the curriculum. In contrast, parents are less likely to agree that they need such training and also request less guidance from teachers on how and to what extent they should assist their children. The need for pedagogical guidance for parents is becoming increasingly relevant. In certain situations and conditions, parents themselves may be misinformed regarding the implementation of appropriate educational measures and activities that would positively influence the overall development of their children.

Many parents feel happy and fulfilled when they complete their children's homework, without realising the potential negative impact. Research has shown that when homework practices are not properly structured or supported, they may lead to reduced motivation and counterproductive learning behaviours among students (Xhambazi et al., 2025). Some parents do this because they view their children's assignments as a burden, while others claim they help to ensure the tasks are completed as accurately as possible for higher grades.

Based on research findings, it is necessary to organise training for parents to inform, guide, and actively involve them in supporting their children's homework – especially for younger children in the early years of primary education. If parents assist their children in completing homework properly, without resorting to ready-made solutions, students' learning outcomes and mastery of the prescribed curriculum are likely to be more effective.

References

- [1] Connolly, M. (n.d.). *Parent involvement in homework: Super strategies for encouraging autonomy in your child*. Learning Mole. Retrieved from <https://learningmole.com/parent-involvement-in-homework/>
- [2] Cooper, H., Robinson, J. C., & Patel, E. A. (2006). Does Homework Improve Academic Achievement? A Synthesis of Research, 1987 – 2003. *Review of Educational Research*, 76(1), 1–62.
- [3] Dettmers, S., Trautwein, U., & Ludtke, O. (2009). The Relationship Between Homework Time and Achievement is not Universal: Evidence from Multilevel Analyses in 40 Countries. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 20(3), 1–31.
- [4] Hallam, S., & Cowan, R. (1999). Is Homework Important for Increasing Educational Achievement? LDE-Online Publications Homework.
- [5] Ornstein, A. C. (1994). Homework, Studying and Role-Taking: Essential Skills for Students. *NASSP Bulletin*, 78(558), 58–70.

- [6] Patall, E. A., Cooper, H., & Robinson, J. C. (2008). Parent involvement in homework: A research synthesis. *Review of Educational Research*, 78(4), 1039–1101. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654308325185>
- [7] Yavich, R., & Davidovitch, N. (2020). Homework: At Home or At School? - Attitudes of Teachers, Parents and the General Public: A Case Study. *International Education Studies*, 13(6), 170-179.
- [8] XHAMBASI, G., DOGANI, B., ILAZI HOXHA, A., & AMETI, M. (2025). AVOIDING STUDENT OVERLOAD THROUGH TEACHER COORDINATION IN HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS. *EDUCATION Journal of Educational Research*, 7(13-14), 81-87. <https://www.cceol.com/search/article-detail?id=1368625>