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OPINION OF GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECONDARY LEVEL STUDENTS TOWARDS HOMEWORK– A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Dr. Sabita Nayak

Associate Professor in Education

Nalini Devi Women's College of Teacher Education, Bhubaneswar

Abstract

Excellence and competitiveness go hand in hand, and require a mindset and culture where all children are encouraged to work on their skill development. Homework is a vital part of learning. It is an extension of the classroom which allows students to internalize information that has been presented in the class. It helps in increasing the knowledge, attitude and skill of the children at each level. The present study intends to ascertain the opinion of secondary school students towards homework. The main objectives of the study are: 1) to compare the opinion of government and private school students towards homework 2) to compare the opinion of boys and girls towards homework. Survey method is adopted for the present study. A well structured opinionnaire is prepared and administered to collect data. The mean, S.D. and t test are computed for data analysis. Findings reveal that government school students have more positive opinion towards homework than the private school students. Both boys and girls do have the same kind of opinion towards homework at secondary level.

Key words: Opinion, homework

Introduction

Classroom is the place where much of the learning activity begins. However, real understanding and the ability to apply what has been learned is achieved when, outside the classroom and sometime later, students review the work introduced in class, test their understanding, extend their reasoning ability, and summarize their thoughts or apply the new information and techniques to solve problems. This additional work comes under the heading of homework.

Although formal definitions of homework can vary, Cooper (1989) defined homework as “tasks assigned to students by school teacher that are meant to be carried out during non-school hours” or “teacher-assigned tasks to engage students in independent and effective studying” (Cooper et al., 2006). Recently, Cooper has modified his definition of homework to indicate that it involves tasks to be carried out during non-instructional time. Implicit in this definition is that students must manage homework assignments by engaging in various self-regulation processes such as planning, managing time, finding a suitable place to work, and motivating themselves.

Some critics claim that homework does not improve study skills, promote self-discipline and responsibility (Kohn, 2007), or enhance students’ academic achievement (Kralovec & Buell, 2005). However, meta-analytic studies reveal that the standardized mean differences on tests between students who completed homework versus those who did not ranged from $r = .39$ to $r = .97$, implying a positive relationship between homework and achievement (Cooper et al., 2006).

In addition to its effect on academic achievement, homework provides students with opportunities to engage in a range of self-regulation processes. A longitudinal study with fifth-grade students showed that doing homework fosters self-regulation skills and reading achievement (Xu, Benson, Murdery-Camino, & Steiner, 2010). Although teachers set goals and expectations for homework, students must independently complete homework by practicing self-regulatory behaviours such as planning, inhibiting distractions, persisting at difficult assignments, organizing the environment, overcoming unwanted emotions, and reflecting on what they have learned (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005; Xu, 2008). Children who complete homework outside of school often develop an aptitude for academic work through extra practice and are responsible for regulating their behaviour (Corno, 2000), making homework a classic form of self-regulated learning (Trautiwein & Koller, 2003).

Therefore, Homework is defined as tasks assigned to students by school teachers that are intended to be carried out during the non-school hours. It is generally regarded as school work formally assigned to the student, for its completion outside the school time. And this work must be done at home by students, which will help them to learn and prepare for what are being studied at the school.

The basic purpose of assigning homework to students is 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 drill or grind work, designed to take up children’s time, without offering tangible benefit. Homework may be designed to reinforce what students have already learned, 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 participate in their children’s education.

Homework is a cost-effective instructional technique. It can have positive effects on achievement and character development and can serve as vital link between the school and family. Homework also has different purposes at different grades. For older students, it is to facilitate knowledge acquisition in specific topics. Homework is required at all grade levels, but a mixture of mandatory and voluntary homework is most beneficial.

Rationale of the study

As the standard of education is increasing day-by-day, there is greater pressure of higher performance at the secondary level. So for the secondary students, more time spent on homework is associated with higher level of achievement. But there is certainly a limit beyond which it is counterproductive. From the analysis of HSC result in Bhubaneswar, Odisha it has been observed that the performance of the students of the Government school is not as good as the private school because most of the students come from a low socio economic background and neither the teacher nor the students bother about their studies. It is also seen that majority of the students drop their school out of fear of studies. But the results of private schools are comparatively better than the government schools. Here the teachers take interest in their students and the students show that they are equally worthy of their teachers' trust. In both the government and private schools homework has been given to the students, and whether boys are more sincere or girls are more sincere in completing their daily homework is to be found out.

Sometimes we find that homework hampers the mental condition of the students. They are so overburdened by their home assignment that they rarely find any time to play outside with their friends. Most of the time, they used to complete their assignment out of fear of being punished by the teacher. This leads to the downfall of their health condition and these students fear to attend the regular classes in the school. In most of the cases this home assignment discriminates between the good students and the poor students. The good student does his homework properly whereas a poor child fails to do so. So, here questions arise like – how do the students take / perceive home assignments ? Do they like it ? Do they enjoy it ? Do they take it in a positive way ? And does it affect their normal routine life ? How much homework is appropriate ? What kind of homework is most effective ? Who is responsible for monitoring the homework ? And at what age level is homework a useful learning tool ? All these above questions need a thorough investigation for which the researcher has chosen such a topic – “OPINION OF GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECONDARY LEVEL STUDENTS TOWARDS HOMEWORK – A COMPARATIVE STUDY”

Objectives of the study

- To study the opinion of secondary level students towards homework.
- To compare the opinion of Government and Private Secondary level students towards homework.
- To compare the opinion of boys and girls of secondary schools towards homework.

Hypotheses of the study

- There is no significant difference in the opinion of the government and private school students towards homework at secondary level.
- There is no significant difference in the opinion of girls and boys towards homework at secondary level.

Delimitation of the study

The present study was delimited to science homework of Class IX students from both Government and private secondary schools of Bhubaneswar town, Odisha.

Operational definition of key terms

Homework - Homework is defined as tasks assigned to students by school teachers that are intended to be carried out during the non-school hours.

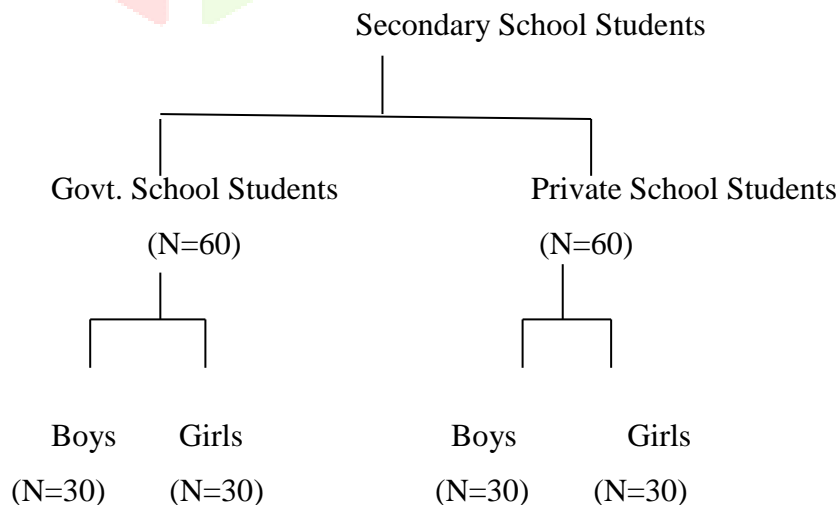
Opinion- Opinion refers to any report on what a person thinks about something based on personal judgment rather than actual facts.

The Method of study

The investigator adopted “Survey method” for the present study.

Sample

A sample of 120 Class IX students, 60 boys and 60 girls was selected randomly from 3 government and 3 private schools.



Tool

A well structured opinionnaire, consisting of 25 items was prepared and administered to collect data for the present study.

Procedure of data collection and scoring

The investigator prepared an opinionnaire and administered the same among the sample of secondary school students by personal visits for the collection of data. The opinionnaires were collected, organized, recorded and scored item wise. For scoring purpose, each positive response carried 3,2,1 for agree, undecided and disagree respectively and vice-versa.

Analysis and interpretation

The data collected were analyzed and interpreted in terms of rejection and acceptance of null hypothesis. The mean, S.D. and 't' test were computed by the investigator for statistical analysis.

Comparative analysis of Government and Private School Students towards homework:

Table – 1

Types of School	N	M	SD	SEd	t
Government	60	65.366	4.167	0.92	2.70
Private	60	63.366	5.896		

One of the objectives of the present study was to compare the opinion of Government and Private Secondary level students towards homework. And to find out the answer to this objective a null hypothesis was formulated i.e. there is no significant difference in the opinion of the Government and Private School students towards home work at secondary level. Table-1 shows that the mean score of 9th Class Government school students and Private School students are 65.366 and 63.366 and Standard deviation values are 4.167 and 5.896 respectively. From the above table it was found out that the 't' value 2.70 with degree of freedom 118 is significant at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. This value exceeds 1.98 and also 2.62 So, the value is significant at both the levels of significance. Hence the hypothesis formulated earlier, there is no significant difference in the opinion of the government and private school students towards homework at secondary level is rejected. It infers that both government and private school students do not have same kind of opinion towards homework at secondary level. Hence, the government school students have more positive opinion towards homework than the private school students.

Comparative analysis of Boys and Girls on their opinion on homework:

Table – 2

Sex	N	M	SD	SEd	t
Girls	60	64.40	4.127	0.94	0.070
Boys	60	63.33	6.090		

The second objective of the present study was to compare the opinion of Boys and Girls of secondary level students towards homework. And to find out the answer to this objective a null hypothesis was formulated i.e. there is no significant difference in the opinion of the boys and girls towards homework at secondary level. Table-2 shows that the mean score of 9th class Girls and Boys are 64.40 and 64.33 and Standard deviation values are 4.127 and 6.090 respectively. From the above table it was found out that the ‘t’ value 0.070 with degree of freedom 118 is not significant at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. This value is lower than 1.98 and also 2.62. Hence the hypothesis formulated earlier, there is no significant difference in the opinion of the boys and girls towards homework at secondary level is accepted and not rejected at any level of significance. It infers that both boys and girls do have the same kind of opinion towards homework at secondary level. It may be statistically interpreted that there is no significant difference between the two groups; Girls and Boys of Government and Private School towards homework.

Major findings

- Both government and private school students do not have same kind of opinion towards homework at secondary level. Hence, the government school students have more positive opinion towards homework than the private school students.
- Both boys and girls do have the same kind of opinion towards homework at secondary level.

Educational Implications

- Homework assigned to the students by the school teachers that are intended to be carried out during the non-school hours is of great value. Hence, homework must be given to students at secondary level.
- Homework at this level will also give social experience and creative activities among students. Hence, it must be given to accelerate knowledge acquisition.
- Varied, challenging and differentiated homework should be included to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Science homework will develop scientific attitude and temperament of the students.
- It will intrinsically motivate the science students and develop their interest towards science and love for the subject.
- It will make them sincere and regular.

- Eagerness towards the subject will also be developed.
- Homework will serve to tie the school more closely with home.
- It is in general, an important pupil activity which contributes to the educative process.
- It takes the form of additional practice and improves the depth of knowledge in the subject.

Conclusion

The scenario in the 21st century promises a more demanding and visible role for all the teachers and also students in particular. To succeed amidst the intensive, accelerating global competition, students need to strive for world class standard of excellence.

Homework aids to practise, retain what is learned, thus reinforces learning. Homework is becoming a routine part of the kindergarten experience. It should also be a routine affair of the Science students at secondary level. As the standard of education is increasing day by day and there is greater pressure of higher performance at the secondary level, so homework must be regularly assigned to the secondary science students in order to make effective time management. However, to make homework an impactful practice for students, the amount and the type of homework are to be worked out rigorously by the teachers.

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