

Homework Assignment and Assessment Practices in Grade-1 in Public Schools

Ahmad Bilal Cheema*
Mushtaq Ahmad**
Farah Shafiq***

Abstract

This quantitative survey study tends to explore the current homework assignment and assessment practices by teachers in Pakistan. It studied their perceptions regarding importance of homework, purposes of assigning homework besides the nature of homework assigned and the types of feedback strategies adopted for homework assessment. The sample was the 100 (57 females, 43 male) junior school teachers from 08 public schools and 275 (125 males, 150 female) students of 1st class of Sargodha. Two research instruments Teachers' questionnaire regarding homework practices and Homework assessment analysis checklist, were developed and used on the bases of four factors planning, assigning, feedback and advantages of homework. It was concluded that the female teachers were better in planning, assigning and evaluation of homework than the male teachers. Data obtained from checklist revealed that majority of the teachers did not focus on written comments, correction of mistakes and subject relevant comments. Most of the teachers' assigned revision based homework and did not focus on other higher purposes of assigning homework.

Keywords: Homework, perception of teachers. Feedback, Junior Classes

* Assistant Professor, Department of Education; University of Sargodha.
Email: ahmad.bilal@uos.edu.pk

** Assistant Professor, Department of Education; University of Sargodha.
Email: mushtaq.ahmad@uos.edu.pk

*** Assistant Professor of Education, University of Education Lahore, Township
Campus. Email: farah.shafiq@ue.edu.pk

Introduction

Assigning and marking of homework is an essential and regular component of instructional process at all grades (Cooper & Valentine 2001; Rosário et al., 2019). It is thought that good schools and good teachers give homework. Assigning of homework is the common school activity cross all the societies and grades (Cooper 1989; Warton 2001). Those schools are considered successful where assigning and assessing of homework is a part of teacher routine work. (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001). The research revealed that the private schools are considered successful because of two major reasons, i.e good discipline and provision of continuous homework assignments (Coleman, Hoffer, & Kilgore 1982).

Homework is viewed as a powerful instructional device to enhance the academic achievement of normal and at risk students and to widen the school activities of the student into the home and society (Sayers, Petersson, Marschall, & Andrews, 2020). Homework provides the opportunity to parents, teacher and society to be connected with each other. (Warton, 2001; Westlund, 2007; Brock, Lapp, Flood, Fisher, & Han, 2007). Early Childhood education is demanding domain of formal education by ensuring its access and quality and research in its contributive factors (Ahmad, 2011). Homework is the issue of research in western countries from many decades but in Pakistan this area of research is needed to be explored. In spite of that a large amount of resources are spent on homework completion in term of time and money and both the teacher and students are overburdened to complete and correct the homework.

Teachers consider the different purposes of designing and assigning of homework, however it is revealed from the research that there are two main purposes of homework e.g. instructional purpose and non-instructional purpose. Instructional purposes of assigning homework, mostly focused by teachers for practice and revision (Becker & Epstein, 1982) so that the students can get the mastery of learnt material. It is also assigned for introduction and preparation of lesson that would be discussed in future in the class (Muhlenbruck, Cooper, Nye, & Lindsay, 1999). Another important purpose of assigning homework is that the student can get the chance to apply previously learnt skill to the new situation or to solve real life problem and making them accountable (Farrell & Danby, 2015). Purpose of extension assignment is to develop higher order thinking skill in students and related to application of previously learnt knowledge (Lee & Pruitt, 1979).

Non instructional purpose of homework is to provide the opportunity that society, school and parents could be connected with each other by

homework (Bailey, 2006; Balli, Demo, & Wedman, 1998; Epstein, Simon, & Salinas, 1997; Gonzalez, Andrade, Civil, & Moll, 2001; Scott-Jones, 1995; Van Voorhis, 2003). Teacher assigned homework because it is the part of school policy (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow, 1995) and to give punishment to students (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Xu & Corno, 1998). Involvement of parents in learning process of their children is another objective of assigning homework. (Coleman, Hoffer, & Kilgore, 1982; Corno, 1996). Sense of responsibility, discipline and good study habit could be developed in students by regular assigning and marking of homework (Cooper & Valentine 2001). All these purposes provide the student opportunities to foster their self-discipline and learning skills.

Researches show the gap in the field of homework, especially in relation to assessment (Black & Wiliam 2009; Hattie & Timperley 2007). Various research findings point to the importance of exploring the quality of homework assignments (Liang 2010; Osterlind, 2001). So it is the need of time to conduct the research on assigning and grading of homework (Natriello & McDill, 1986; Trautwein, Ludtke, Schnyder, & Niggli 2006). The research needs to explore perceptions of students and teachers about prevailing practices of assigning and evaluating of homework. It is also needed to explore how the teachers monitor the homework assignments and which methods they used for feedback provision (Hassan, 2012), even when they are culturally influenced in early classes (Sayers et al., 2020).

It will help to open the ‘black box’ of homework and help to make homework more useful in policy and practice (Epstein & Van Voorhis 2001).

The growing interest among researchers about how to use assessment to enhance students’ learning as well as to improve instruction (Sadler 1989; Black & Wiliam 2009; Hattie & Timperley 2007) provides context for this research on the evaluation of homework. If the teachers monitor and provide consistence, constructive and timely feedback the students become motivated and show more interest and willingness to do homework (Natriello & McDill, 1986; Trautwein et ai., 2006). Similarly, Trautwein et al., (2006) further described that teachers’ monitoring of homework assignment during their completion increases the level of student’s effort. But it demands extensive amount of time and effort from the teachers and many teachers are not interested in doing detailed evaluation. A skillful and affective teacher is needed to design useful assignment and provision of specific and constructive feedback and proper marking and reviewing of homework (Cooper & Nye, 1994; Epstein, Polloway & Patton, 1997; Heller; Mims, Harper, Armstrong, & Savage, 1991; Swanson, 1992). Homework assignment would be more beneficial

for the students only if it includes useful teachers' remarks during assessment on all assignments instead of a grade or check mark (Cooper & Valentine 2001; Vatterott, 2009). A research of Paschal, Weinstein, and Walberg (1984) revealed that written comments of teachers on homework assignment encourage the students to pay extra interest and efforts on homework assignment and ultimately that could foster the academic achievements. Designing a home work which caters students' needs demands the professional skills for which special training are recommended which are directed to the teachers understanding of theoretical models homework assignment and evaluation, besides developing their self-efficacy in developing quality homework (Rosário et al., 2019).

The research explores the teachers' perceptions regarding homework assignment and assessment practices in Pakistan. It compares whether the teachers' opinion regarding assigning and assessment of the homework are in lined with practices in our public schools. The results of this research may contribute for effective planning and designing of the homework and all the stakeholders (e.g. students, teachers and parents) know the worth of well-planned and well-designed homework assignment on students' achievement and learning. In addition to that, the research provided teachers with a list of recommendations based on best practices to incorporate constructive and affective feedback strategies while checking and evaluating the homework assignment that may enable them take proper steps to improve the quality of homework assignment and its assessment in primary and elementary schools.

In Pakistan, homework assignment and assessment has been a neglected area of research. So the issues that are related to current homework practices in Pakistan like opinions of teachers on homework, what are the purposes of assigning homework and which type of feedback strategies adopted by teachers for homework assessment. Educational structure of all public school in in all district in Punjab and being centrally administered. Hence the perception of students about the level of teachers' involvement in planning and assigning of homework, what type of feedback offered by teachers during assessment of homework are needed for grade 1 Students of Public Primary school in district Sargodha, Punjab Pakistan.

Objectives

The objectives of this research were

1. To explore what are the current practices of teachers in public primary schools regarding the assignment and assessment of homework in district Sargodha. Punjab.
2. To find out the feedback strategies adopted by teachers during assessment of homework.

Due to time and financial constraints, the study was delimited to homework of English and Science of students of 1st grade of Government Primary schools situated in Sargodha.

Research Methodology

Basically it was a survey research. To explore the assignment and evaluation practices of homework two instruments were developed.

- Teachers Questionnaire regarding homework practices
- Homework Assessment Analysis Checklist

Population and Sampling

Accessible Population of the study included all the government primary school teachers teaching 1st grades in Sargodha City. Multistage sampling was used; at the first stage, 8 (4 Boys and 4 Girls) schools were conveniently selected on the basis of willingness by head teachers to participate in the study. Secondly, the available 100 teachers including 43 males and 57 females of the 1st and 2nd classes were randomly selected for data collection. At third stage the notebooks of science and English subjects of were collected from the classes of selected teachers to explore the assessment of homework. The total sample was 100 teachers that contained female and male teachers of 1st grade classes and 275 notebooks of science and English subjects were analyzed by the researcher.

Instruments of Study

Due to unavailability of appropriate instrument for assessment of homework in the context of Pakistani schools, two research instruments were developed after reviewing the literature; one was questionnaire for homework practices of junior teachers and other was a checklist for students' homework assessment analysis. The questionnaire for teachers

was developed in English and Urdu including the factors; planning of homework, assigning of homework, type of teacher feedback about homework and benefits of homework. The questionnaire contained 29 items, 9 items were for the planning of homework, 3 items for assigning homework, 9 items for type of teacher's feedback about homework and 8 items for benefits of homework. Each item consisted of a stem with scale responses; items 1 to 20 based on five-point rating responses i.e. never to always while items 21 to 27 were based on Likert scale responses from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The reason for this difference is that some items were opinion based and some were behaviour based.

The second tool was the Homework Assessment Analysis Checklist which contained rubrics to explain the criteria for assessment of homework assignment, checking of written work in class and quality of feedback. This checklist contained total 17 items. First three items based upon Yes/ No responses and items from 4 to 17 were based upon the most of the time (2 to 3 times in a week), sometime (2 to 3 times in 15 days) and almost none (2 to 3 times in a month). Both the instruments were validated through five educationists having PhD in Education with experience of ECE area for face and construct validity. The questionnaire was piloted on 50 teachers and 67 notebooks were observed for pilot testing. The reliability Coefficient Chronbach Alpha of questionnaire was 0.84 which was good.

Data Collection

The data were collected through personal visits to 08 selected schools of Sargodha city. Respondents were briefed about research and conveyed that all the collected information will only be used for research purposes only. One hundred (100) teachers took part in the study and after obtaining the informed consent their personal information was obtained through demographic data sheet.

To fill the homework assessment analysis checklist, the researcher collected 25 to 30 percent copies the science and English notebooks in equal ratio from each class. Every notebook was observed personally by the researcher and checklist was filled according to the observation list of notebook.

Data collected through research tools e.g. Teachers' questionnaire regarding homework practices and students' homework assessment analysis checklist were tabulated and analyzed by using mean, median, SD, t-test, ANOVA, Post Hoc, and Chi-Square.

Data Analysis and Results

Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

The data obtained from questionnaire of teachers regarding homework practices were treated statistically by calculating the means of all variables.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' Questionnaire

Questions	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Planning of Homework	Weighted Mean=			3.2
You assign homework so that;				
Students revise material covered in class.	1	5	4.66	.622
Students may practice the skill learnt in school.	1	5	4.27	.632
Students memorize and retain information.	2	5	4.39	.658
Students prepare for future lesson.	1	5	2.64	.943
Students learn to collaborate with one another.	1	5	2.64	.962
You explain the purpose of homework to students.	1	5	3.13	1.08
Plan homework according to individual needs of students.	1	5	2.7	1.19
Plan homework according to learning styles of students.	1	5	2.25	1.21
Questions	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Your teacher relates homework directly to the learning goals.	1	5	2.86	1.41
Assigning Homework	Weighted Mean=			3.9
You assign homework to punish students.	1	5	3.79	.911
You assign homework because it is the part of school policy.	1	5	4.05	.888
You assign verbal homework.	1	5	4.71	.615
Questions	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Feedback about homework	Weighted Mean=			3.8
You focus on following aspect in homework checking;				
You mark the homework in the same day.	1	5	4.04	.925
You provide feedback to students.	1	5	3.23	.843
You provide students written comment on their homework.	2	5	3.10	.818
You provide students verbal comment on their homework.	2	5	3.17	.913
Yu discuss assigned homework to all students.	1	5	2.42	1.10
You count assigned homework in final grade of the students.	1	5	1.85	1.52
You focus on correction in your feedback.	1	5	3.92	.846

Questions	Min	Max	Mean	SD
You focus on quality in your feedback.	1	5	3.63	1.02
You keep the record of verbal homework.	1	5	1.33	1.06
Advantages of Homework	Weighted Mean=			3.4
What are the perceived advantages of homework:				
Homework helps students to develop good study habit.	3	5	4.75	.44
Homework helps students to develop time management skill.	2	5	4.60	.54
Homework develops sense of responsibility in students.	3	5	4.50	.52
Homework helps students to learn to work independently.	1	5	4.41	.64
Homework helps students to develop good discipline.	3	5	4.40	.57
Homework helps students to develop higher order thinking skill.	1	5	4.30	.69
Homework helps students to attain higher academic scores.	1	5	4.42	.61
Homework helps students to realize that learning happens outside the school.	1	5	4.25	.67

Table shows the mean score and SD of responses on items or questions of the teachers' questionnaire. Teachers perceive that they were doing their best in planning of homework (mean=4.1). The mean values of each items showed that the teacher were very optimistic and perceived that they were fulfilling all the purposes about of homework planning. The mean value (4.42, 4.2 & 4.43) showed that teacher planned homework for the revision, practice and memorization. The mean value (4.04 & 4.21) showed that the teachers designed homework according to individual needs and learning styles of students. The mean value of the variable assigning of homework (mean=3.9) that was considerably lower than the mean value of planning of homework. However, it also shows the good perception of teachers regarding their role in assigning homework.

As for the feedback about homework concerned, mean=3.7 shows that the teachers perceived that they were adopting good feedback strategies in assessment and evaluation of homework. The mean values (3.8, 3.7, 4.1 & 4.3) show the written comments, verbal comment, correction of mistakes and quality of homework were the main focus of teachers while providing the feedback. The mean values regarding the factor advantages of homework, mean=4.35 reveal that the teachers perceived homework act as a powerful tool to develop study habit (Mean=4.42), time management skill (Mean=4.36), sense of responsibility (Mean=4.35), discipline (Mean=4.35) and higher order thinking skills (Mean=4.20) in students.

Demographic Differentiation on Teachers' Questionnaire Regarding Homework Practices and Gender

Table 2

Comparison of mean scores of male and female Teachers Regarding Homework Practices

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P
Male	43	111.98	12.99	98	3.22	.002
Female	57	119.61	10.69			

Table 2 shows a significant difference between mean scores of male and female teachers regarding homework practices ($t = 3.22$ with $df = 98$ and $p = .002$). It can be concluded that female teachers (mean=119.61, $SD = 10.69$) had significantly better perceptions regarding homework practices than male teachers (mean = 111.98, $SD = 12.99$).

Gender based factor wise demographic Differentiation on Teachers Questionnaire

Independent sample t- test was applied to compare the value of mean scores of difference of male and female teachers regarding the factor - planning of homework.

Table 3

Comparison of mean score of male and female teachers regarding all the factors

Factors	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P
Planning of homework	Male	43	34.97	4.76	98	3.90	.000
	Female	57	38.54	4.34			
Assigning homework	Male	43	15.09	2.72	98	2.29	.024
	Female	57	16.14	1.86			
Feedback about homework	Male	43	32.67	5.87	98	1.99	.049
	Female	57	34.93	5.38			
Benefits of homework	Male	43	30.16	2.94	98	.96	.337
	Female	57	30.70	2.93			

Table 3 shows that there was significant difference between mean scores of male and female teachers regarding the factor-planning of homework ($t = 3.90$, $df = 98$, $p = .000$). It is evident that female teachers (mean=38.54, $SD = 4.34$) have significantly better perceptions about planning of homework than male teachers (mean=34.90, $SD = 4.76$).

Table also shows that there was significant difference between mean scores of male and female teachers regarding the factor -Assigning of Homework ($t = 2.29$ with $df = 98$, p -value .024). It is clear that the female teachers (mean=16.14, $SD = 2.715$) showed better perception than male teachers (mean=15.09, $SD = 1.85$) regarding assigning homework. There was significant difference between mean scores of male and female teachers regarding the factor -feedback about homework ($t = 1.99$, $df = 98$, $p = .049$). It can be concluded that female teachers (mean =34.93, $SD = 5.381$) showed better scores than male teachers (mean=32.67, $SD = 5.87$).

Table also shows that there was significant difference between mean scores of male and female teachers regarding the factor -advantages of homework ($t = .96$, $df = 98$, $p = .337$) and it is clear that both male and female teachers did not differ significantly on their perceptions about planning of homework.

Table 4

One-way ANOVA to differentiate homework practices of the teachers having different qualification

Sources of Variance	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig
Between Groups	601.95	7	100.32	.651	.689
Within Groups	14322.16	93	154.00		

Result in table 4 demonstrates that the analysis of variance reveals non significance difference with respect to different qualification of teachers regarding homework practices ($F = .651$, $p = .689$). So, the teachers having different qualification level were not significantly different in their mean score regarding homework practices.

Table 5

One-way ANOVA to differentiate homework practices of the teachers with varied duration of teaching experience

Sources of Variance	SS	df	MS	F	Sig
Between Groups	1840.76	7	368.16	2.622	.029
Within Groups	12497.91	93	140.42		

Result in table 5 reflects that the analysis of variance reveals significance difference with respect to experience of teachers questionnaire regarding homework practices ($F = 2.622$, $sig = .029$). To further explore variations in home work practices that are associated with duration of teaching experience, Least Significant Difference (LSD) as post hoc test was applied.

Table 6
Post hoc test for one-way ANOVA for difference of duration of teacher professional experience of teachers regarding homework practices

(I) level	(J) level	Mean Difference	SE	Sig
20 years	5 years	11.16	4.56	.016
	10 years	17.04	5.06	.001
	15 years	9.4	4.27	.031
25 years	10 years	9.44	4.56	.041
	30 years	10.71	4.99	.035

Table 6 shows only that results in which there are significant difference among the scores in homework practices of the teachers having different years of teaching experience. The teachers having 20 years' experience had significantly better scores on perceptions about homework practices than the teachers having 5, 10 and 15 years' experience. The teachers having 25 years' experience had significantly better perception than the teachers having 10 years of teaching experience. Whereas the teachers having 30 years' experience had significantly better perception than the teachers having 10 years of teaching experience.

Analysis of Check list data

Table 7
Descriptive analysis of responses on notebook formation for Homework assignment

	Yes (percentage)	No (percentage)
Formation of Home Work on note books	273 (99.3%)	2 (0.7%)
Homework checked by teacher	271 98.5	2 (0.7%)
Cross verification	41 (14.9%)	234 (85.1%)

Table 7 shows the findings of the observation of notebooks that 99 % of the assigned homework was written on notebooks. It means that the formation of notebook for completion of assigned homework is common school activity. The cross verification of homework occurred 14% by head teachers or other appointed teachers, 85% of homework is not cross

verified by head teachers, 99% homework is checked by the teacher themselves only .7% of homework is checked by someone else i.e., class fellows, monitor etc.

Table 8
Descriptive analysis of correction of mistakes in homework

Factors	Most of the time f / %	Sometime f / %	Almost none f / %	Total f / %
mistakes in homework	74 (26.9%)	62 (22.5%)	139 (50.5%)	275 (100%)
maintenance of layout	189 (68.7%)	66 (24%)	20 (7.3%)	275 (100%)
mentioning complete and incomplete	9 (3.3%)	37 (13.5%)	229 (83%)	275 (100%)
Ideas and Components of Homework	151 (55%)	93 (33.8%)	31 (11.3%)	275 (100%)
feedback and written comments	35 (12.7%)	125 (45.5%)	115 (41.8%)	275 (100%)
subject relevant comments	1 (.4%)	39 (14.2%)	235 (85.2%)	275 (100%)
Comments of Praise	44 (16%)	119 (43.3%)	111 (40.4%)	275 (100%)
Punishment homework	4 (1.5%)	21 (7.6%)	250 (90.5%)	275 (100%)
Revision based homework	243 (88.4%)	29 (10.5%)	3 (1.1%)	275 (100%)
Creativity Based Innovative Homework	2 (.7%)	165 (60%)	108 (39.3%)	275 (100%)
Practice skill to life use	1 (.4%)	40 (14.5%)	234 (84.7%)	275 (100%)
comments for the parents	12 (4.4%)	16 (5.8%)	247 (89.6%)	275 (100%)
Frequency of homework	141 (51.3%)	89 (32.4%)	45 (16.4%)	275 (100%)
Teacher provided activity or material	7 (2.5%)	12 (4.4%)	256 (93.1%)	275 (100%)

Table 8 shows that 51% of the teachers never focused on the correction of mistakes. 22% of the teachers some time focused on the correction of mistakes. Its mean only ¼ of teachers were doing this practice in public schools. 26% of the teachers most of the time focused on the correction of mistakes. These results show that the correction of mistakes in homework is neglected issue in public schools of Pakistan.

Result presented in the table shows that the 68% students focused maintenance of layout (Date, Headings, Margin, and Handwriting) of homework most of the time. The 24% students focused maintenance of layout of homework some of the time. The 7% students never focused on maintenance of layout of homework.

This table explains that 83% of teachers do not mention homework being complete or incomplete this activity is performed most of the time only by 3% of teachers. 13% of teachers do this sometimes.

Result of the above table shows that ideas and component of homework which is actually related to the organization and logical sequence of homework, was the focus of 55 % of students most of the time. 34 % of students focused on this some of the times. 12 % of students almost do not focused at this aspect.

The results presented in the table shows that only 12% of teachers focused on feedback and written comments most of the time while checking and assessing homework. 45% of teachers focused on feedback and written comments some of the time while 41% of teachers never focused on feedback and written comments.

The results presented in the table shows that only 0.4% of teachers focused on subject relevant comments most of the time while checking and assessing homework. 14% of teachers focused on subject relevant comments some of the times. 85% of teachers never focused on subject relevant comments.

The results presented in the table shows that only 0.4% of teachers wrote comments of praising most of the times while checking and assessing homework. 14% of teachers wrote comments of praising some of the times and 85% of teachers never wrote comments of praising.

The table shows that only 1.5 % of teachers assigned homework for the purpose of punishment most of the times. 7.6% of teachers assigned homework for the purpose of punishment some of the times. 90.5% of teachers never assigned homework for the purpose of punishment.

The table shows that 88.4 % of teachers assigned homework for the purpose of revision of class work most of the times. 10.5 % of teachers sometimes assigned homework for the purpose of revision of class work.

1.1% of teachers never assigned homework for the purpose of revision of class work.

Above table shows that creativity based innovative homework is assigned most of the time by .7 % of teachers. By 60% of teachers assign such type of homework some of the time. By 39.3 % of teachers never assign such type of homework.

The results of the table showed that 0.4 % of teachers assigned homework for the purpose to practice skill to life use most of the time. 14.6 % of teachers sometimes assigned homework for the purpose to practice skills for life use. 84.7% of teachers never assigned homework for the purpose to practice skills for life use.

Above table shows that only 4.4% of teachers wrote comments for the parents most of the times in a week while checking and assessing homework. 5.8% of teachers sometime wrote comments for the parents. 89.5% of teachers never wrote comments for the parents.

The result of the above table shows that only 51.3 % of teachers assigned homework most of the times. 32.4% of teachers sometime assigned homework. 16.4% of teachers never assigned homework.

Above table shows that only 2.5% of teachers most of the times provided activity or material for homework assignment. 4.4% of teachers sometime provided activity or material for homework. 93.1% of teachers never provided activity or material for homework.

Gender based difference in notebooks assessment

In order to find out the differences among males and females teachers in notebooks evaluation and assessment chi-square was computed. The participants were divided into two groups on the basis of demographic variables of gender (male n = 134 and female n = 141). Responses were in the form of frequency of four categories. All the notebooks were divided into two groups on the bases of teacher gender (male and female).

Table 9
Gender based differences in notebooks assessment

Variables	Male			Female		Chi Squ	df	sig
	Most of the Time	Some of the Time	Almost None	Most of the Time	Some Time			
Correction of mistakes	15	33	86	59	29	53	34.09	2 .000
Maintenance of layout	77	38	19	112	28	01	24.03	2 .000
Mentioning of completion or incomplete	4	26	103	5	11	125	8.09	2 .018
Ideas component of homework	61	48	25	90	45	06	17.14	2 .000
Feedback/ Written comments	16	65	53	19	60	62	.984	2 .611
Subject relevant comment	0	14	119	1	25	115	3.94	2 .139
Praising	21	53	59	23	66	52	1.72	2 .423
Punishing	2	9	122	2	12	127	.296	2 .863
Homework a revision of class work	119	12	3	124	17	0	3.79	2 .150
Creativity based innovative homework	0	55	79	2	110	29	43.33	2 .000
Practice Skill	1	15	117	0	25	116	3.27	2 .195
Comments for the parents	10	16	108	2	0	138	24.87	2 .000
Frequency of homework	53	52	29	88	37	16	14.80	2 .001
T teacher provided activity or material for homework	7	5	122	0	7	134	7.723	2 .021

Above table 9 shows there was a significant difference between male and female teachers in assessment and evaluation of notebooks with respect to correction of mistakes (R4), maintenance of layout (R5), mentioning of completion or incomplete (R6), Ideas Component of Homework (R7), Creativity based Innovative Homework (R13), Comments for the parents (R15), Frequency of Homework (R16) and Teacher provided Activity or Material for Homework (R17). These results also showed that female teachers had high score on these variables as compared to male teachers. The female teachers as compared to male teachers were showing better performance in notebooks' checking and marking.

While there was no significant difference between male and female teachers with respect to assessment and evaluation of notebooks, with respect to Notebook formation for homework assignment (R1), cross verification by other teachers or head teachers (R2), homework checked by teacher or someone else (R3), feedback written comments (R8), subject relevant comments (R9), comments of punishing (R10), comments of praising (R11), homework revision of class work (R12) and practice skills for life use (R14).

Conclusion

Following conclusion was drawn on the bases of findings about homework assignment and assessment practices from 100 teachers from 08 public primary school and 275 notebooks of grade 1 students through teachers' questionnaire and observation of notebooks.

Planning of homework refers to the different teachers' purposes of assigning homework. Teachers perceive that they are doing their best in planning of homework. Contrary to these findings is it was revealed from notebooks' observation that mostly the teachers assigned revision based homework and that is not creativity based and did not focus on other higher level purposes of homework.

Teachers perceive that they are doing their best regarding the feedback about homework such that marking or evaluating on same day, give written and verbal comments, follow the corrections mentioned and focusing of quality. But mismatch was found in notebooks observation that revealed only small percentage of teacher provided feedback in a routine like comments of praising and only few teachers wrote subject relevant comments and comments for parents on notebook to involve them in teaching and learning process.

Benefits of homework refer to the perceived benefits of homework. They believed that homework provides the opportunity to develop study habit, time management skill, sense of responsibility, discipline and higher order thinking skills in students.

The perception of female teachers is better than the perception of male teachers regarding homework practices. The qualification of teachers did not affect the perceptions of teachers regarding homework practices. The teachers with more years of experience were better in the planning and assigning than teacher with less experience.

Conclusions were drawn through notebooks' observation. As for the purpose of assigning homework concerned, most of the teachers assigned revision based homework. Very Few teachers assigned creativity based innovative homework. Most of the teachers did not assign homework to practice skills for life use or to apply knowledge in real life problem solving situation. The teachers did not provide activity or material for homework completion at all. The performance of female teachers was better than the male teachers in notebooks' assessment and evaluation.

Discussion

The study concluded that teachers in Pakistani schools perceived homework as an important tool for revision, memorization and practice of learned concepts and skills. They also assign homework for developing study habit, time management skill, sense of responsibility, discipline, higher order thinking skills and attainment of good scores. This aspect is supported by Cooper (1998).

It was a finding from notebook observation that mostly teachers, assigned revision based homework. It is also supported by the Becker & Epstein (1982) who stated that elementary level teacher assigned homework to practice skill learnt in class. Only few teachers assigned creativity based innovative homework few times in a month. Most of the teachers did not assign homework to practice skill to life use or to apply knowledge in real life problem solving situation. These findings are consistent with previous research of Muhlenbruck, et al., (1999)

The study also showed that the teachers did not designed homework according to individual needs and learning styles of students. These findings were supported by the previous studies (Cameron & Bartle, 2009; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler & Burow, 1995) who narrated, that elementary level teachers mostly used traditional strategies of homework planning and assessment and did not change their practice. The formation of notebooks

for homework assignment was a common school activity, which might be done by majority of teacher not because of its benefits but due to the fact that assigning of homework is the part of school policy (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1995) and teachers are assessed on the bases of homework assignments and evaluation practices by their administrator.

This study concluded that female teachers were more proficient than male teachers in planning, designing of homework assignment and in homework assessment. The qualification of teachers did not affect the homework practices (planning, assigning and feedback). However, the length of teaching experience of teacher affected the homework practices. The reason may be, that the training and experience provided in teaching years leave an opportunity for the teachers to incorporate or experiment new strategies in homework planning, assigning and assessment.

The teachers claimed for timely assessment and focus on quality of homework through correction of mistakes, giving written and verbal feedback but the result of notebook observation reflected that feedback on the homework was ignored area by the teachers (Cunha et al., 2018), mostly teacher did not focus on correction while grading and checking the homework. And did not pay much attention to write comments of feedback (comments of praising, punishing, parents' connection, subject relevance) on notebooks of students. Researches of Cooper & Nye, (1994); Epstein, et al., (1993); Heller, Spooner, Anderson, & Mims (1988); Mims, et al., (1991); Swanson (1992) reflected that teachers should be efficient in formation of effective assignment, timely review, and suitable feedback and grading of assignment. For this purpose, in-service training programs are needed to get maximum benefits from the homework assignment and assessment practices. Introduction on new methods and innovation in feedback strategies is the professional need for teachers (Polloway, Epstein, Bursuck, Jayanthi, & Nelsonn, 1996) to bridge the gap between achieved goal and intended outcomes (Black and Wiliam 2009; Hattie and Timperley 2007). On the whole it is found that, it is need of the hour to redesign early childhood education from passive learners' role to being active and thinking child with holistic development which can be carried out through assignment of practical activities and following the corrections for quality feedback by the teachers (Khan, 2018).

Recommendation

Following recommendations were drawn from the findings and conclusions of the study:

1. The research found that the teachers assigned homework that is not well planned and designed, and mostly for the sake of revision and memorization. It is recommended that teachers should assign well-planned and well-designed homework assignment at elementary level so that the students can get maximum benefits of it.
2. The teachers should incorporate constructive and affective feedback strategies while assessing the homework.
3. The curriculum developers and content writers may incorporate the innovative and creativity based homework assignment to apply learnt skill in real life situation in the textbooks and provide hint and clues to the teachers how to assess and evaluate such type of assignment.
4. In-service and pre-service teachers training, may be provided regarding homework assignment and assessment to enhance potential use homework in teaching learning practices.
5. Homework is an important part of the lesson plan, teachers should consider homework innovation and adaptation in lesson planning that may include adaptation in structure of homework (e.g. Provision of various type of assignment, easy to complex) and adaptation in feedback strategies (e.g. comment of praising, comment of punishing, subject relevant comments and comments for parent).
6. Homework Analysis Checklist used in this study has limited items which may restrict the information obtained from notebooks observation. It is recommending to develop rubrics for this purpose by the academic researchers so that the teachers may utilize these rubrics as guideline in homework designing and assessment.
7. Future studies may be conducted on culturally diverse and large sample for more comprehensive and generalized results.

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