

Research Article

INFLUENCE OF PARENTS' SUPERVISION OF HOMEWORK AND ITS INFLUENCE ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF PUPILS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Parents' supervision of their children's homework plays a crucial role in the implementation of a curriculum and academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools. Despite the impotence that may accrue from parental involvement in academic affairs of their children, more than 55% of parents in many countries of the world don't care about what their children's learning after school leading to poor performance of pupils in Primary schools. The purpose of the study was to assess the influence of parents' supervision of homework on academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools. It was based on sequential explanatory research design. It consisted of 300 teachers, 1,210 parents, 75 head teachers and 1,210 pupils drawn from 75 public primary schools. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 230 pupils while purposive sampling technique was used to select 50 parents, 23 head teachers and 90 teachers. Data was collected using; questionnaires, Interview schedules and Focused group discussion guides. The study found out that; Majority of parents don't assist their children with doing homework and lack of adequate supervision of homework play a negative role on the academic achievement of pupils' in public primary schools. The study recommended that; home set rules for homework taking should be encouraged in every home and parents should set aside special rooms for taking and writing homework for their children while doing their private studies at home.

Keywords: Supervision, Homework, Influence, Academic, Achievement.

INTRODUCTION

Homework is generally defined as "tasks assigned to students by school teachers that are intended to be carried out during non-school hours" (Lacina-Gifford and Gifford, 2004). Corno (2010) define homework as the revision of work done in class, to give extra practice and to help the learners to construct their own meaning. Although these definitions are quite clear, the purpose of homework is often questioned. Corno and Xu (2014) prior research shows pupils who develop good homework habits and do more academic learning activities at home are successful at school (Cooper 2014). Homework is also expected to enhance the material learned in class, and to improve pupils understanding of topics. The current study seeks to find out the influence of homework on the academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools. Homework plays a crucial role in the relationship among many parents and their children, because it provides away of "connecting the parent and the child", and for some it is seen as the only contact between parent and child (Solomon, Warin and Lewis, 2012). They further stated that, although such contact can be a highly rewarding experience, it can also be a source of conflict. Muola (2010) found out that, there is low correlation between parental involvement and academic achievement. The researcher explained that the nature of parental involvement given to the child by his parents was important as far as the academic achievement was concerned. Parents who through encouragement pressurized their children by making too high demands may create in them anxiety and fear of failure instead of providing effective morale to do well in academic work (Muola, 2010). Koskei (2012) pointed out that 90.9% of pupils whose parents were involved in education at school scored above average in the standardized scores. Hoosain (2003) examines parental involvement in homework in the ecological context of Chinese families in Hong Kong. It has been well documented that Chinese culture regards education as the most

effective avenue to social and economic advancement and the improvement (Stevenson and Lee, 2010). Chinese school going children general face heavy pressure on academic achievement. Homework comprised of mainly drilling and doing practice, is considered an essential tool for facilitating learning. It is thus not surprising to find that Chinese parents in Hong Kong encourage the use of homework as learning strategy (Education Department and Committee on Home-School Cooperation, 2014). The current study seeks to find out both ecological context and socio-economic context of families in homework. A number of researches have accumulated on parental involvement in education, covering various domains of related to homework practices (Jeynes, 2008, Seginer, 2008). Among them, a modest proportion focuses on homework confirms its relationships to positive pupils' attitude about homework and school learning, pupils' self-perceptions, and effective pupils work habits and self-regulation (Hoover-Dempsey et al, 2011) states that parents may believe that it is important, necessary and permissible for them to be involved in their children's homework. The current study seeks to find out the negative perception of parents about the homework on academic achievement. Ryan (2005) reported that, academic achievement of pupils is more related to having parents who inculcate values at home. This underscores the influence that supervision of homework plays in the implementation of the curriculum hence the need to ensure parents supervise their children's homework, that is the time when parents can find out how their children are progressing with the lessons as well as discipline which is often necessary to make them spend reasonable amount studying. The current study seeks to find out the extent of supervision of parents on homework. Lee and Bowen (2006) demonstrated that, a positive relationship exists between homework supervision and parental involvement and a range of school-related outcomes, including academic achievement, school engagement and socio emotional adjustment (Izzo et al, 2008). At home, parental involvement activities (e.g. checking homework, communicating about school and reading with children) this study did not reveal the methodology used in carrying

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the study, the current study will outline the methodology used and the class that is to be studied. Roth & Samuels (2008) indicated that, the amount of assistance that parents provide decreases even though the amount of homework increases daily through the elementary school grades. Spera (2005) investigated parents helping with evenings studies at home, he found out that, such parents do assist their children with their homework when they believe that it is their duty to do it, when they believe that it will yield a positive effect and when they are being asked for help and he reported that, very few parents do take part in those activities. The current study seeks to concentrate only in grade eight and not any other grade. Ladner (2013) demonstrated that parents' involvement in children's homework was negatively correlated with academic achievement. Hill and Tyson (2009) Researchers interpreted the negative relationship as indicating efforts to provide interventions and help to mainly struggling children (Fan and Chen, 2001). The current study seeks to find out positive homework correlation relationship with academic achievement. Chemogosi (2012) study on parental supervision of pupils' academic progress in Rachuonyo South Sub-County established that 47% of parents sometimes supervised their children as they did their homework. 29% of respondents supervise their children as they do their homework. The academic achievement of such children were good due to effective implementation of the curriculum. It has been revealed that children, whose parents supervise their homework do well in school and are academically motivated hence have interest and positive attitude towards their studies. Therefore, the reviewed studies prompted the current study that was meant to determine parents' supervision of homework and its influence on academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools

Objectives of the Study

The study therefore aimed at assessing the influence of parents' supervision of homework on academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The researcher employed the use of sequential explanatory research design, which combined both qualitative and quantitative models of research so that evidence may be mixed and knowledge increased in a more meaningful manner than either could arrive at alone (Creswell and Plano, 2007). The purpose was to use the qualitative results to further explain and interpret the findings from the quantitative phase. The researcher resolved to use sequential explanatory research design because the design is easy to describe and the results are easy to report and implement because the steps fall into clear separate stages and there is always the option of "minimal integration" where one simply has separate results sections for each method.

Methodology

The study population consisted of 300 teachers, 1,210 parents, 75 head teachers and 1,210 pupils drawn from 75 public primary schools. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 230 pupils while purposive sampling technique was used to select 50 parents, 23 head teachers and 90 teachers. According to Kothari (2006), research instruments are developed tools that researcher employs to gather data. In assessing the influence of parents' supervision of homework on academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools, questionnaires were administered to standard eight

teachers and head teachers'. Questionnaires were preferred because they are economical in time, cost and labour and because their subjects give their answers anonymously (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). Parent's Interview Schedule (PIS) was used to gather information from parents of standard eight pupils concerning the influence of parents' supervision of homework on academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools. The researcher also used this instrument because it provided a free environment for the respondents to express themselves and even gave additional information which was not catered for in the questionnaire (Ader et al, 2008). Document analysis guide for testing pupils' academic achievement was also used.

Reliability and Validity of Instruments

Validity of the Instrument

Validity of instruments is a measure of how well a test measures what it is supposed to measure. Orodho (2010) defines it as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on the research result. According to Borg and Gall (2005) Content validity of an instrument is also improved through expert judgments. To establish content validity of the research instruments, the researcher sought the expertise of the supervisors. The supervisors were requested to contact item analysis to establish whether the items in the test instruments would generate the appropriate information or not. Particularly, the supervisors established the clarity, relevance, simplicity and ambiguity of each tested item. Items that were rated as relevant to the study, clear, simple and non-ambiguous were included in the final test. Based on the responses by the experts, items with 70 percent or more agreement as belonging to a specific construct were retained. Subsequently, the items pool was refined and revised based on the comments and suggestions by the reviewers.

Reliability

According to Orodho (2010) defines reliability as a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent result after repeated trials. Reliability of measurements concerns the degree to which a particular measurement gives similar outcome over a number of repeated trials. Therefore, piloting of research instruments for this study was done by the use of questionnaires, interview schedules and focus group discussion guide which was administered to a sample population in schools that was not sampled for the main study. More than one test was used to enhance reliability of the study instruments used. The test-retest technique of reliability testing was employed whereby the pilot questionnaires and Interview schedules were administered twice to a total 39 respondents, with a one-week interval. The scores were correlated using Pearson product correlation formula to determine the reliability. Coefficient of 0.7 was obtained for the questionnaires and 0.8 for the interview schedules and focus group discussion. This was better than the 0.5 persons' product-moment correlation recommended by Saunders (2009). To establish reliability of research instruments, pilot study was carried out in 2 schools, 9 standard eight teachers, 2 head teacher, 23 standard eight pupils and 5 standard eight parents which was 10% of the sample study population randomly selected. According to Connelly (2008) who suggests that a pilot study sampled should be 10% of the sample for the large study.

Data Collection Procedures

Before the process of data collection started, the researcher secured a research permit and a research authorization letter from the National Council for Science and Technology in the Ministry of Higher

Education through the School of Graduate Studies (S.G.S) of Rongo University. The researcher then reported to Homa Bay County Director of Education before proceeding to Rachuonyo South Sub County Education Office to seek for permission to carry out research. After permission being granted, the researcher proceeded to the field for data collection. The researcher booked appointment with administrators of various institutions through written letters two weeks before the study was carried out.

The researcher distributed questionnaires for Head teachers and Standard eight teachers in twenty three (23) public primary schools which were randomly sampled. Headteachers and Teachers were given two weeks to fill in the questionnaires, and then the questionnaires were picked by the researcher for analysis. The researcher had arranged for the interview date with the parents through the head teachers of the sampled schools. Each parent was interviewed individually. The researcher informed parents of what he expected to research on in advance before he met them. The researcher conducted interviews with parents by reading all the questions found on the interview schedule systematically in 'Luo' language as the respondents were given time to listen keenly and respond to each question as he/she could as the researcher recorded in a reported speech format. Each parent was given a about 50 minute for the interview. The researcher also made a personal visit to the sampled public primary schools and requested the head teachers to avail the sampled standard eight pupils in liaison with teachers for a focused group discussion. Data gathered from standard eight pupil's focused group discussion guide also formed part of qualitative data.

Methods of Data Analysis

Analysis of data collected was based on the purpose and objectives of the study. Data collected was edited, coded, classified and tabulated. After the tabulation process, data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0. Quantitative data was analyzed by use of descriptive statistics and results presented in the form of; tables, frequencies and Percentages to allow easy data interpretation. Quantitative data that was gathered by responses to closed-ended and open-ended questions from Head teachers (HTQs) and teachers (TQ) was read carefully, paying attention to; comments, ideas and concerns of respondents. Qualitative data generated from open-ended questions in the research instruments were organized, categorized and presented in narratives according to various emergent themes. Qualitative data analysis is a systematic procedure followed in order to identify essential features, themes and categories (Borge and Gall, 2007).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Influence of Parents' Supervision of Homework on Academic Achievement of Pupils

The study sought to determine the influence of parents' supervision of homework on academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub-County. In order to achieve this, a number of attributes on parental involvement of homework supervision were measured such as: home set rules, parents' assistance with assignment at home, setting homework room and parents' supervision of homework on academic achievement of pupil.

The study sought to find out the extent to which parents are involved in their children's homework taking. The study responses were summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. The Extent to which Parents are Involved in the Parents' Supervision of their Children's Homework

To what extent are you involved in helping your children do their homework?	No	Yes	Total
Not Involved	12	20	32
Partially Involved	03	08	08
Involved	01	02	06
Fully Involved	00	04	04
Total	16	34	50

Table 1 reveals that majority of parents of 16 (32%) reported that parents were either ; partially involved or fully involved while of parents 34 (68%) reported that parents were not either partially or fully involved. Patrikakou et al. (2005) showed that family involvement sets the tone and condition upon which a child engages in education, thus affecting and impacting their academic success. The worth of the categories system is in demonstrating variety of undertakings that might be integrated in parents' involvement programs. Pupils become more motivated when their parents take their time to read and study with them at home (Caspé, 2010).

These findings also concur with the response from an interview conducted with the parents who said that:

"We feel that we are trying our best at home, but we do check and help our children with their homework. We even follow up what is taking place in school and visit school sometimes when we are invited by the school to do so".

These findings further concurs with Siririka (2007) who found out that parents with limited or no formal education may have the will to help their children, but are constrained because they are convinced that they are incapacitated by their limited formal education to help their children with their learning.

The study also sought to find out from teachers about home set rules for their children to perform their homework. The study findings were summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Parents' Responses on Home Set Rules for Home work Taking

Category	Frequency	Percent	Accumulative Percent
No Home rules	48	96%	96
Home rules	2	4%	100
Total	50	100	

Table 2 indicates that majority of homes 48 (96%) had no home set rules for taking homework while minority 2 (4%) had home set rules for taking homework. The result reveals that most parents do not provide a controlled home environment. The study also implies that most parents are not concerned about their children having set home rules to enhance completion of their children's homework and to enhance better academic achievement. The study findings concur with Jeynes (2007) who state that, supervision and set home rules as moderate levels of parental support. Xu (2009) found that students' achievement appeared to be related to all five subscales of homework management (setting proper homework rules to facilitate homework completion). These study findings concur with Zimmerman (2011) who found out that, eighth grade students receiving daily self-regulation support during math homework performed better on post tests than their peers who did not receive self-regulation support.

These findings were confirmed by responses from an interview conducted with one parent who was quoted saying:

"I'm not a teacher to set home rules for studying for my children. Secondly, do I have time to even find out what my children do at home after school?"

The study further sought to find out from pupils how frequent their parents assists them with homework while at home. The study findings were summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Pupils Responses on How Frequent they Get Homework Assistance from their Parents'

Monitoring	Frequency	Percent	Accumulative Percent
Always	44	19.1%	19.1
Never	156	67.8%	86.9
Sometimes	30	13.0%	100
Total	230	100	

Data analysis in Table 3 reveal that majority of pupils' 156 (67.8%) reported that their parents did not assist them with homework at all while minority 30 (13.0%) also reported that sometimes they do get homework assistance from their parents'. Only 44 (19.1%) of pupils reported that they always got homework assistance from their parents. This implies that most parents' did not assist their children with homework while at home in Rachuonyo South Sub-County. This study findings concur with Pomerantz et al (2007) who said that empiral studies have shown a direct link between the parental involvement in homework and children's academic achievement.

These findings also concur with the responses from focused group discussion with pupils who were quoted saying:

"That is not possible to get homework help from our parents'. Are they at home when we take our home work? And even if they are, do they don't care about our homeowrk assignment?"

The study again sought to find out from pupils' if their parents' had set aside special rooms for homework taking at home. The study findings were summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Pupils' Responses on Special Rooms for Taking Homework

Categories	Frequency	Percent	Accumulative Percent
No Room	200	87%	87
Room Available	25	10.9%	97.9
Not Sure	5	2.1%	100
Total	230	100	

Table 4 reveals that majority of pupils' 200 (87%) did not have special rooms for taking or writing their home work at home while minority of pupils 25 (10.9%) do have special rooms for homework taking or writing at home. 5 (2.1%) are not sure whether the rooms they use for homework taking or writing are special rooms set aside specifically for homework or not. They reported that, they have always done their homework but they can not define special room for homework writing. This study findings also implies that most parents are not concerned about their children's having the opportunity of completing their homework by creating special rooms for homework taking or writing. Parents who are concerned about their children have the opportunity to help their children with their homework set special rooms.

The findings concur with the responses from an interview conducted with pupils' during the focused group discussion, who were quoted saying:

"Special room? Our house is too small and completely out of space".

The study also sought to find out from head teachers and teachers' about the influence of supervision of homework on pupils' academic achievement in primary Schools. The study findings were summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. Head teachers and Teachers' Responses on the Influence of Parents' Supervision of Homework on the Academic Achievement of Pupils

Category	Positive Influence	Percent	Negative Influence	Percent	Totals
Headteachers	23	100%	00	00	100
Teachers	80	88.9%	10	1.1%	100

Data analysis in table 5 reveals that all head teachers in the study 100% (23) reported that there is influence of parents' supervision of homework on the academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools. The same data gathered also revealed that majority of teachers 80 (90%) of teachers reported that, there is a positive influence of parents' supervision of homework on academic achievement of pupils, while minority, 10 (10%) of teachers reported that there is no influence of parents' supervision of homework on academic achievement of pupils. This is in line with Keith (2001) who points out that, when parents help their children to do their homework, most of them begin to enjoy doing homework and in turn become more willing to learn. The findings of the study also concur with Jeynes (2007) who shows a strong positive association between parental style and academic achievement of pupils when he says that supportive, loving, helpful and maintainance of an adequate parental involvement of parents enhance academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools. Henderson and Mapp (2002) believed that, engaging the family could improve children's academic achievement, and also a substantial influence on other key outcomes. Henderson and Mapp (2002) concluded that parents have a major influence on their children's academic achievement in school. These study findings concurs with Bembenutty (2011) who found out that a positive relationship exists between homework activities and self-efficacy beliefs, as well as goal setting, time management, managing the environment, and maintaing attention. Cooper (2007) supports this when he says that, when homework is effective, it benefits many aspects of students' learning experiences.

Conclusion

Majority of parents accepted that they did not assist their children with homework while a few did. Majority of parents reported that neither are they involved, partially involved nor fully involved in helping their children with homework writing. Majority of homes had no home set up rules for taking homework and few homes had homework rules. Majority of pupils indicated that their parents did not assist them with homework and this negatively impacted on their academic achievement. Majority of homes did not have special rooms for taking or writing homework this clearly show that parents did not take homework seriously and this impacted negatively on the pupils' academic achievement. All the head teachers and teachers in the study reported that lack of adequate supervision of homework played a negative role on the academic achievement of pupils' in public primary schools.

Recommendations

Study findings recommended that; home set rules for homework taking should be encouraged in every home and parents should set aside special rooms for taking and writing homework for their children while doing their private studies at home.

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