

Parental Views Regarding Homework

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Abstract: Formal education requires a planned education period to bring forth planned, controlled and required behaviors. Homework is one of the elements of plans in the educational process. In educational programs, homework is given to students as an out-of-class activity. There are some studies in the field of education, indicating the fact that homework does have an effect on students' achievement, while other research results state that homework has no influence on achievement and even causes unhappiness for students. In the education system of TRNC, homework is considered as a part of the educational process. Therefore, teachers assign homework to students in addition to in-class education. Parents, who play various roles in doing and checking homework, are another contributor to school education. Parents' roles about homework might be influential on students' success at school. Thus, it is very important to reveal parents' perceptions about homework. Considering this important point, this study aims to reveal how parents of 4th grade students perceive homework using qualitative case study pattern. Research data were collected through a structured interview form designed by the researcher. Collected data were analyzed by "content analysis" technique encompassing mainly pattern identification, coding and classification processes. On the basis of findings obtained from collected data, suggestions were made concerning the things to do in terms of homework in the education system.

Keywords: Assignment, Assignment Types, Homework.

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INTRODUCTION

There are in-class and out-of-class activities in almost every kind of lesson plan. Lecturing, motivating the students, announcing the subject through motivation target and target behaviours, explanations, practising the learned material, summarizing and evaluating may be listed as in-class activities (Oliva, 1988, p 423-427; Orlich et al., 1985; Posner, 1995, 98-104; Demirel, 2008, 20; Sönmez, 2005). In the light of modern educational trends, a variety of stimulants should be used in all of these in-class activities in order to ease the learning of individual students who may better respond to different stimulants. The educational process also has out-of-class activities including homework. Some authors involve homework in yearly, unit and daily plans (Orlich et al., 1985, p 135-142; Demirel, 2008). In its directive regarding “the Planned Implementation of Academic Studies”, Turkish Ministry of National Education includes experiments, problem solving activities and assignments as part of Individual Learning Activities (TC MEB, 2003).

Homework is generally accepted as an out-of-class activity assigned to students for the purpose of revising what has been taught at school and as a preparatory activity for school. According to Cooper (1989), homework is a task designed by teachers for students to be done after school. (Cooper, Robinson and Patall, 2006; p. 1). Harnis (2001), on the other hand, defines homework as supplementary studies that should be completed out of the school to reinforce what has been learned at school and claims that it is one of the most debated issues between parents and children (cited by Turanlı, 2009). There are also some authors who regard homework as an acceptable educational method either to reinforce the already learned subjects or to encourage students to do research (Turanlı, 2009).

With regard to modern educational trends, homework should be designed by taking individual differences into account. Since 2005-2006 academic year, the TRNC has based its educational system on the principle of “constructivism” (TRNC MEKB, 2005). All primary school curricula have been rewritten in accordance with the principle of constructivism. In constructivism, students play an active role. Activities to be done by the learners play a central role. Constructivist theories agree that learners are active, they reach the meaning by selecting and they construct their knowledge as a whole by means of both individual and social activities (Açıköz, 2014). Multiple Intelligence Theory is also concordant to constructivist theory. It states that human beings have 8 kinds of intelligence for the time being; however, there are not even two individuals who exhibit an intelligence component with exactly same ratio and blend due to genetic and environmental factors and their interaction causing individual differences. Preparation and presentation of stimulants that serve eight different intelligences in the educational process will ensure the students, who learn easily from individually different stimulants, to be taken into account. Therefore, homework, as one of out-of-class activities in education, should be prepared alternatively by considering individual differences. Whether homework

has an effect on students' gaining cognitive, affective and psychomotor behaviours is a significant factor in whether homework is included in the education process. When related literature concerning homework is reviewed, it is seen that there are generally two distinct views about the effect of homework on students' success. Some research results assert the positive effect of homework on students' academic achievements, whereas some others indicate the negative effects.

Some research suggesting the positive effect of homework on students' success: (Tertemiz (1991); Demirel (1989); Foyle and Bailey, 1985; Finstad, 1987; cited by Türkoğlu, 2007); (Keith and Cool, 1992 cited by Bempechat, 2004); (Aksoy and Link, 2000; Betts, 1997 cited by Eren and Hendersen, 2007); Eren and Hendersen, 2007; (Walberg, Paschal & Weinstein, 1984: Townsend (1995); cited by Center for Public Education, 2007); (Cooper, 1989; cited by Cooper, Robinson, and Patall 2006); (Walberg, Fraser, & Welch, 1986; Cooper et. Al., 1998; Epstien, 1988; Paschal et. al., 1984; Keith, 1982; cited by Turanlı, 2009); Cooper, Robinson and Patall, 2006. Pattil's (2011) qualitative study concludes that doing homework helps to improve academic performance according to parental views.

Yet, there is also other research suggesting the negative effect of homework on students' success: Kapıkıran and Kıran, 1999; Akyüz, 2013; (Pascal et. al., 1984; cited by Kapıkıran and Kıran, 1999); (Swank, 1999; cited by Center for Public Education, 2007); (Van Voorhis, 2003; Check & Ziebell, 1980; Heller et. al., 1988; cited by Turanlı, 2009). According to some research findings (Cooper et al., 2006; Trautwein and Koller, 2003), homework has a negative effect on achievement (cited by Center for Public Education, 2007).

Results of meta-analysis conducted by Cooper (1989) found out that homework's efficiency in minor grades was lower (Cooper, Robinson and Patall 2006). Cooper, Robinson and Patall (2006) found out that homework has a stronger correlation with achievement in secondary school period as a result of their meta-analysis of the research conducted from 1989 to 1930s, and of research carried out in 2006 and of the years between 1987 and 2003. Meanwhile, similar to Cooper's (1989) finding, they came across very little research showing the positive effect of homework on achievement in 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades (cited by Marzano and Pickering, 2007). This suggests that homework has little effect on academic achievement in minor grades. Mikk (2006) studied the relation between homework and achievement in mathematics in 46 countries. Interestingly, the relation between homework and achievement was found to be low in countries where the students correct their assignments in class by themselves, the assignments are discussed in class and homework counts towards grades (cited by Center for Public Education, 2007). Research results suggest that giving feedback and making corrections on homework (Hattie, 1992); and giving the necessary explanations to students through feedback and related data (Bangert-Drowns, Kulk and Morgan, 1991) affect students' success in a positive manner. On the other hand, Cooper surprisingly states that not every piece of homework

should be graded by the teacher nor a review should be given to students in accordance with the results of a meta-analysis study covering sixty years (cited by Marzano and Pickering, 2007).

Some research results suggest that amount of homework is associated with academic achievement. Walberg, Paschal and Weinstein (1985) state that little amount of homework provides more academic achievement than bigger amount of homework (cited by Turanlı, 2009). According to Turanlı's (2009) descriptive study that encompasses 147 students from 2nd to 5th grade and their parents, found out that students and their parents do not find homework useful and think that homework is not worth the effort. Moreover, these students and their parents think that teachers fail to satisfy the expectations to check homework and inform students about errors. In a study conducted with 454 parents of children at primary schools, Albayrak et al. (2004) concluded that they believe the out-of-class activities contribute to the learning process of students and students like student-centered out-of-class activities that are in line with the target. In the same research, parents stated that most 1st and 2nd grade students cannot perform out-of-class activities alone. Same research found out that mothers are the primary helpers for first grade students, whereas second grades get help from fathers. The lessons where students ask for help are respectively Math, Turkish, Life Sciences, Social Sciences, Science, and Foreign Languages. Batman et. al. (2014) conducted a qualitative study with 17 primary school 4th grade students as participants from Esentepe Primary School in Kyrenia and Şehit Ertuğrul Primary School in Nicosia both of which are under the supervision of TRNC Ministry of National Education. The main objective of the research was to determine "students' perceptions about homework". Results of the study were briefly as follows: Students find homework beneficial and they think that the time they spend for homework is well worth.

While most students have positive feelings for homework, there are also those who have both positive and negative feelings for homework as well as a smaller group feeling totally negatively about homework, the total of which makes a significant ratio of students (40.8%) who are found to have a somewhat negative view of homework. Students stated that they wanted to have homework. Students expressed the fact that they had positive perception for checking homework; however, that this check was done by students. Students mentioned that they felt the need for help while doing their homework, and ask for help mainly from their mothers and secondly from their fathers. Students also remark that they experience the most difficulty respectively in Math and Turkish. Students perceive the positive contribution of homework to learning. It was also found that students consider their homework as a financial burden to their parents. Pattil (2011), on the other hand, stated in his study that think that homework is beneficial and students get the most help from their mothers (66.7%), followed by father (13.3%) and siblings (10%).

In conclusion, the literature about homework reveals the positive, adverse and even negative relationship between homework and academic achievement. Therefore, stating the significance of

homework in the educational process is highly important. The effect of homework on learning as many other factors should be stated especially in primary school education. For this purpose, this study aims to detect parents' view about homework through a qualitative study. Thus, this study seeks answers to these questions: (1) What are the parents' views about the benefits of homework? (2) What do the parents think about the feelings their children experience while doing their homework? (3) What are the parents' views about homework given? (4) What are the parents' views about teachers' homework check? (5) What are the parents' views about the skills of their children in doing homework? (6) What are the parents' views about the lessons where their children experience the most difficulty? (7) What are the parents' views about the benefits of homework? (8) What are the parents' views about the financial burden of homework?

Method

Qualitative case study pattern was used in this study.

Participants

Participants of the study consist of 15 parents, 13 of whom have kids in 4th grade attending Esentepe Primary School in Kyrenia and 2 of whom have kids in 4th grade students attending Şehit Ertuğrul Primary School in Nicosia, both of which are under the supervision of TRNC Ministry of National Education in 2013-2014 academic year. Both schools are public schools and have a student population, whose parents are of the mid-level income group. Convenience sampling principle was taken into account in order to determine the participants.

Development and Application of Assessment Instruments

Interview Form: An interview form was prepared by the researcher to find answers to the questions of research. During the preparation phase, 11 interview questions were prepared following a survey of the related literature, by examining research questions, as a result of interviews with teachers and discussions with two specialists (1 Assistant Professor of Curriculum Development and 1 Assistant Professor of Psychological Counseling and Guidance). Later, the researcher determined a total of 9 questions to include in the final interview form in line with specialists' views and the research objective. Thus, research questions were determined to reach the targeted answers in interviews. In this way, the interview form was modified by considering specialists' view (see Annex 1). The interview form was designed as a "Family Interview Form" to collect data from parents. The aim in using a structured interview form was to collect detailed data from participants. Interviews were held only once with each parent participating in the study. Each interview lasted about 30 minutes. Interviews were conducted one to one, in a closed environment and confidentially. The researcher talked to 15 participant parents in a detailed manner and recorded the data using a voice recorder.

Data Analysis

A structured interview form was used by the researcher to collect data for the research. Collected data were analyzed by “content analysis” technique involving processes of determining, coding and classifying the patterns. The main aim in employing content analysis technique is to reveal concepts and relations that may define the collected data (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008) or it is simply a way of scanning to identify the specific characteristics of a particular text, book or document by quantification (Karasar, 2005). For this purpose, the researcher, aimed to reach concepts and relations through the data obtained from the interviews.

At the end of the study, qualitative data obtained from the interviews were interpreted by using them together. Specialists’ views were taken for interview forms to increase the credibility and provide consistency. Also, in order to enhance credibility, confirmation interviews were conducted with 15 participant parents individually. “Participant confirmation” is a “confirmation meeting” held individually or as a group with the participants (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008: 267, Creswell, 2009: Hill, Knox, Thompsons, Williams, Hess & Ladany, 2005). In this meeting, the researcher shares the reached results, inferred meanings and his/her own comments with participants and asks them to evaluate their validity. In this context, the researcher conducted confirmation meetings with participants individually and in different places. Participants were asked to make evaluations about the findings of data analysis. All of the participants stated that the reached findings reflected their own views.

Limitations

This research is limited to the views of 15 participant parents, 13 of whom have children in 4th grade in Esentepe Primary School in Kyrenia and 2 of whom have children in 4th grade in Şehit Ertuğrul Primary School in Nicosia, both of which are schools under the supervision of TRNC Ministry of National Education.

Findings And Comment

In this section of the research, obtained findings were presented after analysis. While listing the findings and comments, the same order as the sub-problem of research was followed.

Findings and Comments About the Sub-Problem

What are the parents’ views about the benefits of homework?

Table 1a: Table indicating the parents’ views about the benefits of homework

| CODE | CODE | THEME |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------|
| Grounds for benefit | Whether time spent was worth it | Benefit |

- As he does it reluctantly, he completes it superficially; he does not take it seriously. Only as a duty to be completed. Just to show his teacher that he does something. He cannot learn in such a superficial manner.
- My son learns not from the homework, but from what he gets in class. Whatever his teacher teaches in class is enough for him to achieve.
- My daughter takes homework as a duty... She uses a tablet; she finds what she looks for and writes down. She does not learn even when she writes. She writes, but does not question its meaning. She does it without knowing, she does not learn.

Results of this research show that parents find homework beneficial and think that students get the return of time spent on homework. This finding is parallel with the study of Pattil (2011). Similarly, the results of the study by Pattil (2011) suggest that homework was found to be beneficial in accordance with parents' views. On the other hand, this finding is not parallel with the study of Turanlı (2009). The study conducted by Turanlı (2009) included students and their parents together as participants. In the descriptive study by Turanlı (2009) involving 147 students from 2nd to 5th grades and their parents, the results indicated that neither students nor their parents found homework beneficial and they don't think that they get the return of effort given.

Table 1b. Parents' associations about homework

| Code | Theme |
|--|--------------------------|
| Obligation Duty /responsibility Duty The thing to be done Obligation for children | Duty/responsibility(f=5) |
| Revision by children Refreshing the knowledge Revision of subjects Study/subject review | Revision (f=4) |
| Responsibility/knowledge/future Knowledge Education | Knowledge (f=3) |
| Quarrel Extra work for parents Neat handwriting (as it brings boredom) | Problem (f=3) |

Table 1b revealed parents' (n=15) associations about the concept of homework, which were not planned among the sub-problems of the research. Participant parents stated that the first things that came to their mind (the associations they made) about homework were mostly "duty and

responsibility" and "revision". A smaller ratio of parents expressed that the association of homework was somehow related to "knowledge" and "problem". Participant parents' associations about duty and responsibility and revision of subjects are in line with some definitions of the concept of "homework" in related literature. As cited in the introduction section of the article, Cooper (1989) defines homework as a "duty" designed for students and given by teachers to be performed out-of-class (Cooper, Robinson and Patall, 2006; p 1). In accordance with the expression given in Cooper's description, one third of the participants in this research stated that the first association of homework in their mind was "duty".

One fifth of the participant parents (f=3) see homework as a "problem" in the family. They explained that homework caused quarrel within the family, it was an extra work to do for them after work and caused a feeling of weariness in their children because of the emphasis on "neat handwriting". This supports the idea by Turanlı (2009), who claims that homework is one of the most debated issues between children and their parents. One fifth of the parents, on the other hand, stated that homework is associated with "knowledge".

As a result, when parents' first associations about homework are considered, it is possible to argue that they stand parallel to the purposes of traditional education. On the other hand, it was revealed that parents didn't make any associations that homework might foster children's creativity such as acquisition of knowledge or higher level thinking skills like critical thinking, creative problem solving, problem solving, and etc.

This fact was also presented with the findings in the 1st sub-problem. The majority of the parents described homework as beneficial. As a reason for this benefit, they stated that doing homework gives the opportunity for a general review and better reinforcement of the subjects learned in class rather than acquisition of new knowledge and higher level thinking skills. As seen in Table 1a, almost none of the participant parents mentioned any benefits such as acquisition of knowledge or higher level thinking skills, which are considered the basis of modern education paradigms and emphasized as necessary skills to be acquired by students.

Findings and Comments About the Sub-Problem

What are the parents' views about the feelings their children experience while doing their homework?

Table 2. Table indicating the parents' views about the feeling their children experience while doing their homework

| CODE | THEME |
|---|--|
| -is happy(f=3) -likes (f= 1) -loves (f= 2) -does not get bored (f=1) -generally loves (f=1) -enjoys (f=1) | -Positive feelings f= 9 23 % |
| -is bored (f=3) -absolutely bored (f=1) -does not like (f=4) -does not enjoy generally (f=1) -does not enjoy (f=5) -is unhappy while doing homework (f=1) -is not very happy (f=3) -furious (f=1) -is generally unhappy (f=1) -is reluctant (f=1) -is stressed (f=1) -gets excessively bored (f=1) -is unhappy (f=1) | -Adverse feelings f=24 61.5 % |
| - sometimes gets bored (f=1) -even gets bored sometimes (f=2) -may sometimes get bored (f=1) -is sometimes happy (f=) -is generally not bored (f=1) | -Both positive and adverse f=6 15.4% |

As seen in Table 2, 61.5% of the participant parents expressed views that their children experience adverse feelings while doing homework. On the other hand, 23% of the participant parents stated that their children experience positive feelings while doing homework. Parents who said that their children have both positive and adverse feelings while doing their homework constituted a ratio of 15%. All these findings considered, it is possible to assert that more than half of the parents think that their children experience adverse feelings while doing homework. Besides, it was found out that the ratio for positive feelings while doing homework was one fourth "lower" than the ratio for adverse feelings. That is, fewer parents think that their children exhibit positive feelings while doing their homework. The following views of participants about this subject are worth mentioning:

- He is not very happy as it is an obligation, though he doesn't complain. He thinks "I am a student, these are my responsibilities. However, there is no sign of happiness. He doesn't have that happiness he experiences when he is together with his friends. It is all duty.
- He gets bored while doing homework, he gets bored during lessons. He gets bored and wants to play games, wants to get out.

- He doesn't enjoy doing homework, he absolutely gets bored. Our child doesn't like homework, no he doesn't.
- Children are furious when they sit for homework. Consequently, they don't enjoy.
- He doesn't do homework eagerly, he gets bored. I mean, he doesn't like doing homework, he is happier when there is no homework.
- It is more like slavery for him... Because he says "we know them, we have covered them in class".
- Boredom, stress, hurries to finish as soon as possible, says "I'm sleepy, I'll do it tomorrow"... He doesn't want. He doesn't enjoy it and gets excessively bored...
- He likes homework, never gets bored. He loves doing homework, he seems happy.

In conclusion, parents interviewed in this research have the opinion that their children experience adverse feelings while doing their homework. In other words, parents think that their children do not like doing homework, do not enjoy it, are not happy while doing homework and get bored with homework. This finding is not parallel with those of Batman et.al. (2014). Batman et. al. (2014) stressed that students have a perception of positive feelings while doing homework in their qualitative study conducted with students of the same sample schools. This reveals the fact that parents and students perceive the feelings about homework differently.

Findings and Comments About the Sub-Problem

What are the parents' views about the intensity of homework?

Table 3. Table indicating the parents' views about the intensity of homework

| CODE | THEME |
|---|---|
| I would like teachers to give homework (f=13) | In favour of homework |
| I would not (f= 0) | Against homework |
| Too much homework (f=4) Normal homework (f=7) Too little homework (f=2) | Level of homework intensity is normal |
| In favour of more homework (f=2) Normal (f=6) Less homework should be given (f=3) | Supporting homework in moderate amounts |
| Sometimes (f=1) | Homework should sometimes be given |

As given in Table 3, almost all of the participant parents (n=13) favor homework. There is only one participant parent who does not want homework and wants it to be sometimes given. While almost half of the participants consider the intensity of homework as "normal", about one third think the amount of homework is "excessive", and very few consider it "too little". A little more than one third

of the participants are in favor of giving homework in moderate amounts, and a small ratio think that “more” homework should be given. Very few participants state that they want “less” homework to be given to their children. In this respect, the following views of participants about this subject are significant:

- More homework might be given. What I say, we may be missing out on something; our children do not study daily, so it is better with homework. Children feel themselves obliged, and they study. Homework is a kind of study for students.
- I would like homework to be given, for example, to make him open his school bag. My child never studies, never opens his bag.
- Homework should be given, otherwise he will always play in the street.
- He already does not understand what is given in the class, so he should have homework to revise. However, it does not work, either... It turns into memorizing.
- I would like less homework. Children should not be confused or made bored with homework. They will get bored at the end. Then, he will be literally absorbed in books at the weekends.
- Homework is given in excessive amounts, they are too much. Let me tell you this way, when I follow Salih, he never has just one homework.
- I obviously do not want more homework. Neither do I have enough time to supervise him on his homework, nor does he have the eagerness to do it by himself. He gets bored.

In conclusion, we can say that the participant parents in the study were in favor of homework. This finding is parallel with the studies performed by Albayrak et. al. (2004) and Batman et. al. (2014). Albayrak et. al. (2004) accepted the fact the parents define teachers who does not give out-of-class activities as unsuccessful (59.8% in primary school, 68.2% in secondary school), as a result of a positive parent approach towards homework. This finding reflects the idea that parents want teachers to give homework. Also, children’s eagerness for out-of-class activities (56.1% in the 1st grade and 61.5% in the 2nd grade of primary school) was accepted as their positive approach to these activities. Students' eagerness for out-of-class activities may be considered as their will for homework. Participant students in the study conducted Batman et. al. (2014) stated that they wanted homework. Parents’ request for homework in this study as well is parallel with the findings of both studies.

Findings and Comments About the Sub-Problem

What are the parents’ views about teacher’s homework check?

Table 4. Table indicating the parents' views about teacher's homework check

| Code | Theme |
|---|---|
| Sufficient (f=4) Checked (f=11) Check performed in class (f=4) Teacher collects and checks (f=11) Errors are pointed out(f=11) Correct homework is awarded (star, homework grade, well done) (f=10) Awards are sufficient (f=4) | Positive (f=11) |
| Not sufficient (f= 2) Not checked (f=2) Errors are not mentioned (f=4) | Adverse (f=2) |
| Sometimes checked (f=1) | Indecisive (f=1) |
| Not many awards (f=2) Awards were not sufficient (f=5) | Awards for the correct answers in homework are not sufficient |

As one can understand from Table 4, the participant parents expressed positive opinion about homework checks. Although the majority of the participants (2/3) stated that homework was checked, only four of them stated that this homework check was sufficient as well. The majority of participants think that homework is collected and checked by teachers, whereas the remaining minority of participants thinks that homework check is done in class. Moreover, again, the majority of participants think that students' are made aware of their errors and that correct answers are awarded. Another finding of the research is the fact that 1/3 of the participants consider that the correct answers are not awarded as frequently as it should be. Very few participants stated that there was no homework check or that it was not sufficient. The following views of the participants about this subject should be considered:

- We think evaluation by the teacher is sufficient. They check and we see it. Children take back their sheets or notebooks. Teacher signs it, even the parents are asked to sign. Did you see that paper? Sign and send it back.
- Homework evaluation; for example, misspellings –which I don't notice- teacher would notice the wrong sentence. Teacher would collect the books himself, and he would check.
- I have a look at my kid's homework everyday, and inspect whether the teacher has given any grades? Where is the error, or has he signed? They were evaluating.
- They collect and check as far as I know. There are some notes in the notebook. "You have forgotten this"... "This is very good" he writes. Teacher checks individually.

- Awards... Yes there are. They were giving interesting pencils at school. I used to check his bag frequently. When I see a pencil in his bag, I ask the reason... I am sure he was awarded.
- I don't find teacher evaluation sufficient, because, let's say, the student tries and does the homework, he does research and asks us for help and so we help... Did your teacher check your homework, my dear? No, mum, he couldn't, he will do so later. When this happens, it is not good for the children...
- Awards?... Well, I don't know. As he started school and attended 1st and 2nd grades in Turkey, we think that the awards here are insufficient. They used to have more awards in Turkey.
- Of course, I believe that the teacher should check the homework and see what the student has done, but do teachers do so? I don't think so...
- No, I don't find teachers' checks sufficient because they check all together, teacher writes the correct answer on the board. Students don't write the correct answers in their notebooks.
- If children make any mistakes, the teacher does not tell the wrong answers to them. Correct or wrong, children used to tick their own homework.
- I find the evaluation very bad in the name of fourth grade because children were doing peer check. If the peer is a good friend, then they may erase the wrong answer or tick even if it is wrong. I cannot be sure about their accuracy.
- Children check. They check by themselves with red pencils. There is no signature below. How far can they check? Just the result or the way that goes to the correct answer? It is not clear. Whenever I open his notebook, it is always ticked correctly. When I check, the result is correct but the way is wrong... How do they do it? I don't know. Perhaps they use calculators or cell phones.

In conclusion, the parents presented positive opinions about homework check. Also, the parents think that homework is collected and checked by the teacher. Another result is that only 1/3 of the participants stated that the current homework check was sufficient. This result may be interpreted as the majority of the parents in favor of the idea that the current homework checks are not sufficient. These findings are not parallel with the study of Batman et. al. (2014). In the study conducted by Batman et. al. (2014), in which the participants were the students of the same schools, participant students expressed views that the homework check was performed by the students themselves.

However, in this study, the parents said that homework sheets were collected and checked by the teacher.

According to Ilgar (2005), one of the main conditions for homework to be really effective in education is teachers' checking, commenting and returning it to students. Pascal, Weinstein and Walber (1984) state that homework given back to students with several comments and notes on is more preferable than homework with fewer or no comments and explanations (cited by Ilgar, 2005). The related literature particularly underlines the fact that reviews and corrections to homework (Hattie, 1992) as well as explanations to students with comments and related data have a positive effect on student success. (Bangert-Drowns, Kulk and Morgan, 1991). This research also reveals that homework check is performed by the teacher, who collects the papers, tells students about their errors and awards correct answers, which is quite parallel with literature.

Findings and Comments About the Sub-Problem

What are the parents' views about the skills of their children in doing homework?

Table 5. Table indicating the parents' views about the skills of their children in doing homework

| Code | Theme |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Without help, doing on his/her own (f=3) | No need for help f=3 20 % |
| -With help (f=4) -Sometimes gets help (f=7) <i>Who helps most:</i> Mother (f=9), Father (f=2), Maternal aunt (f=1), Paternal aunt (f=1), <i>Elder Sister</i> (f=2), Elder brother (f=1), Grandmother (f=), <i>Grandfather</i> (f=1) | Needs for help f=11 73.3 % |

As indicated in Table 5, the majority of the participant parents (2/3) think that their children need help while doing their homework. They get help mostly from their mother and father respectively. Very few participants stated that children can do their homework by themselves, without help. The following are the views of the participants in this study, which are notable:

- In previous grades he used to ask his elder sister for help, but now, in 4th grade he does it on his own: Project, performance... He does not need help from anyone in the family. He definitely does not.
- He can do if he wants, but doesn't pay attention... He might do if I sit by him. He says that he understands; he might if he reads thoroughly.
- He used to do most of it. If the subject was new, he might do 85% of it, but generally he might do more than 90% of it by himself. He might need help sometimes.

- He used to do on his own generally. However, when he got stuck, we used to help as his mother and elder sisters.

As a result, it is possible to assert that parents think that their children need help while doing their homework. In the study conducted by Batman et. al. (2014), whose participants are students of the same school, it was revealed that almost all of the participants (94.1%) needed help while doing their homework. Also, in the same research, it was detected that students get help mostly from their mothers, then from their fathers. In the study conducted by Albayrak et. al (2004) parents stated that students of both primary and secondary level of primary education didn't do the out-of-class activities on their own. Similarly, in the same research, it was discovered that the primary level students got help especially from their mothers, whereas in secondary level help came from their fathers. Pattil (2011) expressed that the mother is the one who helped students most (66.7%) with their homework, followed by the father (13.3%) and the siblings (10%). As stated in this research, students' need for help while doing their homework is quite parallel with the results of the above-mentioned research. Furthermore, students mostly asking their mothers for help rather than their fathers are parallel with all three research results.

Findings and Comments About the Sub-Problem

What are the parents' views about the lessons in which their children experience the most difficulty?

Table 6. Table indicating the parents' views about the lessons in which their children experience the most difficulty

| Lessons | f * | % |
|------------------------------------|----------|-------------|
| -Math | 8 | 50 |
| -Grammar | 2 | 12.5 |
| -Turkish | 2 | 12.5 |
| -Science and Technology | 1 | 6.25 |
| -Social Sciences | 1 | 6.25 |
| -English | 1 | 6.25 |
| <i>No difficulty in any lesson</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>6.25</i> |

f*= frequency of the lessons in which the student experiences difficulty

As indicated in Table 6, the participant parents expressed that the lessons where students experienced the most difficulty are respectively Math, Turkish and Grammar. Following views of participants about this subject are remarkable:

- He experiences more difficulty in Science... Even I have difficulty. It is something related to the book.

- He has difficulty in Turkish/Grammar. He mixes them up.
- More difficulty in Turkish. Vowels, consonants... But, not Math.
- He asks for help in different subjects. He gets the most help in Math... Yes, especially in problems, etc.

As a result, according to the parents their children have the most difficulty in Math, Turkish and Grammar respectively. In the study conducted with students of the same schools by Batman et. al. (2014), it was found that students had the most difficulty in Math (52.6%) and Turkish (15.8%) respectively and the third place was shared by Grammar, Geometry and Science and Technology. On the other hand, study of Albayrak et. al. (2004) determined the fact that students require help mostly in Math, Turkish, Life Science, Social Sciences, Science and Foreign Languages. The results of this study exhibits paralellism with above-mentioned two studies.

Findings and Comments About the Sub-Problem

What are the parents' views about the benefits of homework?

Table 7. Table indicating the parents' views about the benefits of homework

| Code | Code | Theme |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| Preparation for lesson | Reinforcement for what has been learned | Positive contribution to learning |
| Beneficial for the preparation for lessons (f=1) | Reinforces what has been learned in class (f=11) Provides better learning (f=12) Revision (f=6) | |
| Is not beneficial for the preparation for lesson (f=4) | Does not provide better learning (f=2) No contribution to reinforcement (f=1) | No contribution to learning |

As shown in Table 7, almost all of the participants expressed that homework has benefits for their children in terms of reinforcement of what has been learned in class and thus providing a better learning. However, about one third of the participant parents suggested that homework does not have any positive contribution to learning in terms of students' preparation for future subjects. The following views of the participants about this subject are worth mentioning:

- Yes. Homework provides better learning. It reinforces learning. It encourages daily revision for those who do not study every day.
- Homework contributes to the reinforcement of what has been learned in class. They learn their subjects better when they do their homework.
- As I said, if the teacher makes his students revise what they have learned that day at home via homework, students comprehend the subject. It is like double revision.

- It reinforces, I believe because he makes a general revision. He asks what he has not understood, and he learns.
- ... I think it is beneficial because, at least, he revises the subject. He becomes more informed about that subject and is better prepared if he could not listen to his teacher at school.
- We cannot say that homework helps 100% to understand the lessons... He opens his notebook, finds the answer and writes exactly the same thing. Or, he may find the same question in the book, copies and pastes them. I mean, as they are the same, students cheat... He does not learn better, because he just memorizes.
- It definitely has no contribution to learning. He even does not remember what he has written... They just think it should be completed and the blanks should be filled in anyway.

As a result, according to the participant parents, homework has a positive contribution to learning. In the study conducted by Batman et. al. (2014) and whose participants were students of the same schools, homework was stated to have a positive contribution to learning in accordance with the students' perceptions. Thus, the results of this study and that of Batman et. al. (2014) show resemblance. Albayrak et. al (2004) conducted their study with 454 parents who had children in primary schools and it was concluded that the parents believed in the positive contribution of out-of-class activities to the learning process and students liked targeted, student-centered out-of-class activities. Parents believe in the contribution of out-of-class activities to the learning process and students express that they like these activities; which can be perceived in a way that they all believe in the positive effect of homework on learning. Therefore, the results of this study and the study conducted by Albayrak et. al. (2004) are parallel to each other.

In accordance with the results of the descriptive study covering 147 parents and students of 2nd to 5th grade by Turanlı (2009), students and their parents did not accept homework as beneficial and they suggested that the students did not get the return of time spent on homework. In other words, students and parents do not think homework as something beneficial, and this may be interpreted as homework does not have any positive contribution to learning. Thus, the results of this study and those of the one conducted by Turanlı (2009) are not parallel.

Findings and Comments About the Sub-Problem

What are the parents' views about the financial burden of homework?

Table 8. Table indicating the parents' views about the financial burden of homework

| Code | Code | Theme |
|---|--|---|
| Status of financial burden -Does not cause any financial burden (f=11) | Technological equipment - Needs a computer and the Internet (f=14) - Does not need a computer or the Internet (f=1) | Homework does not cause any financial burden (f=11) (73.3%) |
| -Causes financial burden (f=3) | We have Internet access at home (f=12) We have a computer (f=12) We have a printer (f=1) We have a computer, but don't have Internet access(f=1) We have no computer (f=2) We don't have Internet access at home (f=2) We don't have a printer at home (f=1) | Homework brings financial burden (f=3) (20%) |

As indicated in Table 8, the participant parents stated that homework does not cause any financial burden for them (73.3%). The following views of participants about this subject are remarkable:

- Actually we didn't have any financial problems. In art and project assignments, we needed to buy some equipment. However, it didn't cause any financial burden. An adhesive, a cardboard, that's all.
- It creates financial burden, otherwise is not possible. We had to buy some equipment to use for homework. Our family experienced that financial burden.
- Here is our financial status: My husband is the only wage earner in the family. I also work, but weekly. When there was too much homework, we experienced that financial burden. She needed a computer and Internet access, but we didn't have any of them home. I would send her to my friend. My friend used to find it on the net, and my daughter would write it.
- When they give a research assignment and we need Internet access, we use the Internet of our friends or neighbors.

As a result, this research suggests that the parents do not think homework as something that causes financial burden, whereas in the study conducted by Batman et. al. (2014) in which the participants were the students of same schools, it was asserted that homework brought extra burden to families as perceived by the students involved. Therefore, the results of this study and those of Batman et. al. (2014) are not parallel to each other.

CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions of the research are briefly as follows: Parents find homework beneficial and think that it is worth the time that their children spend on them. Parents think that their children experience negative feelings while doing their homework. More clearly, parents think that their children do not like doing homework, do not enjoy homework, cannot be happy while doing homework and get bored with doing homework. Parents want teachers to give homework. Parents expressed views that homework check was performed. Parents also think that the teacher collects the assigned homework and checks them. In accordance with another result, only 1/3 of the parents find homework sufficient. It may be interpreted that the majority of the parents do not find homework check sufficient. Parents have the idea that their children need help while doing their homework. According to the participant parents, the lessons in which their children experience the most difficulty are respectively Math, Turkish and Grammar. According to them, homework has a positive effect on learning. Parents do not see homework as a financial burden on their family budget. Furthermore, in the research, the first associations of parents emerged about homework, although they were not designed as a sub-problem but exhibited by all parents (n=15). The participant parents stated that the first association in their mind about homework was mostly "duty and responsibility" and "revision". When these first associations are considered, it is possible to suggest that parents have a similar approach to homework to the traditional educational approach. On the other hand, it was determined that the parents did not have homework-related associations such as knowledge acquisition and gaining higher level thinking skills (critical thinking, creative problem solving, problem solving) that may result in more creative students. This finding may be considered as a new idea that this study introduces to the related literature. The fact that the first associations of parents about homework were "duty and responsibility" and "revision", but not knowledge acquisition and gaining higher level thinking skills, can be suggested as a contribution of this study to the related literature.

When these results are taken into consideration:

For practice; the Ministry of National Education may cooperate with universities and may organize in-service training courses for teachers about the effects of homework. In this regard, in-service training courses may include such topics as performing homework check, how to prepare homework in a way that is achievable by students, reasons why students experience difficulty in doing homework for some particular lessons, of course considering the fact that basic behaviors are gained especially in primary school period.

Life long learning process may be put into effect by the Ministry of National Education or the Government and the awareness of parents may be raised through educational seminars, symposiums in which the subject of homework might be discussed with parents.

For further research; considering the objectives of this research, various sampling or qualitative and quantitative studies may be conducted and the obtained results may be compared with the results of this study.

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