



Homework (Primary)

Background

The summary below presents the research evidence on homework in primary schools in the Arab World context.

The Teaching & Learning Toolkit focuses on impact of outcomes for learners; it presents an estimate of the average impact of homework in primary schools on learning progress, based on the synthesis of a large number of quantitative studies from around the world.

This page offers a summary and analysis of individual studies on homework in primary schools in the Arab world. In contrast to the Toolkit it includes studies which do not estimate impact, but instead investigate the implementation of interventions and how they are perceived by school leaders, teachers and students using a range of research methods. This information is valuable for leaders and teachers interested in finding out more about particular examples of primary school homework interventions that have been delivered in the Arab world.

Summary of the research in the Arab World

Impact of homework in primary schools for students learning outcomes has hardly ever been questioned in the Arab world. Despite the general belief in the importance of homework and necessity of asking students to do tasks at home for improving their learning process, homework cannot be considered as an assessment practice (Abed & Abu Awwad, 2016). A random sample of 402 teachers of mathematics at Jordanian schools reported that homework is a weak assessment practice because students might depend on their parents help while doing them which may lead to homework losing its expected benefits (Abed & Abu Awwad, 2016).

A majority of research in the Arab world has focused on the impact of parental involvement in children homework and investigated ways that would increase that



involvement. For instance, in Saudi Arabia, Elgimari, Alshahrani, and Al-shehri (2017) developed a website application to replace the hard copies of homework with soft copies as a solution to reduce the cost and increase parental involvement. In Kuwait, Al-Fadley, Al-Holy, and Al-Adwani (2018) looked at teachers' views of parental involvement in their children's learning of English as a foreign language at home. Qualitative data showed that teachers in Kuwait public schools had strong beliefs of the importance of parental involvement despite the variances of the level of involvement depending on their socioeconomic background and educational level of the parents. According to the teachers in this study, lack of parental support and encouragement at home is associated with the absence of reading readiness in students. That is why, findings of this study suggested for teachers to investigate into ways to increase parental involvement such as increasing the communication channels and allowing parents to visit their child classroom.

When exploring parents' perceptions, Mahmoud (2018) found out that Saudi Arabian parents usually help their kids in early school years especially in English language. However, their help varies according to their level of education, the degree of difficulty of the curriculum, and the type of school their kids join. Through a 29-item questionnaire, a sample of 100 parents reported that through helping their child directly in homework, assignments or projects or indirectly through ensuring their children have a motivating environment or involving them in cocurricular activities is vital for a fruitful academic life for kids. A majority of these parents agreed that for their help to be constructive, a healthy constructive parent-teacher relationship should be developed. In line with the findings of Abed and Abu Awwad (2016), this study also showed that the homework will become less beneficial when parents do the assignments on behalf of their children. In a similar context, parents of Saudi elementary students with learning disabilities reported that they were not involved in developing their children's academic and social skills; despite that they see great value in their participation (Alobaid, 2018). Findings of this ethnographic qualitative study showed that lack of parental involvement is because schools rarely contacted parents and did not encourage their participation. To increase parents' involvement in their children homework Alobaid (2018) suggested that schools should educate parents on the best ways to get involved and ensure clear communication between parents and teachers.



Summary paragraph:

Evidence of homework in primary schools for students learning outcomes has rarely been investigated in the Arab world. Studies in Jordan, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia focused on the value of homework as a tool to increase parental involvement. However, these same studies showed that homework became less beneficial whenever parents are doing it on behalf of their children.

Researchers have highlighted some barriers for parents when supporting their children homework such as, parents level of education, the degree of difficulty of the curriculum, lack of communication channels and limited parents-teachers relationship.

To date, research on homework in primary schools is absent in this region despite the general belief of its importance in improving the learning process. More research is needed in this area and investigate ways to improve the quality of the homework and the best means to support constructive parental involvement with their children learning at home.



References

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Search Terms

Homework; home assignment; take-home; out of school; flipped or inverted classroom; inverted teaching or learning; after school study; primary education.

Databases searched

Academic search complete

ERIC (EBSCO)

Education Source

Google scholar

ProQuest Central

ProQuest Dissertations

PsycInfo

Web of Science