

The Influence of Parental Involvement in Children's Homework on Academic

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Abstract: An increasing attention has been paid to children's education with the development of social economy. In recent years, the fierce social competition forces parents' concentration on their children's academic achievements. Homework is a pivotal tool in fostering student learning, however, varying parental involvement approaches in the context of homework have demonstrated a spectrum of impacts. This study delves into an in-depth exploration of four modes of parental engagement, i.e., autonomy support, control, interference, and cognitive engagement, within the realm of children's homework, while investigating their effects on academic achievement. In addition, we scrutinize how parental involvement manifests differently across different grade levels, revealing nuances in its influence throughout distinct developmental stages. Results underscore that the types of parental involvement in children's homework are not suitable for each child or different periods of the same child, and it need dynamic adjustments. Specifically, autonomy support stands out as the most beneficial parental engagement method, facilitating problem-solving skills, nurturing parent-school communication, and fostering self-confidence and academic accomplishments in children. Notably, as grade levels progress, there's a need to adapt parental involvement strategies to prevent excessive intervention. The conclusions of this paper offer valuable information to families, schools, and policymakers, empowering them to craft targeted educational policies and practical strategies that foster holistic child development.

Keywords: Parental Involvement, Children's Academic Achievements, Different Types of Involvement

1. Introduction

With the continuous evolution of education, homework has become an integral component of student learning [1, 2]. Amid this landscape, the manner in which parents engage in the process has wielded a profound influence on their children's academic achievements [3, 4]. This study delves into the four distinct modes of parental involvement in children's homework: autonomy support, control, interference, and cognitive engagement. Our aim is to explore the impact of these diverse approaches on children's academic performance, and to dissect how these effects might vary as children progress through different grade levels.

Existing studies have highlighted the pivotal role parents play in their children's educational journey. However, the effectiveness of various parental involvement modes and how

these modes evolve with children's growth remain areas of incomplete elucidation. Consequently, our study seeks to bridge this research gap, offering a clearer guidance to parents, educators, and institutions in the realm of homework.

This paper provides an in-depth comparison of the characteristics of different parental engagement methods and explores how these methods affect children's scholastic achievements. Specifically, we aim to unravel whether these impacts diverge across grade levels and the underlying reasons for these disparities. Through this exploration, we aspire to furnish practical recommendations for parents, educators, and policymakers on optimizing children's academic accomplishments.

The significance of this research resides in its capacity to provide profound insights for educational practices in the domain of homework. A thorough analysis of the diverse parental involvement modes in the context of homework

enhances our understanding of the mechanisms through which these modes impact children's academic achievements. This, in turn, aids in the formulation of more effective homework policies and practice guidelines to elevate learning outcomes.

2. Literature Review

There are four types of parental involvement in homework, including autonomy support, control, interference and cognitive engagement [3]. The four types of parental involvement have different impacts on children's academic achievement. At the same time, it will create different influences on children in different grade even if parents get involved in homework with the same means [1].

2.1. Autonomy Support

Autonomy support refers to enough freedom and sufficient back up from parents, which means that parents give guidance to children based on their own willingness. In another words, autonomy support is based on mutual respect between parents and children [5].

Many teachers believe that autonomy support of parental involvement in homework is the most beneficial one [6]. It not only helps children solve problems in homework but also has some potential benefits, such as it gives parents and children a chance to communicate what happened in school. It can help children to solve problems timely. Parents could help children analyze the reason of problems and guide their children to think independently [5, 7]. In this process, children's ability of reading, independent thinking, self-regulation, time management and many other skills could be improved. It helps children to build up their self-confidence and improves their academic performance. Additionally, the higher grade students in, the more homework autonomy and less involvement are needed. When children are in higher grade, parents need to give more autonomy in order to strengthen their independent ability to finish tasks. Therefore, parental autonomy support could be the most helpful one for students' study ability and academic performance [1].

2.2. Parental Control

Parental control means that parents supervise and control their children to finish homework. In general, there are both advantages and disadvantages in this type of parental involvement in homework [1, 8]. The main advantage is that children can finish their homework in time so their academic achievements can be improved, however, there are also many disadvantages [8]. For example, parents usually control the time and pay more attention to the result. They do not give the chance for children to ask questions. When children have some questions, parents may tell them the answer directly. Therefore, children cannot develop their reading ability, independent thinking ability, self-regulation ability, time management ability and so on. They cannot improve their academic achievement as well. In addition, if parents are busy with their works, children may not finish their homework

independently [1]. It is worth noting that the elementary school parents of males reported more control involvement in homework, while high school parents of females reported more control trend. In other words, the higher grade the children in, the less this method work, or even counterproductive. Consequently, parental control in children's homework is useless in improving their academic achievement [5].

2.3. Interference

Parental interference means parents giving their children so much intervention that the children cannot do their homework autonomously or control the time freely. Specifically, when children do their homework independently, parents would interfere their thinking or give them some invalid help. For instance, some parents tend to chat with their children or give children fruits when they are doing homework. This will break up children's learning and thinking. However, when children get into trouble with homework, parents are not qualified with sufficient knowledge. Actually, parental interference is likely to be ineffective. It cannot help children to solve the difficulties in learning and it cannot cultivate children's learning ability, problem-solving ability [1].

2.4. Cognitive Engagement

Cognitive engagement means that parents communicate with children and improve children's cognitive ability by getting involvement in children's homework. It is claimed that parental cognitive engagement could improve children's academic efficacy. It would give parents a chance to communicate with their children about school performance and build a good relationship between parents and children. It also can help parents to improve children's academic experiences, knowledge and skills [1].

Specifically, parents are generally open-minded so they give children the freedom and opportunity to express their thinking [9]. Parents allow their children talk their school life and learning confusion. Therefore, parents will give children some guidance to help children solve problems and improve their cognitive ability.

However, no authoritative statement has been found to prove on this type of parental involvement in homework could improve students' academic achievement. The reason is that it is helpless for improving children's learning ability explicitly, such as self-management, time management, reading ability and so on [1].

3. Discussion

These four types of parental involvement in homework can be discussed according to different grades [10]. First, when children are in the lower grades, such as in primary school, parents should use autonomy support and control to involve children's homework. They do not have the ability to think independently and finish the homework consciously because of young age. If parents are busy, children may play toys or

watch TV instead of doing their homework. Parents need pay more attention to children's homework in order to train children's ability to finish homework and develop their independent thinking ability [11].

Second, when children are in the middle and high grade, such as in middle school and high school, parents should use both autonomy support and cognitive engagement to involve children's homework, because they need parents' support and respect in this stage [10]. If parents give too much intervention and control of the children's homework, they would cause the children's adverse psychology status. Students in middle and high school are in need of a good relationship with their parents. They want their parents to understand them and give freedom to them. So, parents could use these two ways to develop children's learning ability and help them to improve their academic achievement [11, 12].

In addition, Interference should not appear in any of the children's growth phase since it has negative impact on children's academic achievement. Interference will let children lose autonomy, independence, and will have a reverse psychology [13]. In order to improve children's academic achievement, parents should choose other three types of parental involvement in homework based on the children's situation. Applying the ways of autonomy support, control and engagement cognitive could motivate children's learning interest.

It is worth noting that the above types of parental involvement in children's homework are not suitable for every child. Specifically, students' learning attitude is a direct factor that influences children's academic achievement, the types of parental involvement in homework is the secondary factor. Meanwhile, the attitude of the students towards homework is not related to the types of parental involvement in homework. Therefore, the most important thing for parents to improve the children's academic achievement is to stimulate children's learning motivation and interest. Only children have learning interest, the different types of parental involvement could improve the child's academic achievement effectively [13].

These types of parental involvement do not play the role on children's all subjects. Autonomy support has a negative effect on mathematics Because it requires logical thinking and spatial imagination, but it has positive effect on Chinese and English. Although children are interested in mathematics, it is difficult to improve his or her math grade without logical thinking and spatial imagination [14, 15].

There are also many other factors, such as children's family structure, may influence children's academic achievement. We hope there will be more research about parental involvement in children's homework and children's academic achievement in the future.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, our exploration into parental involvement in children's homework has yielded valuable insights for parents, educators, and schools across mainland China. This study underscores the imperative role that parental engagement

plays in fostering children's academic achievement. Drawing from our findings, we propose a set of practical implications tailored to each stakeholder group to optimize children's learning experience.

For parents, our research strongly advocates for regular communication with teachers. Our observations revealed a concerning lack of attention to children's learning among some parents, exemplified by instances where parents were disengaged and absorbed in their mobile devices during crucial homework periods. To rectify this, it is essential for parents to establish ongoing dialogue with teachers, thus gaining a comprehensive understanding of homework objectives and requirements. By actively participating in their children's homework, parents can cultivate positive homework habits and instill a genuine enthusiasm for learning [15].

Furthermore, parents are urged to nurture a sense of confidence in their children's learning potential. Our encounters with parents expressing doubts about their children's abilities underscore the need to instill belief in their capabilities. This is particularly crucial for younger students. Encouragement and unwavering support are pivotal in fostering an environment where children feel empowered to engage with their studies [15].

Teachers, too, hold a pivotal role in this equation. Our research emphasizes the importance of tailoring homework assignments to match students' capabilities. Assigning excessively challenging tasks not only frustrates children but also places undue pressure on parents. Homework should not only serve as a tool for reinforcing learning but also as an opportunity for collaborative engagement between parents and children. By designing creative assignments, such as role-playing activities, teachers can foster interactions that facilitate communication and stimulate children's interest in learning, especially in subjects like Chinese.

Schools, as institutions shaping young minds, can contribute significantly to parental involvement in children's homework. We advocate for the establishment of parental education programs targeting families encountering difficulties with homework involvement. Such programs would provide insights into the local school system and help parents comprehend the developmental and learning needs of their children. Addressing the challenges faced by families without access to higher education, these initiatives have the potential to bridge knowledge gaps and provide essential tools for fostering effective homework involvement.

As we look toward the future, there are exciting avenues for further research. To delve deeper into the realm of parental involvement in children's homework, future studies could explore the role of cultural factors in shaping parental attitudes and practices. Additionally, investigating how digital technologies could be harnessed to facilitate parental engagement in the context of evolving educational landscapes holds immense potential. By continuously expanding our understanding of parental involvement, we can refine strategies that enhance children's academic achievements and contribute to their holistic development.

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