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Article: **Effects of Home Task on the Academic Achievement of Students at Graduate Level**

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# Effects of Home Task on the Academic Achievement of Students at Graduate Level

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## Abstract

The current aims to examine the impact of home tasks on the academic achievements of students at graduation level. The main objective of the research was to find out the effects of home task descriptive feedback on students' academic achievement, to investigate achievement of experimental group after treatment and to investigate the effect of home task on the performance of individual students. Researcher selected the population of students of Education department from Lahore College for Women University. Sample of 60 students were randomly selected. These sixty students were merged in the group of two; Experimental and Control group, on the basis of GPA. Each group was divided into fifteen students. The control group was kept under control conditions, and experimental group was given daily home task. Feedback was also given to students after each assessment. Duration of the experiment was about two months. The academic achievement of student's was found through achievement test, data was analyzed through t-test and graph. When the treatment did provided the academic achievement of the experimental group was not increased. So, it can be concluded that home task affects negatively on the academic achievement of the students at graduation level.

**Keywords:** academic achievements, home tasks, college education, Lahore College for Women

## Introduction

The effect of home task on student's academic achievement is a highly-debated issue and has been for over a century. Home task likely has a significant impact on students' educational trajectories. Most educators believe that home task can be an important supplement in academic activities. Home task is learning experience that take place outside the class

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room, it a planned part of education, enhance to design better learning. Student's achievement measures the amount of academic content a student learns in a determined amount of time.

Since last 75 years, Home task is a topic of controversy for researchers of educational field (Cooper & Valentine, [2001](#)). The literature indicates that home task methods are popular notions that are used to change educational theories and philosophies. Back in the twentieth 20<sup>th</sup> century, home task was seen a practice for the brain, and learning and retaining was the basic element in gaining new information. The drastic change in the attitude of home task can be seen since 1940's. The main focus was on improving and increasing the learning of the students. Home task was seen as an interruption on extra activities of the students. Nevertheless, by the mid-1960's the movement was once again back, and students found home task as a pressure for them (Cooper et al., [1998](#)).

Lately, many people once again consider home task as an interruption and inconvenience in their personal lives (Cooper & Valentine, [2001](#)). Findings show a gap in the research field of home task especially in relation to formative assessment. Various research findings point to the importance of exploring the quality of home task. Attitude of the public toward home task have been skeptical (Gill & Schlossman, [2004](#)). In the beginning of the twentieth century, home task was considered as a significant mode for disciplining the minds of children. Also, the home study is seen as an interruption with respect to movement of life adjustments and home based. Home task impacts the educational trajectories of students significantly. The positive impact of home is grouped in four categories: (a) prompt learning and achievement; (b) academic in a long term way; (c) non-academic; and, (d) family and parenting benefits. The prompt effect of home task on learning is most commonly rationale (Paschal, Weinstein, & Walberg, 1984).

Home task is supposed to (a) motivate students to learn during their leisure time;(b) improve students' attitudes toward school; and (c) improve students' study habits and skills (Johnson & Pontius, [1989](#); Warton, [2001](#)). Also, home task is offered as a mode for establishing personal attributes in children that can encourage behavior positively.

## **Problem Statement**

This study aimed to examine the impact of home tasks on the academic achievement of students at graduation level.

## **Objectives of the Study**

Main objectives of this study is to:

1. Find out the effect of home task and descriptive feedback on student's academic achievement at graduation level.
2. Investigate the effect of achievement of experimental group after treatment
3. Investigate the effects of home tasks on the performance of individual students

## **Hypothesis of the Study**

The hypothesis tested are:

- H<sub>1</sub>: Students who receive treatment have greater mean gain in achievement score than those who don't receive treatment.
- H<sub>2</sub>: Students who receive treatment have higher mean gain in mid-term test score than those who don't receive treatment.
- H<sub>3</sub>: Students who receive treatment have higher mean gain in final term test score than those who don't receive treatment.
- H<sub>4</sub>: Students who receive treatment have higher mean gain in total achievement score (mid-term and final term) than those who don't receive treatment.
- H<sub>5</sub>: Students who receive treatment will have greater mean gain in their individual's achievements than those who don't receive treatment.

## **Significance of the Study**

Home task is any task assigned to students by the teachers that is meant to be carried out during non-institutional hours. As a daily routine for most students, home task is often regarded as an extension of in-class academic activities and a way to reinforce what students have learned in institutions. It can be seen that along with support and reinforce to learning in classroom by home task, it supports in the development of discipline and confidence which are major part in the success of life., the main purpose of present

study is to investigate the effects of home tasks on the academic achievement of students.

## **Literature Review**

### **History and Development of Home Tasks**

Prior to the 20th century, society felt that homework was meant to discipline children's minds. The brain was seen as a muscle that needed to be exercised, mostly by memorizing important information (Cooper et al., [1998](#)). However, by the start of the 20th century, society formed opposing opinions regarding homework's role in students' learning.

The 1960s and 1970s were the years when there were hard feelings for homework. Homework was considered as unwanted stress that would let students from accomplishing other areas of their personal lives. In the twenty first century, there was a shift towards homework that can be seen by public. Parents started to show their worries for their kids and the amount of anxiety they were experiencing. At this time, there were a lot of mixed feelings by both educators and parents about the role of homework in children's education. The most recent discussions around education have focused on the idea that more time in school, more homework, more technology and more high-stakes testing will better prepare students to face the challenges of the 21st century (Baines, [2000](#))

Throughout history, the effect that homework has been a debating topic among the policy makers, parents and researchers.

### **Common Reasons for Assigning Home Task**

It must be reinforcing material that has already been presented in class (NEA, [2008](#)). Although, determining if students understand the lesson and have mastered the required skills (NEA, [2008](#)). Moreover, homework can also be assigned for non-instructional purposes, such as helping students improve their time management and organizational skills and develop perseverance, responsibility, self-confidence, and self-discipline and also enhancing the communication between children and their parents on the significance of schoolwork and learning (Cooper & Valentine, [2001](#)).

## Benefits of Homework

One of the significant benefit is that this will help the students to understand the content cover. Homework also plays a significant role in provision of diagnostic tool which helps teachers to monitor the progress of their students on regular basis. Homework also gives the time flexibility in class and the estimated material of the curriculum is easily covered in the class.

## Drawbacks of Homework

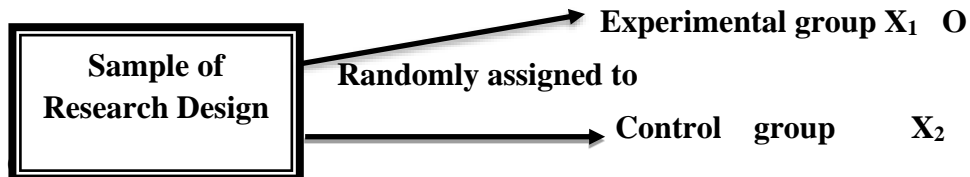
Teachers get very little or almost no information regarding the original educational progress or level of their students. Since homework is not done with the help of their teachers, the completion of the homework remains the mystery for teachers if it has been done by student him/herself or by anyone else.

## Method and Procedure

### Research Design

In present study, quantitative approach was used. Experimental design was adopted because both variables of the study, home task and academic achievement of students, can be investigated better through experimental research. In this study posttest, only control group design was used, as the study was conducted in university where already have two sections that are intact groups. One group taken as an experimental group and other as a control group and has a random selection.

Following was the symbolic representation of group design:



X<sub>1</sub>=treatment of experimental group

X<sub>2</sub>= treatment of control group

O= posttest of both groups

## Population

All students of education department of Lahore College for Women University were the population of the study.

## Sample

For this study, sixty students, from semester four of the department of education were selected, through the process of randomization. They were further divided into 2 groups on the bases of their previous GPA's. There were 15 students in each group.

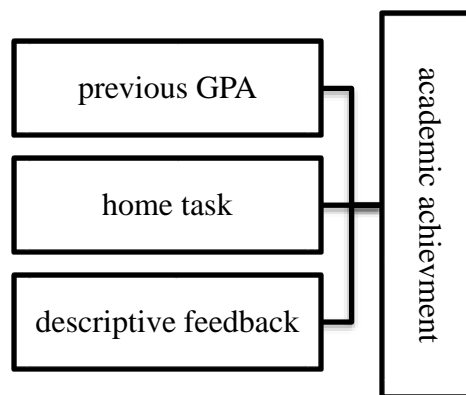
Group 1 = Experimental Group

Group 2 = control Group

## Research Instrument

For present study, self-supported achievement tests were used to measure the academic achievements of students at graduate level. Achievement tests were constructed after a thorough review of test construction techniques and the curriculum of students. 1<sup>st</sup> test was comprised of student's mid-term course work and of 30 marks. Similarly, 2<sup>nd</sup> achievement test was comprised of final-term syllabus of student's and of 50 marks.

## Conceptual Framework



### **Delimitations of the Study**

The study was delimited to only female students of semester 4 as it was conducted in Women University. The experiment was lasted for 8 weeks. The teacher made achievement test was used to measure the student's achievements.

### **Summary of the Study**

The main purpose of the reasearch is to examine the effect of home task on the academic achivement of students at graduation level. For this purpose, all students of education department from Lahore college for Women university were the population. The sample consituted of 30 students, devided into 2 groups, on the basis of their previous CGPA. Participants of experimental group were further divided into three groups on basis of their CGPA; high achievers, average achievers and low achievers. High achievers range was from 3.00-4.00. Average achievers range from 2.00-3.00. Low achievers range from 1.00-2.00. The study was experimental and only control group design was used to examine the variables. Experimental group was assigned home tasks along with their daily lectures whereas control group was taught through lecture method. Duration of experiment was about 2 mounths. Data collection was started from the very first day of experiment. Both the groups were post tested. Collected data was analyzed by using independent t test and graphical representation of daily assigned home tasks.

### **Findings**

Key findings of the study are:

1. Mean scores of experimental group and control group were not significantly different in achievement test. The value of t is  $-0.513$  which is less than the critical value  $1.701$  ( $0.67 > 0.05$ ) at 0.05 level of significance.
2. Mean scores of experimental group and control group are significantly different in mid-term test. The value of t is  $-0.802$  less than the critical value  $1.701$  ( $0.019 < 0.05$ ) at 0.05 level of significance.



3. Mean scores of experimental and control groups are not significantly different in final term test. The value of  $t$  is  $-1.159$  which is less than the critical value  $1.701$  ( $0.789 > 0.05$ ) at  $0.05$  level of significance.
4. Mean scores of experimental and control groups are significantly different in total achievement scores (mid-term + final term test). The value of  $t$  is  $-1.447$  which is less than the critical value  $1.701$  ( $0.082 < 0.05$ ) at  $0.05$  level of significance.
5. In daily home task, high achievers achieved 20% more than average achievers and low achievers achieved 16% less than average achievers.

### Discussion

The current study was planned to examine the effect of home task on academic achievement of students at graduation level. Experimental study was conducted to investigate the effect of home task. Two groups were formed. Experimental group was assigned home task based on lectures on daily bases while control group was taught through lecture method. Students were given descriptive feedback on grammatical mistakes, conceptual mistakes and errors in presenting ideas. The effect of previous achievements on the daily assigned home tasks was also administered in the study. The participants were divided into three groups based on their previous GPA. They were divided into high achievers, average achievers and low achievers respectively. No matter the participant belongs to which group almost every participant has shown some sort of improvement. Individual performance of high achievers raised at a faster pace as compared to the other two groups. Average students gradually improved with consistency, some of the participants from the average achievers even achieved the highest achievable point of performance. However, low achievers improved quite slowly as compared to the average students. The results of the study showed that the daily assigned home tasks did not ultimately lead to the improvement in their semester examinations. Results of control group in achievement test were consistently better than the results of experimental group. Experimental group somewhat improved as compared to their previous GPA but overall it was found that their performance was less than those in control group. These results might have been possible because students of experimental group were overburdened

because of the assigned home tasks, they could not have enough time and stamina to prepare for their final examination.

Literature also supports our results. Some other studies conducted in this regard were also concluded as, home task overload can cause students to lose interest in the academic material and become physically and emotionally fatigued (Naash et al., [2006](#)). Another study was conducted by Horowitz et al. ([2005](#)) the results of the study showed that the mismatches in home task assigned and student readiness can result in frustration and contribute to negative attitudes toward study. So, it can be concluded from above discussion that assigned home tasks have an overall negative impact on students' academic achievements.

## **Conclusions**

It is concluded that the students who were not assigned home task performed better in achievement test than those who were assigned home task. The students who were not assigned home task performed better than those who were assigned home tasks in mid-term tests. It is also concluded that the students who were not receive home task performed better in final term test and the overall performance of students who were not assigned home task is better than the performance of students who were assigned home tasks. The students with higher previous GPA performed better than students with average or low previous GPA in daily assignments. The students with average previous performance performed better than the students of low previous performance in daily assignments.

## **Recommendations**

Following recommendations are formulated on the basis of findings of the study

1. In order class activities may be a better choice than home tasks.
2. Home tasks may be significant at primary and secondary level.
3. The conducted study may be done at higher secondary level to probe further information.

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