



Evaluating teacher and student perspectives on homework

Tanem Ozaygin^a, Ministry of Education and Culture, Lefkosa, North Cyprus, Turkey.

Zehra Ozcinar Uzunboylu^{b1}, Ataturk Teacher Training Academy, İsmail Beyoğlu Caddesi, Küçük Kaymaklı, Lefkosa, 99010, North Cyprus, Turkey, zehra.ozcinar@aoa.edu.tr, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1974-2958>

Suggested Citation:

Ozaygin, T. & Uzunboylu Ozcinar, Z. (2025). Evaluating teacher and student perspectives on homework. *Contemporary Educational Research Journal*, 15(2), 124-136. <https://doi.org/10.18844/cerj.v15i2.9724>

Received from January 01, 2025; revised from February 8, 2025; accepted from April 16, 2025

Selection and peer review under the responsibility of Assoc.Prof. Dr. Deniz Ozcan, Samsun Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey.

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Abstract

This study explores primary school teachers' and students' perspectives on the practice of assigning homework, with a focus on perceptions of effectiveness, workload, and emotional impact. Despite its widespread use, homework remains a contested aspect of educational practice, and a gap exists in understanding how it is perceived by both educators and learners at the primary level. Addressing this gap, the study adopted a qualitative research design and involved 11 classroom teachers and 11 fifth-grade students. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews using semi-structured questions developed by the researcher, and analyzed using content analysis. Findings indicate that while most teachers supported assigning individual homework, they generally opposed group assignments, viewing them as impractical. In contrast, students expressed a preference for tasks that involved experiential learning and minimal writing. They were less supportive of individual assignments, especially those requiring extensive literacy. Teachers suggested that homework should take no more than one hour daily, whereas students favored a shorter duration of approximately twenty minutes. Students also reported predominantly negative emotions associated with homework. These findings highlight the need for reconsidering homework practices to better align with student needs and emotional well-being.

Keywords: Emotional response; experiential learning; homework; primary education; student perspective

* ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: Zehra Ozcinar Uzunboylu, Ataturk Teacher Training Academy, İsmail Beyoğlu Caddesi, Küçük Kaymaklı, Lefkosa, 99010, North Cyprus, Turkey. E-mail address: zehra.ozcinar@aoa.edu.tr

1. INTRODUCTION

The primary responsibility of a teacher is to elevate students to higher levels of knowledge. Activities carried out at school are as significant as those conducted outside the classroom (Zhiyenbayeva et al., 2022). For this reason, teachers often assign homework to keep students engaged beyond school hours. Homework serves to reinforce newly learned topics by encouraging repetition at home and helps students arrive prepared for the next lesson (Wu et al., 2023). While all teachers who participated in the study agreed that homework should be given, some students expressed the opinion that it should not be assigned (Başaran & Vural, 2022).

Homework is defined as an out-of-class activity assigned by a teacher with the purpose of reinforcing and consolidating what has been taught in school (Akran, 2021). Teachers assign homework to extend the educational process beyond school and help students develop self-discipline and independent study habits. However, it is important to recognize that each student's readiness level and individual characteristics differ. Likewise, not every family has the same educational background or the ability to equally support their child's learning at home (Aksu & Karaçöp, 2015).

As a result, some children may struggle with homework or make frequent mistakes. In some classrooms, students may be scolded or blamed for incomplete or incorrect homework, which can negatively impact their psychological development and contribute to undesirable behaviors such as cheating or avoidance (Kurt, 2020; Güneş, 2014).

In recent years, the topic of whether homework should be assigned has sparked considerable debate (Ekici & Akdeniz, 2018). Critics argue that homework infringes on children's rest, relaxation, sleep, and social time. While assigning homework in the early years of education may be necessary, it is also essential that certain criteria be carefully considered when doing so (Tukaiev et al., 2019).

Despite the criticisms, research shows that homework can have positive effects on students' lives. It fosters responsibility, strengthens relationships between schools and families, and reinforces the knowledge acquired during the day, helping students prepare for upcoming lessons. It also encourages students to manage their time effectively and adopt a structured approach to learning (Ardiansyah et al., 2020; Turtulla & Lopar, 2022).

Furthermore, homework allows students to apply learned knowledge in real-life contexts and develop problem-solving skills and a sense of responsibility (Deveci & Önder, 2014). Family involvement plays a critical role in student success. Families act as a support system, and homework creates an opportunity for increased parental engagement in the educational process, thereby strengthening the bond between teachers and parents (Arslan & Arseven, 2022). In essence, homework becomes a shared responsibility that extends beyond the school.

Research shows that when families participate in the homework process, students feel valued and supported, which contributes to a positive attitude toward school and improves academic outcomes (Avcı et al., 2025; Çetinkaya & Uzunkol, 2019). Notably, support does not have to come solely from parents or siblings, it can also involve grandparents or other extended family members (Calp, 2011). Students who observe their family investing time in their education often exhibit more positive attitudes and greater academic success (Alpayar, 2020).

Nevertheless, if homework is not designed according to students' educational needs, it can produce negative outcomes (Yıldırım, 2018). One challenge noted in the literature is the lack of clear guidelines from the Ministry of National Education regarding homework. This lack of regulation creates confusion among educators and prompts ongoing debates among all stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and school administrators (Pektaş & Ulucan, 2022).

Moreover, when teachers focus on assigning a large quantity of homework instead of prioritizing its quality, the effectiveness of the homework diminishes (Aksu & Karaçöp, 2015). This study seeks to shed light on the role of homework in student learning by offering insights to educators on whether homework should be given, and if so, how it should be structured to ensure its maximum benefit.

1.1. Related research

Mustafa Pekas and Çalışkan (2019) examined the perspectives of teachers, students, and parents on the role of homework in education. Their findings revealed that teachers primarily assign homework to serve the purposes of reinforcement and repetition. While students expressed a preference for completing assignments during class time, parents generally aligned with teachers in supporting the educational value of homework. In a similar vein, Aladağ and Doğu (2009) investigated homework in the context of science and technology lessons. Their research indicated that such assignments play a significant role in helping students comprehend subject matter and reinforce what they have learned.

Ektem and Yıldız (2017) explored English teachers' opinions on homework and found that nearly all participants considered it both beneficial and reinforcing for students' learning. Supporting this perspective, Kalsen et al. (2020) gathered insights from school administrators, teachers, and parents regarding homework practices in primary education. The majority of administrators and teachers viewed homework as essential for reinforcing learning and enhancing both academic and school success.

The importance of parental involvement in homework was emphasized in recent studies by Li et al. (2023), Li and Ding (2025), and Gao et al. (2025), all of which highlight that parents should maintain a high level of engagement and adopt a positive stance toward homework to support their children's educational development.

Duban (2016) also explored the views of classroom teachers and found that they generally hold a positive attitude toward assigning homework, believing it to be beneficial for student learning. Similarly, Kaplan Can and Gelbal (2022) focused on mathematics homework from the perspectives of teachers, students, and parents. Their study found that while teachers typically check the completion of homework, they rarely engage in classroom discussions about it or provide written feedback.

1.2. Purpose of study

The purpose of this research is to explore the perspectives of primary school teachers and students regarding the assignment of homework. To achieve this, the study establishes specific sub-objectives aimed at understanding both groups' attitudes and beliefs. For teachers, the research investigates whether primary school students should be given homework and, if so, how it should be structured. It examines the appropriate amount and duration of homework for 5th-grade students, the desired qualities and content of such assignments, and the educational purposes homework should serve. The study also seeks to understand the perceived role of families in supporting students with their homework and how parents should be involved in the educational process. Additionally, it explores whether teachers believe the quantity of homework should be increased as a response to undesirable student behavior.

From the students' perspective, the research aims to evaluate their opinions on whether homework should be assigned and, if so, what types they prefer, such as individual tasks, research-based assignments, or group projects. It examines the amount of time students believe should be spent on daily homework and how they feel while completing these tasks. The study further investigates students' perceptions of how teachers and parents react when they struggle with or make frequent mistakes on homework. Finally, it invites students to reflect on the concept of role reversal, if they were teachers themselves, would they assign homework to ensure student success, and what kind and quantity would they choose? This comprehensive approach aims to provide a balanced understanding of homework from both the educator and learner perspectives.

2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

This section outlines the methodology employed in alignment with the purpose of the research. The study was designed using a qualitative research approach, which allows for an in-depth exploration of participants' thoughts, experiences, and perceptions. Qualitative research is characterized as a systematic and intentional process through which data is collected and interpreted to provide insights into specific problems (Tarkun, 2000). In this

study, the opinions of 5th-grade teachers and students at Dikmen Primary School, a school within the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), were examined to understand their perspectives on homework. Through this qualitative approach, the research aimed to capture the nuanced views of both educators and learners regarding the role and impact of homework in the primary education setting.

2.1. Participants

The research was conducted with a specifically selected study group. This group consisted of 11 classroom teachers employed at Dikmen Primary School and 11 fifth-grade students currently enrolled at the same institution. These participants were purposefully chosen to provide relevant and diverse insights into the study's focus on homework practices in primary education. The inclusion of both teachers and students allowed for a comprehensive examination of the topic from multiple perspectives within the same educational environment.

2.2. Data collection tools

In this study, data were collected by the researcher using the interview technique, a commonly employed method within qualitative research. Face-to-face interviews were conducted to gather detailed and authentic responses from participants. The interview questions were carefully designed to align with the comprehension levels of both teachers and students, ensuring that the questions were accessible and appropriate for each group. To support the development of the interview protocol, a comprehensive literature review was conducted on the topic of homework in primary education. Additionally, feedback from two field experts was incorporated into the process, contributing to the validity and clarity of the final set of interview questions.

2.3. Procedure

During the data collection phase, the interview method, an essential technique in qualitative research, was employed. The researcher presented a set of prepared questions to classroom teachers at Dikmen Primary School who teach 5th-grade students, as well as to the 5th-grade students themselves. All interviews were conducted face-to-face, allowing for direct interaction and more nuanced data collection. Throughout the interviews, the researcher took detailed notes to accurately capture participants' responses. The data collection process was carried out over a period of approximately one month.

2.4. Data analysis technique

In this research, the content analysis method was employed during the data analysis phase. Content analysis is a systematic technique for identifying, organizing, and interpreting qualitative data in a structured and meaningful manner. It is especially useful for analyzing non-numeric, unstructured data to extract patterns, themes, and insights (Ültay et al., 2021). The analysis of the research project was carried out in four distinct stages:

a. Coding of Data:

During the initial phase, the responses gathered through interviews with teachers and students were documented and assigned numerical identifiers. These responses were then systematically examined, and significant segments of the text were coded to reflect meaningful units of analysis.

b. Identification of Themes:

In the second stage, the codes developed in the previous step were grouped into broader categories. Similar expressions were combined under common themes. For instance, statements such as "I feel nervous while doing homework" and "I feel stressed while doing homework" were grouped under a theme related to emotional responses to homework.

c. Organization of Data According to Codes and Themes:

Each participant, both students and teachers, was assigned a unique identifier, starting from S1 for students and T1 for teachers. These identifiers were consistently used when referencing participant responses throughout the analysis. The data were then organized in a structured format based on the established codes and themes.

d. Interpretation and Reporting of Findings:

In the final stage, the organized data were synthesized and interpreted. The themes derived from participant opinions were analyzed to draw conclusions, which were then contextualized within the framework of the study's objectives and the existing literature.

2.5. Ethics

Before conducting the interviews with the students and teachers who participated in the research, the purpose and content of the study were clearly explained to all participants. To ensure ethical compliance, participants were then asked to complete an ethical declaration form, confirming their voluntary participation in the study.

Throughout the research process, particular attention was paid to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all participants. Personal information was anonymized, and no identifying details were included in the presentation of findings. This approach was adopted to uphold ethical standards and ensure that the rights and well-being of all participants were fully respected.

3. RESULTS

In this section, the findings obtained from the interviews with 11 classroom teachers and 11 5th-grade students who constitute the study group of the research are stated, interpreted, and compared with the literature.

3.1. Findings regarding teachers

Table 1. The responses of the teachers participating in the study to the research questions were evaluated.

Table 1
Teacher responses to interview questions

Questions	Answers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Should homework be assigned to students??	Must be given	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Should not be given											
	Individual homework	X				X	X	X			X	
What style should your homework be?	Group homework								X			
	Research-Project homework											X
How much time should daily homework take to complete??	All homework types (Individual, group and research-project (homework)		X	X	X						X	
	40 Minutes											X
What should be the quality	1 Hour	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
	2 Hours									X		
	To the level suitable	X										

of your homework?	Processed to suit the subject	X				X					X
	The topic of reinforcing KGS Exam	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		
	supportive Research-Project direction							X			X
	developer										
	Processed the subject reinforcement	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Find your way to access the information.	X			X	X					
What should be the purpose of your homework?	Incomplete / Not fully learned areas							X			
	specification										
	The information Synthesis										X
	Don't control Homework	X				X				X	X
What should be the role of the family in homework??	A comfortable environment preparation	X			X			X			X
	Do not intervene in students' mistakes.			X				X			
	Guidance and support	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
	Should be increased – the purpose is to punish students	X									
	Should not be increased - The completion of homework must be ensured by giving a penalty for not participating in recess.				X					X	X
Should the amount of homework be increased when unwanted behaviors are exhibited at home?	Should not be increased - The perception of punishment by students may lead to a decrease in motivation.	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X

The study explored the question, "Should homework be given at home?" In response, all teachers (N=11) indicated that homework should indeed be assigned. Regarding the style of homework, teachers largely supported

the concept of "individual homework" (N=5), which they believed helped students remain focused. The least favored types of homework were "group assignments" (N=1) and "research-project homework" (N=1).

The study by Baynazoğlu (2019) found that students are generally happier when engaging in homework that involves research, games, or projects, while homework that involves writing or reading tends to cause dissatisfaction. The findings from this study highlight that homework should be tailored to meet the diverse needs of students. Czerniawski and Kidd's (2013) research on Multiple Intelligence Theory suggests that each individual has a unique intelligence profile, and homework should be designed accordingly, based on students' interests and needs. The results of this study show a divergence of views among teachers, as some support the idea of varied homework types to prevent boredom and maintain student engagement. For example, one teacher noted, "Primary school students should not engage in group homework outside of school. Individual homework should be given instead" (Ö-1). Another teacher argued, "Homework should be varied to include group assignments, individual tasks, research, and presentations to prevent monotony" (S-3).

When considering the daily duration of homework completion, the most frequent response was "1 hour" (N=9). The study by Susam and Demir (2019) found that for students in grades 1 to 3, homework should take approximately 45 minutes to complete, while for grades 4 and 5, it should not exceed 180 minutes weekly. This study aligns with the findings that the average daily homework completion time for 5th-grade students is 25 minutes, but the amount of time needed has increased over time. Some teachers reported durations of "40 minutes" (N=1) and "2 hours" (N=1). One teacher expressed the opinion, "Homework should not exceed 1 hour; otherwise, it becomes overwhelming for students" (S-11), while another stated, "Two hours of homework per day is acceptable" (S-9).

Regarding the nature of homework, the most common response was that homework serves as a "reinforcer" (N=7), with at least one teacher considering it "appropriate" for the level of the student (N=1). Minke's (2017) study at St. Cloud State University emphasized that homework should reinforce learned content without overburdening students. According to Minke, if homework is too time-consuming or unaligned with students' learning needs, it may lose its effectiveness as a reinforcement tool.

Teacher responses about the purpose of homework highlighted its role in reinforcing the material covered in class. One teacher explained, "The main purpose of homework is to help students consolidate what they have learned during the day" (S-8). Another teacher stated, "Homework should help students apply new information in various contexts" (S-11). These views reflect a general consensus that homework should support learning and help fill gaps in students' understanding.

Finally, when asked about the role of families in homework, the most common response was that families should "guide and support" students (N=7). At least two teachers emphasized that families should not intervene in students' mistakes. The involvement of families in guiding students through homework can create a supportive environment, fostering both academic achievement and emotional well-being.

A comfortable environment for children should be prepared by parents, providing a setting that is free from pressure and competition, where children can feel safe, peaceful, and at ease. Parents should ensure that all necessary materials are readily available for the child to access and should guide the child without intervening in their mistakes, as correcting mistakes is the teacher's responsibility. Some teacher opinions on family involvement in homework are as follows:

"Families should guide their child but not correct their mistakes. The child should be allowed to handle mistakes themselves while the teacher is responsible for corrections" (S-3). Another teacher emphasized, "Families should provide a supportive environment where students can do their homework comfortably, with resources within reach. Family involvement in projects is also beneficial" (S-2). A further suggestion included, "For 5th-grade students, families should follow up on homework completion, and if the child struggles, parents should help clarify the subject matter" (S-1).

Regarding the relationship between unwanted behaviors at home and the amount of homework assigned, the majority of teachers (N=7) indicated that increasing the amount of homework in response to unwanted behavior could lead to a decrease in motivation. Only one teacher suggested that punishment in the form of increased homework could be useful. A study by Baynazoğlu (2018) also highlighted that assigning punishment in the form of additional homework can have negative effects on students. This view aligns with the findings of the current study, where teachers expressed a consensus against increasing the homework load in response to undesirable behaviors.

Additionally, regarding the use of punishment for incomplete homework, most teachers argued that homework should not be used as a form of punishment. They noted that increasing homework as a penalty is ineffective, as it may not motivate students but instead cause frustration. Some teachers shared the following opinions:

"Homework should not be used as a punishment. Assigning extra homework does not benefit students and can diminish motivation" (S-5). Another teacher explained, "Punishment should be applied based on the severity of the undesirable behavior, but increasing homework is not an effective solution" (S-1). One teacher elaborated, "Increasing homework does not encourage students to form better habits, and often, the opposite occurs. Instead of increasing homework, other forms of penalties could be applied, such as rewarding students who complete their homework and applying consequences for those who do not" (S-3). Another stated, "Increasing the amount of homework only makes students more reluctant, careless, and demotivated" (S-10).

3.2. To the students Related Findings

Table 2. The responses provided by the students participating in the research have been evaluated in relation to the research questions.

Table 2
Students answered your questions they gave Answers

Questions	Answers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Should homework be given at home? If so, why??	Should be given - as Punishment			X								
	Must be given – helps students prepare for the next class		X			X	X	X			X	X
	Should be given - Helps to understand the course better								X	X		
	Should Not Be Given – students are already tired from school	X										
	Should Not Be Given - homework prevents students from discovering other things					X						
How much time does the student spend on daily homework at home?	1.5 Hours				X				X	X		
	2 Hours	X				X	X				X	
	3 Hours		X	X				X				X
How much time should students	10 Minutes	X										
	20 Minutes			X			X			X		X

spend on daily homework at home?	30 Minutes				X			X		X
	1 Hour		X			X		X		
How does the student feel while doing homework?	Anxious - Stressed		X	X	X	X		X		
	feels they don't know enough		X					X		
	fear									
	Sad	X	X	X	X			X		
How does the family address mistakes made by the student when the teacher is not present?	Tired - Unmotivated - Overwhelmed								X	X
	Good - Happy - Joyful							X		X
How does the teacher assign homework if they were the student?	Family doesn't care	X							X	
	The teacher is angry and screaming, and gives more homework	X	X			X				
	Teacher ignores	X								
	Family encourages		X	X		X	X		X	X
	Family pressure does				X			X		X
How would the teacher assign homework if they were the student?	The teacher has to encourage			X	X		X	X	X	X
	By applying	X	X			X			X	X
	Punishment is assigned to students solely for exhibiting negative behavior			X	X					
	Research - Experiment							X		X
	Individual						X			

The responses from students regarding homework highlight a range of perspectives on its role and impact. Many students believe that homework should primarily serve to reinforce what they have learned in class, helping them to better understand the material. Some students also see homework as essential for preparing them for upcoming lessons, while a few feel that it should be used to explore new topics and broaden their knowledge. These varying views reflect the different ways in which students perceive the educational value of homework.

The amount of time students spend on homework also varies, with most students stating that they spend between 1.5 to 3 hours daily on assignments. While some feel this is manageable, others express frustration at the amount of time required, especially when it leaves little time for socializing or engaging in other personal activities. This range in time spent suggests that the workload might not always align with students' expectations or available time outside of school hours.

When it comes to emotions experienced during homework, students often report feelings of anxiety, stress, and sadness, particularly when they struggle with assignments or feel overwhelmed by the workload. For some, the pressure to complete homework can lead to negative emotional states, impacting their overall well-being. However, a smaller group of students report positive emotions such as happiness and motivation, especially when they feel that the homework is useful, meaningful, or aligns with their learning goals.

Family and teacher involvement in homework also varies greatly. Some students value the encouragement and support they receive from their families, although others note that their families are often too busy to help. Regarding teachers, many students appreciate constructive feedback and guidance, which can increase their motivation and sense of accomplishment. On the other hand, some students feel demotivated by harsh punishments or negative reactions to mistakes, indicating that teachers' attitudes toward errors can significantly influence students' attitudes toward homework.

Finally, students expressed preferences for different types of homework. While many are weary of repetitive writing tasks, they show a stronger preference for assignments that involve research or allow them to apply their knowledge in practical, engaging ways. These types of tasks are seen as more interesting and beneficial, providing students with opportunities to explore new areas and actively participate in their learning process.

Overall, the data suggests that while homework is considered an important educational tool, there are concerns about its duration, the emotional strain it can cause, and the varying levels of support students receive from both teachers and families. Students have expressed a desire for more balanced, meaningful assignments that support their learning without overwhelming them.

4. CONCLUSION

This study, conducted with the participation of teachers and students, revealed differing perspectives on the necessity of assigning homework. All participating teachers reported that homework should be given, mainly to reinforce information learned at school and to prepare students for future lessons. However, some students believed that homework should not be assigned, expressing that it prevents them from exploring other interests and does not benefit their learning. They also reported feeling tired and overwhelmed by it.

The majority of teachers believed that homework should be assigned individually rather than in groups, citing the impracticality of students meeting outside of school to complete group assignments. Research and project-based homework were also seen as something often handled more by the teachers than by the students themselves. When analyzing students' opinions, individual homework was also not favored, with many expressing a preference for homework that is short, does not involve excessive writing, and is more practical or experiential in nature.

In terms of the time, it takes to complete daily homework, teachers generally agreed that one hour should be sufficient. In contrast, students reported spending two to three hours per day on homework, with some saying it interferes with their rest and sleep. Most students felt that daily homework should ideally take about twenty minutes. Teachers emphasized that homework should serve a reinforcing purpose, synthesizing knowledge and identifying gaps in understanding, while also suggesting that families should play a supportive and guiding role in the process.

Most teachers did not support increasing the amount of homework as a consequence of undesirable behavior, fearing it could negatively impact student motivation. While some teachers considered applying alternative penalties such as restricting recess, most believed encouragement was a more effective approach. Students expressed mixed experiences, with many feeling their teachers encouraged them when they made mistakes, though some described negative reactions such as shouting or being ignored. Similarly, families varied in their responses, with some being indifferent due to busy schedules, and others exerting pressure on their children.

Regarding emotional responses to doing homework, most students reported feeling anxious, stressed, or sad. Only a few described feelings good or happy while doing homework. The students' comments included feelings of extreme stress, frustration, and exhaustion, with some describing homework as a thief of their time and energy. They also expressed sadness about missing out on hobbies and social activities due to the burden of homework.

Ozaygin, T. & Uzunboylu Ozcinar, Z. (2025). Evaluating teacher and student perspectives on homework. *Contemporary Educational Research Journal*, 15(2), 124-136. <https://doi.org/10.18844/cej.v15i2.9724>

This study is subject to certain limitations. First, it was limited to 11 fifth-grade teachers working at Dikmen Primary School and 11 fifth-grade students studying at the same school. Second, the research was constrained to the responses provided by the participating primary school teachers and students. Lastly, the study was confined to the spring semester of the 2022–2023 academic year.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

House homework should be organized according to the student's evolving interests and educational needs. It should stimulate curiosity and a desire to explore through research, experiments, and observations. Assignments that incorporate technology can be used to capture students' interest and attention, making the learning process more engaging. Homework should be purpose-driven, helping students develop responsibility and contributing to their academic success. It is important that assignments are given in a sufficient amount and aligned with the student's level and goals. When students make more mistakes in their homework, the amount of homework should not be increased. Instead, corrective studies and guidance services should be provided to support them.

Parents and teachers should work in partnership to support students in completing their homework. Parents should create a safe, peaceful, and comfortable environment at home and ensure that the necessary materials are available. Beyond the quantity of homework, the support and encouragement provided by the family play a vital role in students' academic success and psychological development. If students make more mistakes, parents should be informed about how to respond constructively and avoid comparing their children with others. Training can be provided to guide them in this aspect.

Teacher training programs should evolve to replace traditional forms of homework with technologically integrated and well-designed assignments. When necessary, teachers should offer homework that is effectively structured to support lesson goals and designed to align with students' developmental needs.

Conflict of interest: No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Ethical Approval: The study adheres to the ethical guidelines for conducting research.

Funding: This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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