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Is Homework Completion Significant in Academic and Character Development?

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ABSTRACT

Homework has been a longstanding convention in American Education, but is it truly necessary for students to excel, both in academia and in life? The research conducted is not overly convinced it is necessary, though benefits of such a practice can be identified. Educational professionals and students alike can attest to homework's role in learning comprehension, so long as it is used as a means of practice, not a substitute for classroom learning. The issue is, however, that homework is being used not only to teach lessons outside the classroom, but also occupy students' free time. There are methods to help children improve their homework completion rate, as well as actions that can be taken to adjust overwhelming homework dispensation, but is the United States government truly concerned about the state of its educational system?

Keywords: impact of homework, positive impact of homework, negative impact of homework, history of homework, improving homework

INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions are often mistaken as “universal truths,” ignoring the fact that “universal” implies everyone must be affected in the same way. Prime examples of undeniable universal truths tend to stem from scientific research, such as how human beings cannot survive without food and water. Regardless, a lack of empirical evidence does not hinder systematic norms from being prominent in every day interactions and practices. The issue with society becoming accustomed to these “truths” is said truths become intertwined with the customs of society, making them more difficult to challenge or amend.

One American social standard that is often mistaken for a “universal truth,” at least by its citizens, is the sentiment that the American educational system places on the importance of homework. Though many students of all ages tend to express an opposing sentiment for completing homework assignments, specifically how much they detest doing so, homework is still a common practice at many schools in the United States. At first glance, such remarks from students may appear to be querulous; simply people complaining about needing to complete more work outside of a minimum six-hour school day. However, upon deeper scrutiny, there lay questions pertaining to the value of homework and what it offers American students not only in the present, but also the future.

There are two objectives commonly associated with homework completion in the field of academic research: “the practice of concepts already discussed and preparation for upcoming material” (Maltese & Tai, 2012, p. 54). Researchers also attribute the development of various skill sets to consistent homework completion, such as proficient study habits, greater sense of responsibility, and ability to effectively communicate (regarding confusing or difficult

questions/prompts). Both teachers and students expect the practice of homework to cultivate a deeper understanding of the concepts at hand, thus leading to greater academic attainment. Homework is implemented as an extension of school, intended to augment learning time. In theory, the notion of having more time for one to learn in a given day or throughout the week seems difficult to refute, to the point where various states have looked into increasing the duration of their school days (ex. Oklahoma, Chicago) or school years (ex. North Carolina, Washington, Massachusetts). However, research deduces that academic achievement does not rely solely on the amount of time allotted for academia, but also in the utilization of such time.

The merit of homework assignments is questioned not only by students, but also education professionals inside and outside of the United States. Students in the United States are made to believe that after-school assignments are key in facilitating learning, yet the education system of countries like Finland and South Korea, countries that self-report administering the lowest levels of homework across the globe, are consistently ranked not only significantly higher than that of the United States, but also the highest ranked in the world (first and third respectively, according to World Top 20 Project, a virtual domain that ranks world education systems year by year). The objective of this paper is to delve into information regarding the significance of homework on the academic and psychological development of the average student. After thoroughly investigating the relevant research, a verdict will be made on the legitimacy of homework as a practice for shaping minds. The question this paper is aiming to answer is as follows: is completing homework assignments imperative for students to achieve to their highest capacity either as an academic or an adult in the workforce, or is homework completion not indicative of future success at any level?

LITERATURE REVIEW

HISTORY

The crux of most anti-homework attitudes centers on “school imperialism” and the negative impact homework has on the cognitive development of children. Such attitudes can be traced as far back as 1887, where a student in DeWitt, Texas refused to complete his homework for two nights, citing that the school had no jurisdiction regarding time outside of school. His actions resulted in his teacher whipping him (the standard punishment for non-compliance). In response, the student stabbed the teacher under the shoulder and in the leg. In the year 1900, Edward Bok, editor of the *Ladies Home Journal*, published an article titled “A National Crime at the Feet of American Parents,” in which he censured the practice of homework, typifying it as “the most barbarous part of the whole [schooling] system” (Kralovec, 2007, p. 9). Come the 1930’s, education professionals such as John Dewey and Calvin S. Hall introduced new philosophies into the anti-homework discussion, placing emphasis on “the value of play and free time, which homework shortchanged,” as well the importance of “family life” (Kralovec, 2007, p. 9).

The homework debate persisted between traditional and progressive education professionals, but in 1957 the educational terrain shifted drastically with the launch of the Soviet Union’s Sputnik, the first artificial earth satellite. The United States was beaten into space by their chief adversaries, and was looking to rectify its shortcomings immediately. The response was to make homework a more prevalent fixture in United States education, which required students to dedicate more hours to studying science and math. Homework rates only increased as the years went on, prompting more arguments from the anti-homework camp. During the late sixties, “both the

American Educational Research Association and the National Education Association published statements about the need to limit homework” (Kralovec, 2007, p. 10).

In 1983, the publication of *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, a report of the United States educational system, stated the U.S. school system was stagnating compared to its international counterparts. The contents of the report were so damning of the American educational system that they garnered massive support for implementing more homework, seen as the only method of increasing academic achievement in American students. Since the release of *A Nation at Risk*, homework has been a ubiquitous facet of the American school system. Though the educational community has placed hefty significance on the practice of homework, criticism of such a practice has not subsided. Educational professionals, as well as some parents, continue to insist homework is “excessive and damages family life” (Kralovec, 2007, p. 11).

THE PRESENT

For over a century scholars have argued over the merits of homework, and though both sides have carried out credible research, there is no universal consensus regarding the benefits of homework. In the academic journal, “When is Homework Worth the Time?: Evaluating the Association Between Homework and Achievement in High School Science and Math,” the authors, Maltese & Tai, cite two major studies of homework impact, both conducted by Harris Cooper, a salient scholar on the subject. First, Cooper et al. examined a compilation of studies published between 1987 and 2003, which centered on the correlation between homework and achievement. A majority of the research scrutinized the relationship between the volume of homework reported by students and said students’ test grades. To supplement the review, “Cooper et al. conducted a meta-analysis of the

results from the studies and concluded that the amount of homework completed by students has a significant and positive relationship with student achievement and noted that this relationship is greatest for secondary students” (2012, p. 54). However, though both studies determined that there was a positive correlation between homework time and achievement, the findings were deemed inconclusive. The reasoning for this outcome was due to both studies using summed values for homework time and achievement (ex. GPA or test scores), as opposed to thoroughly delving into child’s comprehension of the subject at hand (ex. if the child could express a thorough understanding of the subject, rather than memorize the terms of said subject for a test).

Most of the reviewed research examined the association between amounts of homework reported by students and their performance on achievement tests. To complement the review, Cooper et al. conducted a meta-analysis of the results from the studies and concluded that the amount of homework completed by students has a significant and positive relationship with student achievement and noted that this relationship is greatest for secondary students. While both studies suggested that there is a significant and positive association between homework time and achievement, the findings lack resolution because both studies used summed values for homework time and achievement (e.g., GPA or test scores).

Other studies yield conclusions that are less supportive of homework as an institution. In Daniel J. Henderson’s, “Are We Wasting Our Children’s Time by Giving Them More Homework?” Henderson and his research team analyze the effect of homework on tests from four core academic fields: math, science, English, and history. The information was retrieved from the NELS:88, a hefty longitudinal study administered

by the National Center for Educational Statistics. The sample was selected over the course of two stages. In the first stage, 1032 schools were selected out of a pool of 40,000. In the second stage, twenty-six students, all eighth graders, were selected per school; the chosen subjects were selected based on race and gender. Ultimately, the original sample contained an estimate of 25,000 students. The study was governed as follows:

“To measure academic achievement, students were administered cognitive tests in math, science, English and history. In addition, for every participating student, the NELS:88 fielded questionnaires for two academic-subject teachers, whom provided information pertaining to their background and the classroom environment. The two surveyed teachers were selected by randomly assigning each sampled school to one of four subject area groupings: math/English, math/history, science/English, and science/history. This nature of the data allows us to observe two outcomes for each student. That is, an outcome is observed for each student in each of the two sampled subjects along with data on the teacher of the student in the given subject. (2011, p. 4).”

The resulting research indicated homework having a significant effect on math test scores, but yielding little to no impact on test scores pertaining to the other three subjects.

The initial objective of homework was to bolster two underlying characteristics of students: intellectual growth and autonomy. In the academic journal “Homework practices and academic achievement: The mediating role of self-efficacy and perceived responsibility beliefs,” researchers Zimmerman and Kitsantas investigated the role homework played in relation to the students “self-efficacy beliefs regarding their use of specific learning processes (e.g., organizing, memorizing, concentrating, monitoring, etc.), perceptions of academic responsibility, and academic achievement” (2005, p. 397). The study population (one hundred and seventy-nine subjects in total) comprised of all female high school students hailing from a variety of ethnic and mixed socioeconomic backgrounds, who inhabited a major metropolitan region of the United States. The school said

subjects attended accentuated the significance of homework in their curriculum, reportedly assigning more than three hours of homework a day.

The test subjects were required to complete one personal questionnaire (ex. age, grade, ethnicity), which including a question asking how long the subject takes to complete their respective homework assignments, to which the average response was three hours and ten minutes. Next, the subject filled out a survey composed of two sections: homework quantity and homework quality. Homework quantity asked the subject to answer questions regarding how much time she took to complete her work (in general or focusing on specific types of assignments), whereas the quality questions centered on factors that could affect her ability to complete said homework (ex. having a place/time to study, planning study schedule, success rate of completing preset goals, etc.). Finally, the subjects completed two scales: the *self-efficacy for learning* and the *perceived responsibility for learning*. The former scale asked the subjects a series of self-report measures regarding being able to perform “various forms of academic learning, such as reading, note taking, test taking, writing, and studying. The items of the scale were constructed to assess students’ certainty about coping with various academic problems or contexts, such as having trouble concentrating on a reading assignment or having missed class” (2005, p. 403). The latter scale asked the subject a series of questions intended to specify whether the subject believes the student or the teacher was more accountable for various learning outcomes, such as behavior in class (ex. fooling around), learning processes (ex. not taking notes), and lack of motivation/effort. The results of the study revealed a positive correlation between highly efficient study methods/habits and favorable perception of academic capacity, as well as attitudes in favor of personal responsibility. While it appears, the

educational community has not unanimously supported the former finding, the latter has garnered sizably more backing from both researchers and students.

THE FUTURE

Though the academic journals shared thus far have not been overly damning of the practice of homework, educators are constantly working on ways to improve homework as an institution. In “Improving Homework Completion and Academic Performance: Lessons From Special Education,” the two authors, Bryan Tanis and Karen Burstein, cite two major reasons for lack of homework completion. The first reason revolves around the child’s character traits, such as poor organizational skills, listening comprehension, and ability to self-motivate. The second reason focuses on the teacher’s insufficiency in assigning/crafting assignments (ex. too difficult or time consuming, do not properly bolstering students’ comprehension of materials prior). A concern commonly expressed amongst educational professionals is when particular homework is assigned to all the children of one class, rather than assignments being personalized to better suit the academic capacity and/or learning preferences of each child.

The research presented in the journal advocates and supports several strategies for improving both the quality of homework and the completion rate of homework. These strategies include, “(a) reinforcements, (b) graphing, (c) cooperative study teams, (d) homework planners, (e) real-life assignments, and (f) family involvement” (2004, p. 219). Graphing and homework planners are student made and used to help them become more organized. The graphs are color-coded to indicate the student’s rate of homework completion (green for timely completion, yellow for tardy completion, and red for zero completion of the assignment), which would be shared in parent-teacher conferences. Homework planners are intended to serve as a creative outlet for students, regarding how they design their

planners, but more importantly encourage better work habits amongst the students. Examples of such habits include writing down the objective/requirements of a given assignment as well as its due date, designating time to complete the assignment, and making note of other events that may be occurring throughout that week. Parents would also be able to provide input regarding given assignments in said planners.

Cooperative study teams and family involvement concern the student's ability to collaborate with others, and in the case of family also use intimate intrapersonal relationships to facilitate learning. The former is essentially a peer-review format. In the academic journal the groups comprised of three or four students. These groups met for 10 minutes daily, where each member submitted their completed assignment to the designated "checker" (a position that alternated each day), who essentially reviewed the work and reported the grades to the teacher. The teacher would hand back the work for the students to correct, a process in which the students were encouraged to collaborate with their fellow team members. The team would be given a collective grade based on both homework completion rates and the number correct answers. The study concluded that students who belonged to cooperative study teams were more likely to complete their homework and have more correct responses than those of peers who did not belong to such teams. Studies also found that students whose parents played an active role in their homework process have a higher homework completion rate than those whose parents who play a more dissociated role.

Real-life assignments and reinforcements are used to apply meaning to the work in class for students who struggle to identify with the topic at hand. The former is intended to make the content of the work more valuable in an intrinsic sense, whereas the

latter offer extrinsic rewards for homework completion. Real-life assignments are geared towards connecting class work to events that occurred at home or in their community on a daily basis. Examples of such assignments in the journal were teaching primary students to tell time by having them mark a “clock with the times that [their] favorite television shows began and ended” (2004, p. 217), or creating card games involving class vocabulary words that could be played with their family. The point of these assignments are to apply a dimension of relevance the work being done in class, thus allowing the student to invest more interest in the subject at hand. Reinforcements are simply incentives for children to complete their homework, such as extra recess time or materialistic prizes.

Some educational professionals, as well as concerned parents, believe the answer in adjusting today’s homework practices is in shifting the focus less on homework completion and more on the overall mental health and wellbeing of the students. As explored in *Rethinking Homework: Best Practices That Support Diverse Needs, 2nd edition*, author Cathy A. Vatterott discusses the “Balance Movement,” a movement that champions the need for students to have well-rounded educations. There was a study conducted by *Time* magazine in 2016, in which it was revealed that amongst more than 5,000 high school students in 13 affluent public and private schools, more than 70 percent of said students reported frequently feeling stressed by their schoolwork. Many admitted to resorting to “taking illegal stimulants to stay awake to study and complete the lengthy homework assignments each night. Very few found the homework to be useful or meaningful—which only added to their frustration with the heavy workload” (2018, p. 12). Notions supported in the “Balance Movement” include not overwhelming the

students with after school assignments, especially those intended to serve more as busy work rather than conducive to learning, and allowing them an appropriate amount of time to both partake in leisure activities and sleep.

METHODOLOGY

All of the information presented prior to the LITERATURE GAP section was obtained from academic peer-reviewed journals. These sources were accessed through the SUNY Purchase Library database and/or the “scholarly articles” subset of Google Scholar. The key search terms/phrases used were “impact of homework,” “positive impact of homework,” “negative impact of homework,” “history of homework,” and “improving homework.” The “Literature Gap” section, as mentioned previously, was carried out either in person (U.S. residents) or via video chat (NZ residents). I posed the questions to the peer participants, they responded in a conversational fashion, and I recorded their responses on my laptop (typed into a word document).

RESULTS

LITERATURE GAP

There is a dearth of research pertaining to the correlation between one’s homework completion rate in secondary school and their perception of their work rate after graduating from said secondary school. Therefore, I took it upon myself to reach out to various young adults, who all consented to answer questions regarding their history with homework and their resulting opinions on homework as a practice. I conversed with six individuals: all male, aged either 23 or 24, and resided in one of two countries (the United States of America or New Zealand). The identities of these participants will remain anonymous, and their contributions are written exactly as they were expressed during our conversation, which was conducted either in person or through video chat. There were eight questions total, which read as follows:

1. *How old are you?*
2. *What country do you reside in?*
3. *What is your prime occupation (work, education, etc.)?*
4. *How many hours of homework do you estimate you completed (per day or per week) while attending secondary school (junior high through high school/year 7 through 13)?*
5. *Do you believe your rate of homework completion had a significant impact on your learning process (understanding the topic at hand)? Explain your answer.*
6. *Did you find homework pertaining to a specific topic helpful, interesting, or challenging? If so, specify the topic and explain how homework helped better your understanding of said topic.*
7. *Do you believe your rate of homework completion had a significant impact on your work ethic (sense of responsibility)? Explain your answer.*
8. *Do you believe homework is necessary in guiding children to become responsible/well-rounded adults or does homework as a practice need to be abolished/adjusted? Explain your answer.*

The first three questions were designed to establish basic background details, while the following five questions all directly related to the participants homework habits and attitudes.

Though the occupations of the participants varied greatly (construction/sewer maintenance worker, graduate student in law school, zoology research assistant, systems engineer, market surveillance analyst, underwriting associate), they all deemed homework as, at the very least, a potentially beneficial aspect of schooling in general. Many of the participants felt completing homework helped progress their understanding of the topic at hand, and felt “lost” in class or lacked comprehension on the respective subject whenever they did not complete homework assigned prior. However, the participants stressed the significance of homework as a means of practice, not as a primary source of obtaining knowledge. They believed homework should facilitate one’s ability to perform in class, not utilized as a substitute for teaching. A common notion also exhibited in the responses was homework completion helps instill a sense of personal responsibility, including time management. Not all of the participants believed that consistent homework completion was vital in developing a work ethic, but most did identify a positive parallel between the two. The specific responses from each individual are presented throughout appendices A through H.

There are several important caveats that should be noted regarding my execution of this portion of the paper. Firstly, my sample population is far too small for any information retrieved to categorically portray any population. If others were to adopt a similar approach in the future, their sample population should be far more numerous than three from two different countries. Secondly, the three participants from each country attended the same secondary schools, therefore only shedding insight on the teaching methods of two schools per country (one middle school and one high school). Thirdly, the participants are of a similar economic standing (middle class), which means the information obtained cannot be reflective of schooling in general. The teaching methods of a moderately affluent school will likely differ from those of schools in underprivileged areas. Finally, all of the participants were of the same sex, age range and mostly same ethnicity (five of the participants were white, one was of a mix of white and Chinese). The sample population cannot attempt to represent a general public attitude unless its participants are representative of diverse cultures and experiences.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS/CONCLUSION

Prior to writing this paper I was of the mindset that homework as a practice was emblematic of the faults of modern education in the United States. I believed these faults resulted from placing larger emphasis on academic achievement rather than development of the student, both as a learner and an individual. My stance was bolstered when I compared the U.S. educational system to that of Finland, being as the latter is universally renowned for its schooling, while the former can consider itself fortunate to be deemed top ten in any reputable list regarding world education rankings. A massive distinction between the two school systems was that Finnish students were not required to complete homework, whereas homework is a key fixture in the American school system. After reviewing several academic journals and conversing with several young adults my perspective on

homework is ultimately unchanged. However, I have adjusted my attitude regarding where the main issues lie.

If administered with consideration for the student as an individual, homework can be a significant aide to learning. It provides the student the opportunity to practice what was observed in class. Homework assignments can also encourage students to develop proactive study and work habits, such as time management (working with deadlines) and communication (asking the teacher for clarification/guidance on the information discussed in class). Where homework fails as a practice is when it is used to replace classroom learning or primarily occupy the student's free time. The former method has proven to be insufficient for comprehensive learning. The latter method is more likely to deter the student's academic interest rather than burgeon it.

In order for the American school system to improve, all parties involved must do their part to ensure that a given student is properly accommodated and assigned work that is appropriate for them both in terms of content and volume. Schools must allow their teachers freedom regarding how they allocate academic material to their respective students. Teachers must take it upon themselves to facilitate an environment that encourages learning, as well as identify the strengths and weaknesses of each individual student, and then assign work accordingly. They must also be willing to corroborate with the parents of said students and other education professionals. Parents must be available to assist their children with homework, and if their child exhibits prominent learning difficulties then the parents must communicate such to both the school and the child's instructors. Finally, the student must learn to take responsibility for a) completing homework when the task at hand is reasonable, and b) voicing concerns when they are struggling with class material or feel they are being required to take on too much.

Unfortunately, many schools in the United States are not sufficiently supported, which will affect the amount of resources available to both teachers and students. The sad truth is the United States government is more concerned with amplifying the budget of the military than that of education in America. It is not that educational professionals are short on ideas about how to improve American schooling, which would likely include imposing regulations on homework, but rather they are often not given the tools needed to build upon such ideas. In order for this country to undergo widespread, sweeping educational reform, it must make education a top priority. Until then, excessive amounts of homework will continue to plague American students, though admittedly the impact will be disproportionate. There are, after all, some schools that can afford to let kids be kids.

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APPENDIX A

Table 1

Q1: *How old are you?*

Peer Participant	Response
1	24
2	23
3	24
4	23
5	24
6	23

APPENDIX B

Table 2

Q2: *What country do you reside in?*

Peer Participant	Response
1	United States of America
2	United States of America
3	United States of America
4	New Zealand
5	New Zealand
6	New Zealand

APPENDIX C

Table 3

Q1: *What is your prime occupation (work, education, etc.)?*

Peer Participant	Response
1	Underwriting associate
2	Systems Engineer
3	Construction and Sewer Worker
4	Law Student in Graduate School
5	Zoology Research Assistant
6	Market surveillance analyst

APPENDIX D

Table 4

Q1: How many hours of homework do you estimate you completed (per day or per week) while attending secondary school (junior high through high school/year 7 through 13)?

Peer Participant	Response
1	1 hr/day
2	2 hrs/day
3	8 hrs/week
4	4 hrs/week
5	1 hr/day. At my secondary school we were given “homework” and “assignments.” Homework was not graded, but was useful if you needed to practice the material. Assignments were graded. I prioritized completing assignments over homework.
6	1.5 hrs/week. Behaviourally, homework was seldom completed on a routine basis, nor was it a mandatory requirement in secondary school. Homework was done on an as demanded basis (i.e. project due/exams).

APPENDIX E

Table 5

Q5: Do you believe your rate of homework completion had a significant impact on your learning process (understanding the topic at hand)? Explain your answer.

Peer Participant	Response
1	No. I caught on to the lessons taught in class quickly.
2	Yes, homework allowed me to practice what was taught in classes such as math and science. For English classes, writing assignments just made me a better writer in general.
3	In ways it acted as practice for me that prepared me for a test later and trained my mind to recognize different ways to break down an answer in any question I'd see later on test.
4	Definitely, because it meant I was able to check I understood the topic properly by going away and completing further practice questions etc.
5	During schooling, probably yes, because exam time during high school became crunch time, with lots of cramming. From memory I hadn't reinforced what I had learned in class during the year until study leave (when the exam period begins). This was probably because there was a lot of time spent on graded assignments, and not necessarily on homework.
6	As per Question 5, homework was often completed when an assessment was due. My personal time management in secondary school was poor. There was an underlying desire to gain high marks, with little effort required. Therefore, when homework was undertaken, combined with a time constraint, the task often drove a 'rote learning' process specific to answering the assessment. Understanding the material ranked secondary, especially in topics I held little interest in.

APPENDIX F

Table 6

Q6: Did you find homework pertaining to a specific topic helpful, interesting, or challenging? If so, specify the topic and explain how homework helped better your understanding of said topic.

Peer Participant	Response
1	Environmental sciences; it was an interesting topic to me.
2	Yes, I found homework in English and math/science to be the most rewarding. In both cases the repetition and practice made me better. In math specifically it exposed me to different variations of a problem, which really helped when it came time to take a test.
3	I found homework for history classes enjoyable as it helped me better understand the reasons why certain things in history happened the way they did and allowed me to gather more information I could easily include as arguments in assignments (papers and essays) later. Math homework was in a way enjoyable and helpful as for me the more repetition of work in the particular subject was helpful to me.
4	I would have found the homework much harder generally speaking if my parents weren't able to answer some of the questions I had about the topic, such as asking dad questions about math. But with process-based classes like math or chemistry where it was all about following the formula, I found completing the homework helpful because it made me have to use the relevant formula multiple times on different examples to make sure I understood what I was doing, rather than just being good at guessing.
5	I remember homework for statistics in year 13 was too challenging (it probably would have been fine if the class wasn't disruptive – suffice to say, I didn't learn anything from homework for that subject). From memory, overall homework throughout high school was not memorable, nor particularly interesting.
6	Sometimes. Homework geared towards critical thinking and problem solving I personally found to be most engaging. This was often specific to topics I enjoyed.

APPENDIX G

Table 7

Q7: Do you believe your rate of homework completion had a significant impact on your work ethic (sense of responsibility)? Explain your answer.

Peer Participant	Response
1	Yes. I didn't complete my homework when it was due and my work ethic sucks.
2	Yes. Even though doing homework sucked, looking back at it, it made me more responsible. In addition to teaching me responsibility I learned important skills such as time management, problem solving, and integrity.
3	Not really. I didn't always turn in homework on time or put the same amount of effort into each assignment or subject as I could. Since starting my full time work life I have always been on time (or at the very least 95% of the time) at both jobs I now hold. I put in all my energy into working said jobs so I can be considered reliable and a prime asset to their respective operations.
4	Yes. When I did the homework, I had a much better understanding of what was going on in the classroom and when I did not do the homework, I was more lost. This made me realise that doing the homework improved my learning, and made completing tasks more enjoyable so it made me keep a high work ethic for everything.
5	If it does, I have not felt the correlation, neither am I sure I would have been able to identify the correlation if it existed. I suppose that is one of those questions that can only be answered by people that had a high rate of homework completion. My general sense of responsibility when it comes to work is quite high though. In my opinion, work ethic is more akin to diligence (i.e. getting things done and on time); I do have some faults in that regard. But in general, I am unsure if my homework completion rate (or lack of) reinforced my work ethic.
6	The rate of completion – no. Method of completion – yes. A positive outcome of a last-minute approach to homework developed my resilience and ability to work under pressure. However, impacts of this approach were generally negative, as it would compromise topic understanding, create temporary strain on mental health, etc. Also, the method inspires a false confidence if successful (which I generally was). The rate, or how often I did/completed homework, had little impact.

APPENDIX H

Table 8

Q8: Do you believe homework is necessary in guiding children to become responsible/well-rounded adults or does homework as a practice need to be abolished/adjusted? Explain your answer.

Peer Participant	Response
1	Yes, I believe homework is necessary. However, it should involve components dealing with nature and real-world problems, so it can be practical for people.
2	Yes I think homework is necessary to create well-rounded and responsible young adults. I believe homework should be given in moderation and should be coordinated between the different classes so students are not repeating assignments or working on multiple large assignments at one time. If there is coordination then students can focus on doing one assignment really well rather than dividing their attention between multiple assignments.
3	I don't think it's a good measure of how to predict someone's future work ethic, level of maturity or responsibility as it really only, in my eyes, suited me as practice in order to prepare for tests and essays on the subjects later. It prepares people who will work with deadlines in the future perhaps, but it doesn't prepare people on how to work in a particular field for a long extensive career or how to deal with the changes that come in the workforce. All that comes with on-site work experience, not what you do at home. It also depends on how hungry and motivated a person is. Homework completion might get you a good grade, but when in the work force it matters not on grades but what you're getting paid.
4	I think homework is certainly necessary but I think the message around why it is done has become a bit lost. I see homework as practicing the skills you have learnt at school and also about time management, both of which contribute to establishing a work ethic that makes students realise that when they do work either before or after class as required, they will get a better understanding of what is going on and also teach them how to prioritise their tasks with free time. Where it could be improved is by telling the students what the role of homework is, why they should do it and what to do if they have any problems with completing it. Creating a better dialogue between the students and teachers will (hopefully) get students more engaged with completing their homework and also improve the standard of work completed.

- 5 Yes perhaps, but it depends. I believe homework is useful for reinforcing ideas learned during the school day, thus becoming well rounded children. But I don't see it as a good method as learning new ideas, or if the course material is designed for the following class is dependent around the completion of homework. How homework translates into well rounded adults in general, I have no clue. Indeed, what is the measure of a well-rounded adult? In my opinion, sure it may be possible. But there are many people that did poorly at school (and by extension homework) and have excelled in the work force. In reality, the answer to the question is probably 'it depends', i.e. it depends on the subject being taught and how it is being taught – as homework is largely written by the teacher, the common denominator really is, what is the quality of teacher? Considering the length of schooling a student goes through (and the range of teachers a student is exposed to), there is probably considerable inconsistency. The biggest factor driving a child into a well-rounded individual is probably the parents and the teachers, rather than homework, not that homework doesn't haven't an effect, but might be minimal compared to those other factors.
- 6 Homework has a tendency to be an extension of class work versus a reflective exercise. If geared towards critical thinking as opposed to a task-based exercise, I believe that rate of completion would increase (in my case, anyway). Homework also depends on the material taught. Mathematics is best practiced regularly, though written topics lesser so. **Homework as a practise should be adjusted.** I personally believe that doing homework was a very small component in developing personally, amongst the other factors a teenager would confront in secondary school. My anecdote is that extracurricular activities (sport, music, etc) contributed more to my personal development and uptake of responsibility. In this case, there is a strong argument for the abolishment of homework to accommodate these activities. However, I do believe homework offers benefits. If completed regularly, the exercise helps develop good habits and comprehension of the topic.
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