

# RECONCEPTUALISING HOMEWORK STANDARDS: INSIGHTS FROM EDUCATOR PERSPECTIVES IN KOSOVO'S PRIMARY EDUCATION

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## ABSTRACT

**Aim.** This study explores the impact and implementation of standardised homework practices in primary education, focusing on teachers' experiences and perceptions in Kosovo. The aim is to evaluate the effectiveness of these standards in improving teaching efficiency, student engagement, and academic outcomes.

**Methods.** A qualitative case study was conducted with 10 teachers from a private elementary school in Prishtina. Data was collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews and analysed using thematic analysis. The study investigated how homework standards influence planning, execution, and feedback processes and the challenges faced during implementation.

**Results.** Findings reveal that standardised homework practices improve organization, reduce workload variability, and increase the timely completion of assignments. Teachers noted better time management, enhanced opportunities for providing feedback, and stronger collaboration with parents.

**Conclusion.** Standardised practices foster student motivation and engagement while ensuring age-appropriate and manageable workloads. Despite these benefits, challenges include addressing diverse learning needs and maintaining flexibility in homework design. The study concludes that homework standardisation positively influences teaching practices and learning outcomes, offering actionable insights for improving educational policies.

**Research Restrictions.** The study's findings are limited by the small sample size, limiting generalisability to broader contexts.

**Practical Application.** The results highlight the importance of developing evidence-based homework policies to support teachers, students, and families.

**Cognitive Value.** By examining homework standards in an underexplored educational context, this research provides valuable insights into their role in enhancing primary education practices and policies.

**Keywords:** homework, implementation, standard, performance, effectiveness.

## INTRODUCTION

Homework is a critical element of the educational process, offering students opportunities to practice and reinforce the knowledge gained during teaching hours. It fosters self-management skills, responsibility, and independence, preparing students to meet academic and life challenges (Zhang et al., 2023; Cooper et al., 2006). Research indicates that homework enhances knowledge retention, aids exam preparation, and promotes parental involvement in the learning process (Roschelle et al., 2016; Cooper et al., 2006; Cooper & Valentine, 2001; Dettmers et al., 2019; O'Keeffe et al., 2023). However, to ensure a balanced and effective educational experience, homework must be tailored to students' age and capabilities (Bërdynaj-Syla, 2023).

Historically, homework has been regarded as a strong driver of student learning and has been used as a supplement to formal curricula since the mid-19th century. Over the years, debates have persisted about the benefits of homework, the appropriate minimum age for its introduction, and the ideal type and number of assignments (Jamal & Rizvi, 2021; Rønning, 2011; Zhao et al., 2016; Moorhouse, 2021; Murillo & Martinez-Garrido, 2014). Despite its widespread application, discussions about the role and significance of homework remain inconclusive.

Some researchers argue that homework increases students' academic workload, diminishing their perception of learning as an enjoyable activity (Juralovich, 2023; Kukk et al., 2015; Zappalà et al., 2022; Moè et al., 2020; Costa et al., 2016; Masalimova et al., 2023). Much of the prior research has focused on the positive and negative implications of homework while largely overlooking strategies to optimise its usefulness for student learning. Winifrida Kambona (2024) emphasizes the need for educational policymakers to establish explicit guidelines for parental involvement in homework. Similarly, Lirika Bërdynaj-Syla (2023) advocates for schools to implement homework standards appropriate for elementary grade levels.

This study seeks to expand the existing body of literature by exploring the role of homework management, with a specific emphasis on the impact of homework standardisation as a key aspect of pedagogical practice and student learning. It will analyse the effects of standardised homework on teaching and learning efficacy, as well as examine the role of parents as partners in the educational process.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **The Role and Impact of Homework in Education**

Homework is a well-established educational tool that serves multiple purposes, including motivating students, fostering the development of essential skills and habits, informing parents about student progress, and enhancing academic achievement. These assignments allow students to revisit and reinforce topics covered in class, identify and learn from their mistakes, and prepare for upcoming assessments (Güven & Akçay, 2019). Furthermore, homework plays a critical role in promoting the development of various habits and mind-sets that not only provide immediate academic benefits but also contribute to long-term advantages beyond the scope of formal education (Chophel & Choeda, 2021).

The consensus in existing research is that homework tends to have more positive effects than negative ones, particularly in terms of improving students' study skills, fostering positive attitudes toward school, and demonstrating that learning is not confined to the classroom (Roschelle et al., 2016; Cooper et al., 2006; Cooper & Valentine, 2001; Dettmers et al., 2019; O'Keeffe et al., 2023). Harris Cooper (1989), Joyce L. Epstein (1988), and Pamela M. Warton (2001) highlight that such assignments enable students to develop a stronger connection to their education both at school and at home. However, Kara McNulty (2018) acknowledges that although many students express a dislike for completing homework, they value it as a tool for enhancing their learning and personal development. Similarly, Gökhan Baş et al. (2017) stress that the effectiveness of homework depends on numerous factors, including the role of teachers and parents, the amount and duration of assignments, their alignment with students' developmental levels, and the guidance and feedback provided throughout the process.

At the same time, homework is a uniquely challenging pedagogical practice due to its dependency on the interplay between school and home environments, which can vary significantly among students. Cathy Vatterott (2018) underscores that this variability contributes to the complexity of implementing homework in a manner that is equitable and effective for all students. Janet Alleman et al. (2010) propose seven principles for meaningful homework, which include fostering connections to real-life situations, encouraging parental involvement, and leveraging student diversity as a resource. They argue that homework should be relevant, cost-effective, and reflective of students' lived experiences, aiming to enhance self-efficacy and engagement by promoting practical applications and community integration.

### **Standardizing Homework Practices**

Lindsey Glenn et al. (2015) analysed homework policies across various schools and discovered considerable variation. While many institutions have well-defined

homework policies, others either lack explicit guidelines or do not implement any policies at all. This inconsistency underscores the need for standardised approaches to homework assignments. Cooper et al. (2006) emphasize that although homework serves as a valuable educational tool, excessive amounts can yield diminishing returns and even be counterproductive. Their research advocates for the adoption of the “10-minute rule,” which recommends assigning a maximum of 10 minutes of homework per grade level each night. For instance, second-grade students should complete no more than 20 minutes of homework, whereas fifth-grade students should not exceed 50 minutes of assigned tasks.

An additional factor influencing the effectiveness of homework is the feedback provided by teachers. According to Marina Costa et al. (2016), it is essential that homework assignments are consistently corrected, as this practice reinforces the importance and perceived utility of the tasks for students. Eunsook Hong and Roberta M. Milgram (2000) argue that homework becomes significantly more meaningful when students receive feedback from their teachers. Similarly, Nancy Protheroe (2009) contends that feedback enhances the educational value of homework, particularly when accompanied by classroom discussions about the completed assignments. Such interactions deepen students’ understanding and engagement with the material. Feedback should prioritise error correction, quality improvement, areas for further development, and motivational encouragement for students (Vieites et al., 2024). Traditional evaluative comments, such as “excellent work” or “good job,” are considered less effective and should be replaced with more constructive and specific feedback.

Ann-Marie N. Skaggs (2007) highlights that the provision of feedback is largely dependent on individual teacher practices, which vary widely. Some teachers collect and thoroughly review homework assignments, providing detailed feedback, while others merely check whether the assignments have been completed. Skaggs suggests that if teachers face time constraints that limit their ability to provide feedback, they should consider reducing the quantity of homework assigned. However, a reduction in homework without clear quality assessment frameworks can significantly limit opportunities for learning. This highlights the importance of establishing comprehensive homework policies that balance workload with meaningful feedback. As Cooper (1994) and Skaggs (2007) emphasise, standardised homework assignment policies could potentially redefine the discourse surrounding homework efficiency and effectiveness.

Parental involvement in the homework process has also been shown to have a significant impact on children’s educational outcomes (Dettmers et al., 2019; O’Keeffe et al., 2023; Valle Arias et al., 2015). Antonio Valle et al. (2015) examined the approaches of primary school students toward homework and concluded that both parental involvement and teacher feedback play a critical role in enhancing students’ engagement with their assignments. When parents actively support their children’s homework and this support is complemented by teacher feedback, students feel valued and encouraged by both parties, which increases their motivation to complete assignments.

Lisa O’Keeffe et al. (2023) explored the role of mothers in supporting children with mathematics homework, finding that many mothers feel disadvantaged or lack confidence in their mathematical abilities. This can negatively influence children’s attitudes toward mathematics and contribute to intergenerational cycles of negativity toward the subject. Swantje Dettmers et al. (2019) highlight that strong family-school partnerships (FSPs) can effectively enhance parental involvement, thereby addressing previously overlooked connections between FSPs and parental engagement in homework.

In conclusion, the establishment of effective homework policies, the provision of appropriate and constructive teacher feedback, and the cultivation of strong family-school partnerships are critical for improving student engagement and parental involvement. A well-defined approach and robust support system can significantly enhance educational outcomes, emphasizing the necessity of a standardized framework for homework practices.

## **Aim of present research**

Despite decades of research, the debate continues regarding the challenges teachers face in the practice of assigning homework (Beutlich, 2008; Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Hoeke, 2017; Landing-Cooretjer, 2009). Although homework is a regular practice within the context of this study and a daily concern for every family with school-enrolled children, research indicates that educational policymakers have not yet addressed this issue. This pedagogical practice, widely prevalent in Kosovar schools, has been somewhat neglected as a topic of study. While it is being implemented, it is crucial to investigate it further, as exploring homework by teachers also contributes to improving its quality.

How teachers approach their tasks, including homework assignments for students, has been extensively researched internationally. However, the contextual variables of Kosovar schools represent a dimension that requires examination in terms of how teachers understand and approach this issue.

It is important to note the clear lack of a standardised framework or plan at the general level upon which teachers can base homework assignments, allowing individual needs to be addressed according to the student’s requirements. A review of the literature within the context of this study reveals no official document that outlines any standard for managing homework. However, within the context of this research, homework assignments have been conducted according to a defined standard to ensure a consistent approach that addresses the individual needs of students.

The main objective of this research is to analyse the impact and effects of implementing the homework assignment standard in the context of primary education. Through a qualitative analysis, the study aims to understand how the application of homework assignments influences the engagement and outcomes of students of elementary

education 1-5 grades. Additionally, the research seeks to identify and evaluate the benefits and challenges presented by these standards for teachers and students in general. This analysis aims to provide comprehensive and refined insights that contribute to our understanding of the role and impact of homework assignments in improving the quality of education and teaching practices in a global context.

The study was guided by the following research questions: What changes occur in teachers' practices with the implementation of homework assignments? What are the main benefits and challenges faced by teachers during the implementation process of the homework assignment standard? How does the implementation of the homework assignment standard impact students' engagement and academic performance?

## METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this study is a qualitative case study conducted in a non-public school in Kosovo to examine the implementation and impact of the homework assignment standard. By focusing on deep analysis, the case study method allows for a profound understanding of the influence of these assignments on student engagement and performance, as well as the identification of challenges and benefits experienced by teachers in implementing this standard.

Aligned with this approach, the study adopts a qualitative research design, employing semi-structured interviews as instruments for data collection to examine teachers' perceptions of homework standards. Qualitative research methodologies are selected when there is a paucity of knowledge about a particular topic or phenomenon, and the researcher seeks to investigate or gain deeper insights into it. This approach is a widely accepted method for comprehending individuals' experiences and articulating their viewpoints (Johnson & Christensen, 2019).

### Sample

Data for the present research was collected at a non-public school located in Prishtina. The school has 992 students enrolled and a teaching body composed of 100 teachers, of whom 23 work with elementary school students (i.e. grades 1-5). A total of 10 teachers participated in the present study. Participant ages ranged from 25 to 50 who applied the standard of homework assignments in their teaching practices. This age group includes individuals at various stages of their professional development, from those at the beginning of their careers to those with extensive experience. The participants include both novice and experienced teachers, offering a comprehensive perspective on the use of the homework standard (please see table 1 below).

**Table 1.**  
*Sample demographics*

Name	Gender	Age	Work experience
Teacher 1	F	28	6
Teacher 2	F	25	2
Teacher 3	F	58	35
Teacher 4	F	26	4
Teacher 5	F	24	3
Teacher 6	F	27	5
Teacher 7	F	27	3
Teacher 8	F	30	8
Teacher 9	M	45	20
Teacher 10	F	41	20

*Source.* Own research.

**Instruments and procedures**

The instrument of analysis for this study, a case study conducted in a non-public elementary school, completed a structured set of 10 main questions. This set of questions was used to interview 10 selected teachers who have knowledge in teaching and standards in their teaching practices. Participants were informed in advance, and their data was kept anonymous, participation was on a voluntary basis and participants had the opportunity to opt out of the study at any time. Interviews with these teachers were conducted in a format allowing them to express their thoughts and opinions in detail. Each interview lasted between 35 and 50 minutes, providing a rich platform to convey in-depth information on the topic of study.

**Data analysis**

The data collected from the interviews was analysed using thematic analysis, a method well-suited for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data. This process was carried out collaboratively by two independent raters to ensure a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the data. Researchers independently coded the transcripts, identifying significant phrases related to the research questions. They then discussed and resolved discrepancies, enhancing reliability, and grouped the codes into broader themes by identifying patterns and relationships (Creswell, 2005).

## RESULTS

Themes emerging from the interviews with teachers regarding the homework standard and its role in effectively managing these assignments are presented in Table 2 below. This research has identified six key themes that demonstrate the efficiency of utilising the homework standard in elementary education: Assistance with Homework Planning; Relief from the daily pressure of homework; Advantages of the standard; Completion of homework on time; More time for feedback; Parents embraced the homework standard.

**Table 2.**

*Themes and codes derived from interviews with teachers*

THEMES	CODES	SAMPLE QUOTES
Assistance with Homework Planning / Homework Help Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Facilitation in creating assignments</i></li> <li>– <i>Manage my activities more efficiently</i></li> <li>– <i>Easier control of assignments</i></li> <li>– <i>It has helped me plan the type of homework I want to give more effectively</i></li> </ul>	<p>“The standard of homework assignments has helped me manage my activities more efficiently as a teacher because monitoring assignments and providing feedback requires time and dedication” (Teacher 5)</p> <p>“The homework assignment standard has initially clarified many aspects of work and tasks with children” (Teacher 2)</p>
Relief from the daily pressure of homework/ Relief from the daily burden of homework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Time for extracurricular activities</i></li> <li>– <i>No pressure</i></li> <li>– <i>A much clearer and more concrete way regarding tasks</i></li> <li>– <i>More care in the amount of homework assignment</i></li> <li>– <i>Respecting time for class level</i></li> </ul>	<p>“Students are informed in advance about the time of the tasks and plan the time when to complete them and when to play” (Teacher 10)</p> <p>“Students are not too burdened with tasks” (Teacher 7)</p> <p>“The tasks given are in accordance with their age, therefore the tasks do not take much time to complete “ (Teacher 1)</p>
Advantages of the standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Better time is planned</i></li> <li>– <i>The students work with a lot of will on their homework</i></li> <li>– <i>Children’s fatigue during the week is managed</i></li> <li>– <i>The possibility of “collecting energies</i></li> <li>– <i>They are interesting and stimulate them</i></li> <li>– <i>The involvement of all the students is done, the students research</i></li> <li>– <i>Arouse students’ curiosity</i></li> <li>– <i>It is practical for working with children</i></li> <li>– <i>They are used to the days when they have tasks</i></li> </ul>	<p>“Through the standard, it is possible to plan time better and manage children’s fatigue during the week” (Teacher 8)</p> <p>“The homework standard helps teachers have time to plan assignments to include all children regardless of knowledge level” (Teacher 3)</p> <p>“The advantages of the standard are that the students do their homework with a lot of will, they are interesting and encourage the students to research, they awaken their curiosity and always using their creativity and imagination” (Teacher 4)</p>



THEMES	CODES	SAMPLE QUOTES
Completion of homework on time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– <i>The motivation and will to complete them has been raised</i></li><li>– <i>Reduction of cases of students without assignments</i></li><li>– <i>The students are very regular</i></li><li>– <i>Students are correct with their homework and always bring it in on time.</i></li></ul>	<p>“Students are very regular and correct with their homework and always bring it in on time” ( Teacher 6)</p> <p>“It was observed that the motivation and will to complete them has increased, resulting in a reduction in the cases of students without assignments” (Teacher 9)</p> <p>“Nowadays, children complete their homework punctually, and it is uncommon for them to fail to submit it on time” ( Teacher 5)</p>
More time for feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– <i>More time for feedback</i></li><li>– <i>Better planning to give feedback</i></li><li>– <i>Easier to provide feedback</i></li><li>– <i>Constructive and advisory comments, mistakes he may have made in order to improve</i></li><li>– <i>A relief so that we can also provide feedback</i></li></ul>	<p>“Practicing the simple standard has made it easier so that we can also provide feedback”( Teacher 10)</p> <p>“ One of the things I have always practiced and will always continue to practice is giving feedback on homework and of course the homework standard has helped me in this aspect” (Teacher 3)</p> <p>“With the standard of homework, I find more time to give feedback” ( Teacher 4)</p>
Parents embraced the homework standard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– <i>Included relief for parents</i></li><li>– <i>Scheduling time to help their children</i></li><li>– <i>Information from the beginning of the school year</i></li><li>– <i>Support for homework</i></li><li>– <i>Help in family planning</i></li><li>– <i>The students liked it a lot because, in addition to their homework, they also have free time for games.</i></li><li>– <i>They simply supported it as an idea.</i></li></ul>	<p>“This standard was a relief to the parents, due to their obligations and the lack of time to help the children” (Teacher 5)</p> <p>“Parents have strongly supported this standard because according to them it is easier to plan the time “ ( Teacher 3)</p> <p>“The parents were notified at the same time as the children about the standard of homework and therefore they received it very well, affirming that it helped them a lot in their family planning during the afternoon” ( Teacher 10)</p>

Source. Own research.

Theme 1: Assistance with Homework Planning

In exploring teachers’ perspectives on homework standards, several significant themes emerged. Initially, educators noted that standardised guidelines simplified the assignment creation process by offering clear structures and objectives. This streamlining not only facilitated the development of assignments but also ensured their align-

ment with educational goals, promoting consistency and purpose. For instance, one teacher emphasised, „the standard of homework assignments has helped me manage my activities more efficiently as a teacher because monitoring assignments and providing feedback requires time and dedication” (Teacher 5).

Furthermore, adherence to homework standards enabled teachers to optimise their management of tasks. With predefined criteria and expectations, participants reported reduced time spent on planning and allocating assignments, allowing them to concentrate more effectively on instructional delivery and fostering student engagement. Another teacher highlighted that „the homework assignment standard has initially clarified many aspects of work and tasks with children” (Teacher 2).

Additionally, teachers indicated that standardised homework practices facilitated improved oversight of assignments. Clear guidelines enhanced their ability to monitor and assess student progress, ensuring that tasks were appropriately challenging and aligned with learning objectives.

Moreover, the implementation of homework standards supported teachers in strategically planning assignment types. By providing frameworks and benchmarks, educators could customise tasks to accommodate diverse student needs, thereby enhancing the relevance and educational impact of homework assignments. They also emphasize the importance of a consistent distribution of homework tasks to address teachers’ responses and evaluate assigned tasks, ensuring better learning outcomes for students. All interviewees valued the homework standard as a crucial element in their pedagogical practice. They mentioned that this standard aids in organising and ensuring consistency in assigned tasks for students. Teachers emphasized that this standardised approach facilitates the preparation and monitoring of homework, enabling them to provide more effective and tailored instruction.

## **Theme 2: Relief from the daily pressure of homework**

Relief from the daily burden of homework allows students more time for extracurricular activities, fostering a balanced and well-rounded development. One teacher noted, „Students are informed in advance about the time of the tasks and plan the time when to complete them and when to play” (Teacher 10).

This shift not only reduces stress but also encourages a more holistic approach to education, where learning extends beyond the classroom. Another teacher emphasised that „students are not too burdened with tasks,” highlighting the importance of a balanced workload” (Teacher 7).

Implementing a much clearer and more concrete approach to homework tasks ensures that assignments are purposeful and manageable. Teachers can exercise more care in the amount of homework assigned, respecting the appropriate time for each class level. This approach prevents students from being overwhelmed and allows

them to complete their homework efficiently, leading to better academic performance and a more positive attitude toward learning. One teacher pointed out that „the tasks given are in accordance with their age, therefore the tasks do not take much time to complete” (Teacher 1).

By respecting these guidelines, educators can help students achieve a healthier balance between academic responsibilities and personal development. The findings of this study align with the premise that the standardisation of homework assignments could alleviate the daily burden of homework for students, as the time spent by students on homework is of significant importance and affects their outcomes in the learning process.

### **Theme 3: Advantages of the standard**

The implementation of homework standards offers numerous advantages, one of which is better time management for students. With well-defined guidelines, students can plan their schedules more effectively, ensuring that they allocate sufficient time for homework without overwhelming other activities. One teacher highlights this benefit, noting that „through the standard, it is possible to plan time better and manage children’s fatigue during the week” (Teacher 8).

Moreover, standardised homework tasks are designed to be interesting and stimulating, playing a crucial role in engaging students. These assignments are crafted to arouse students’ curiosity and involve them in meaningful research activities. By incorporating diverse and thought-provoking tasks, educators can ensure the involvement of all students, encouraging them to explore new concepts and ideas. This engagement not only enhances their learning experience but also fosters a deeper interest in the subject matter. As another teacher states, „the advantages of the standard are that the students do their homework with a lot of will, they are interesting and encourage the students to research, they awaken their curiosity and always use their creativity and imagination” (Teacher 4).

In addition, the consistency provided by homework standards helps manage children’s fatigue during the week. With a clear schedule and reasonable expectations, students are less likely to feel overwhelmed and stressed. This management of fatigue allows students to “collect their energies,” ensuring they remain focused and motivated throughout the school week. As a result, students can maintain a healthier lifestyle and approach their studies with a positive mindset. „One teacher’s observation that the standard helps in managing children’s fatigue underscores the importance of this benefit” (Teacher 8).

Furthermore, standardised homework ensures that assignments are practical for working with children of various age groups. Tasks are tailored to be manageable and appropriate for different developmental stages, making it easier for teachers to ad-

dress individual needs. Another teacher mentions that „the homework standard helps teachers have time to plan assignments to include all children regardless of knowledge level” emphasizing the inclusivity and practicality of standardised tasks (Teacher 3).

#### **Theme 4: Completion of homework on time**

The fourth theme that emerged from the research was the completion of homework on time. According to educators, completing homework on time is a significant achievement in the school context. The promotion of motivation and willingness to finish assignments has led to a noticeable increase in timely completion. This effort has resulted in a reduction of instances where students do not submit homework, contributing to enhanced discipline and accountability within the school environment. Teachers have noted this improvement, with one stating, „Students are very regular and correct with their homework and always bring it in on time” (Teacher 6).

Another observed that, “It was observed that the motivation and will to complete them has increased, resulting in a reduction in the cases of students without assignments” (Teacher 9). Furthermore, another teacher affirmed, „Nowadays, children complete their homework punctually, and it is uncommon for them to fail to submit it on time” (Teacher 5).

Students have demonstrated consistent presence and regularity in submitting homework assignments. They exhibit dedication and responsibility, ensuring their tasks are taken seriously and submitted punctually. This level of organisation and commitment aids in fostering a supportive and motivated learning environment for all students.

#### **Theme 5: More time for feedback**

The teachers who participated in the research stated that using the homework standard gave them more opportunities to give timely feedback, so one of the themes that emerged from the research was more time to give feedback. According to one teacher „Practicing the simple standard has made it easier so that we can also provide feedback” (Teacher 10).

Another teacher affirmed, „One of the things I have always practiced and will always continue to practice is giving feedback on homework, and of course, the homework standard has helped me in this aspect” (Teacher 3).

The implementation of structured homework completion schedules allows teachers more time for feedback. By ensuring assignments are submitted on time, educators can dedicate focused periods to assess and provide detailed feedback on student work. This increased time facilitates thorough evaluation and constructive commentary, enhancing the quality of feedback students receive.

This structured approach ensures that feedback is timely, relevant, and tailored to address specific learning needs, thereby maximising its impact on student learning outcomes. The timely completion of homework assignments provides relief for educators, enabling them to focus on providing meaningful feedback. With fewer instances of late submissions, teachers can allocate their time and energy more effectively toward delivering thorough and supportive feedback. This conducive environment promotes a collaborative approach to learning, where feedback serves as a catalyst for academic growth and development.

## **Theme 6: Parents embraced the homework standard**

According to the teachers, parents embraced the homework standard very positively. The introduction of the homework standard provided relief for parents by offering clear guidelines and expectations, alleviating concerns about workload variability, and ensuring assignments were consistent throughout the school year. This initiative enabled parents to allocate time to assist their children with homework, nurturing a supportive home environment conducive to academic success.

Beginning from the start of the school year, parents received comprehensive information about the standard, enabling them to grasp its benefits and implement effective strategies to support their children's learning at home. According to another teacher, „Parents have strongly supported this standard because according to them it is easier to plan the time” (Teacher 3).

The support for homework was evident as parents acknowledged its role in reinforcing learning and academic growth. By adhering to the homework standard, parents found it easier to plan family activities around homework schedules, promoting a balanced approach to education and leisure time. Another teacher observed, „The parents were notified at the same time as the children about the standard of homework and therefore they received it very well, affirming that it helped them a lot in their family planning during the afternoon” (Teacher 10).

## **DISCUSSION**

The adoption of standardised homework guidelines represents a critical advancement in contemporary educational practices, providing a structured framework that supports effective homework management for students, parents, and educators alike. These standards address common challenges associated with homework by streamlining assignment processes, reducing ambiguity, and fostering clarity in task expectations. By promoting consistency and structure, standardised guidelines empower students to better understand their assignments and enable parents to provide informed and ef-

fective support, creating a supportive home environment essential for academic success. Adhering to the “10-minute rule” per grade level, as advocated by Epstein and Frances L. Van Voorhis (2001) and Samantha Kummerer (2015), helps balance students’ workloads, preventing the detrimental effects of excessive homework and promoting sustained engagement with learning.

Collaboration between teachers and parents emerges as a cornerstone for enhancing students’ academic performance and attitudes toward education. This research underscores that clear and consistent homework standards not only enhance teachers’ efficacy in assigning and assessing homework but also enable them to accommodate diverse learning needs more effectively. Despite potential constraints, such as large class sizes, tailoring homework to students’ proficiency levels and providing timely, detailed feedback remains essential. As highlighted by Costa et al. (2016), consistent and constructive evaluation of homework reinforces its value, motivating students to engage meaningfully with their assignments. Timely feedback also allows students to internalize corrections and apply their learning, creating a productive feedback loop that fosters continuous academic improvement.

The variability in feedback practices among teachers, as noted by Skaggs (2007), emphasises the importance of providing educators with guidance and support in managing homework evaluations. Reducing the volume of assignments, where necessary, may facilitate more thorough feedback, ensuring that evaluations are both comprehensive and constructive. Studies such as those by José Carlos Núñez et al. (2015) further affirm that constructive feedback significantly improves students’ task completion rates and encourages critical reflection, enabling them to achieve higher academic outcomes.

Parental involvement also plays a pivotal role in the successful implementation of homework guidelines. When parents are equipped with the knowledge and strategies necessary to support their children’s homework effectively, they can foster a collaborative environment that bridges the home and school contexts. This inclusive approach not only enhances academic performance but also strengthens familial relationships, creating a foundation for holistic student development. Research by Bërdynaj-Syla (2023), Glenn et al. (2015), and Van Voorhis et al. (2013) highlights the benefits of aligning home and school efforts to support students’ educational trajectories.

## CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

The findings of this study emphasise the importance of establishing clear homework guidelines, recommending that schools develop targeted training programmes to increase parental awareness of homework expectations. Such programmes should aim to equip parents with effective strategies for assisting their children while also scaffolding support to promote independent learning. Through these measures, schools and families can collaboratively ensure that homework serves as a meaningful

and impactful component of students' educational experiences, driving both academic achievement and personal growth.

The primary limitations of this study include the sample size and composition. Since the study was an in vitro study conducted in a specific school with a limited number of teachers, the results may not be generalisable to all private or public schools. Additionally, external factors, such as parental support, may have influenced the standards and outcomes of the homework assignments, making it difficult to isolate the exact impact of the school's standards. Even the positive outcomes need to be cautiously interpreted since the study assessed perceptions of how useful homework was for student learning and the degree to which parents were involved in the process. No measures were taken to objectively assess student learning outcomes or parental involvement. A further limitation of this study is the fact that it took place in a non-public school which has more resources and smaller classes compared to public schools in the country which may have aided in the application of homework standards. With that in mind, we can also make an educated guess that parental involvement may have also been influenced by the fact that the student body generally comes from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. In the future, further studies involving a larger sample size and different evaluation methodologies will help improve the generalizability of the study's results.

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## APPENDIX

### Interview questions

- How much did the homework standard help you plan your homework?
- Can you describe what is the standard of homework that you practice?
- What are the advantages of the standard you practice?
- Are there any weaknesses in the standard you practice? If yes/no, explain why?
- Has the standard influenced homework to be completed more quickly?
- Has the homework standard helped you to have more time for feedback on assignments?
- What would you have added or removed from this standard?
- Do you share your experience with school colleagues regarding the standard of assignments?
- How did the children expect the standard of homework?
- How did parents expect the standard of homework?