

## **Attitude Towards Homework: A Comparative Study of High and Low Achievers**

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### **Abstract**

Homework is generally defined as tasks which are assigned to students by their instructors that are meant to be carried out during non-school hours. This issue has been researched and hotly debated by educationists, parents, and students over the last century. Arguments have developed for both positive and negative effects of homework on students' academic and personal growth. This study examines the students' attitudes towards homework in relation to their academic achievement. It is a comparative study of high and low achievers. The research was conducted on 100 students studying at secondary level, randomly selected from four schools of district Sonapat, Haryana, out of which 50 students are male and 50 are female. "Attitude Scale towards Homework" developed by Dr. Usha Mishra (2011) was used in the study. The results of the study indicated that most of the students (45%) have moderate favorable level of attitude towards homework. Significant difference was not observed between high and low achievers regarding their attitude towards homework. Teachers may use the findings in this research to better understand the relationship of students' academic achievements and attitude towards homework.

### **Introduction**

Homework is defined as written/oral individual or group tasks assigned to students by the teacher to be done out of school time with the purpose of getting prepared for a new learning material or reinforcing, expanding, practicing or completing newly learned material (Cooper, 1989:7; Corno, 1996: 27). Hence, the aim of an assignment is to teach students studying independently, planning efficiently, getting organized in group assignments and thinking individually (Sgouros and Martin, 2005). Generally, assignments which provide instruction to continue outside of the classroom are one of the means to gain new abilities, experiences, skills and benefit from the previous learning activities. They assist students to understand what is learnt at school better and improve their retention levels and help them to improve their study skills. Those who value homework believe that it has many advantages to the academic growth of students and has become an important component within the educational system. It is seen by most educators and parents as a necessity for academic excellence (Baines, 2007). Teachers often assign homework as an opportunity to evaluate their student's progress. Students benefit from doing homework in non-academic areas as well as developing academic skills (Baines and Slutsky, 2008). Teachers admit that they often use homework as a tool to evaluate a student's knowledge of the subject matter as well as a method of classroom control (Shumow, Schmidt and Krackar, 2008). Students' enthusiasm in school and academic achievement is influenced by teachers' response to homework and quality of assignments. Murphy and Decker (1989) found that most teachers who consistently checked and graded homework had higher amounts of students completing homework

regularly. Homework can have an overall positive effect on a student's level of achievement, improvement in educational skills, and social skills when structured properly (Haas, 2008).

Beside positive effects of homework described as immediate achievement and learning, long-term academic and nonacademic benefits, there are also some negative effects such as satiation (loss of interest in academic material, physical and emotional fatigue), denial of access to leisure time and community activities (parental interference, pressure to complete and perform well, confusion of instructional techniques), and cheating (copying from other students, help beyond tutoring) (Cooper, 1994). Researchers have also found that homework does not necessarily improve academic achievement. Social class level, family dynamics and students' level of academic achievement in school if not considered when given homework can also have a negative effect on students' grades (Trautwein and Ludtke, 2008). Homework can be detrimental to students and their social development (Baines and Slutsky, 2008). Keeping both opinions in mind, we felt it necessary to study the attitude of students towards homework.

### **Statement of the problem**

Attitude towards Homework: A Comparative Study of High and Low Achievers

### **Objectives**

1. To study the level of attitude of secondary school students towards homework.
2. To compare the attitude of high and low achievers towards homework.
3. To compare the attitude of male and female high achievers towards homework.
4. To compare the attitude of male and female low achievers towards homework.

### **Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant difference between the attitudes of high and low achievers towards homework.
2. There is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female high achievers towards homework.
3. There is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female low achievers towards homework.

### **Methodology**

#### **Sample of the study**

Sample of the present study consisted of 50 male and 50 female respondents of the age group 14 to 16 years, studying in Secondary Schools, selected randomly from four Secondary Schools of District Sonapat, Haryana. For the present study higher achievers were those who secured 65% or above marks in previous class while low achievers were those who secured less than 65% marks in previous class.

#### **Tools used**

Attitude Scale towards Homework" developed by Dr. Usha Mishra (2011) was used in the study. There were 32 statements, 16 positive and 16 negative, to which participants indicated their opinions on a likert type scale by marking "strongly agree", "agree", "indefinite", "disagree", and "strongly disagree".

### **Procedure**

Descriptive survey method of research was employed for the present study. The tools employed in the study were administered on the secondary school students of the age group 14 to 16 years. The data for the present research was collected personally by the

investigator from different schools included in the sample. The survey results showed that among randomly selected 100 students, high and low achievers are found as follows:

**Table-1: Classification of High Achievers and Low achievers among Male and Female**

High Achievers		Low achievers		Total
Males	Females	Males	Females	100
21	25	29	25	

The response received was analyzed through statistical applications using percentage for study the level of the attitude of students towards homework and t-test for comparison of attitude of students towards homework in the light of objectives.

**Table-2: Shows Percentage of Secondary School Students Attitude towards Homework**

Highly Favorable	Most Favorable	Above average Favorable	Moderate Favorable
3%	32%	20%	45%

This data in Table 2 indicates that most of the students are in favour of homework and have positive attitude towards homework. 45% students has moderate favorable attitude towards homework while 32% students show some higher level i.e. Most favorable attitude towards homework. There are 20% respondents who show above average favorable attitude towards homework. Out of 100 students only 3 students are having high favorable attitude towards homework.

**Table-3: Shows the mean, standard deviation and t- ratio for testing the significant differences of high achievers and low achievers' attitude towards homework**

Category	N	M	S.D	S.Ed.	t- value	Level of significance
High Achievers	46	113.87	11.99	2.50	0.54	0.05
Low Achievers	54	115.22	13.04			

It is evident in table-3, that t-value is 0.54 which is not significant at 0.05 levels of confidence. The mean value of low achievers' score for homework is higher than high achievers' scores but it is not significant. Thus null hypothesis "There is no significant difference between the attitudes of high and low achievers towards homework." is accepted.

**Table-4: Shows the mean, standard deviation and t- ratio for testing the significant differences of male and female high achievers' attitude towards homework**

Category	N	M	S.D	S.Ed.	t- value	Level of significance
Male	21	110.38	3.26	2.64	2.43	.05

<b>Female</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>116.8.</b>	<b>12.74</b>			
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Table-4 shows that there is significant a difference between the male and female high achievers regarding their attitude towards homework as the obtained t-values (2.43) is significant at 0.05 level of confidence. The mean values of male and female students who are high achievers on attitude towards homework are 110.38 and 116.8 respectively. It reveals that the female students are better regarding the attitude towards homework. Hence the hypotheses, “There is no significant difference between attitude of male and female high achievers towards homework.” is rejected.

**Table-5: Shows the mean, standard deviation and t- ratio for testing the significant differences of male and female low achievers’ attitude towards homework**

Category	N	M	S.D	S.Ed.	t- value	Level of significance
<b>Male</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>120.58</b>	<b>12.91</b>	<b>3.08</b>	<b>3.75</b>	<b>.05</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>9.69</b>			

Table-5 shows that there are significant differences between the attitude towards homework of male and female students who are low achievers. The obtained t-values is 3.75, which is significant at 0.05 level of confidence. The mean value of male students on attitude towards homework is 120.58, which is greater than the mean value (109) of female students. It reveals that in the category of low achievers, male students have better level of attitude towards homework than female students. Hence the hypotheses, “There is no significant difference between attitude of male and female low achievers towards homework.” is rejected.

**Conclusion**

The result of the present study revealed that most of students had positive attitudes towards homework. 45% students had moderate favorable attitude towards homework while only 3% were in the category of highly favorable attitude. Research evidence shows that there is a negative correlation between the attitude of students towards homework and their grades as low achievers had more positive or we can say high level attitude towards homework than high achievers but it was not significant. It is evident in this study that low achievers tend to show more serious on this issue. In the case of male and female high achievers, significance difference was found in favor of female student but as far as the low achievers was concerned; significance difference was found in favor of male students.

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