

Trainee Teachers' View on Getting Similar Responses from Students Based On Rote Learning. “A Qualitative Study at Elementary Level in Pakistan”

Samiya Ashfaq¹, Dr. Safi Ullah², Dr. Farkhunda Rasheed Choudhary³

¹Teacher Education Department, Faculty of Education, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad.

²Department of Teacher Education Qurtuba University of Science & Information Technology, Peshawar.

³ Assistant Professor Departments of Educational Planning Policy Studies & Leadership

Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad, Pakistan

*Corresponding author, E-mail: safiullah.pedo@gmail.com

Abstract

This research delves into the perspectives of trainee teachers within Pakistani teacher education programs regarding the practice of assigning identical homework and classwork in elementary education. The study encompasses a diverse group of trainee teachers representing various specialties and demographics. The researcher used a descriptive design and a qualitative approach. The qualitative data from the interviews were recorded and analyzed thematically. Thematic analysis involves identifying patterns, themes, and categories in the interview data. The study focused on trainee teachers enrolled in a teacher training program engaged in teaching activities in the Islamabad region of AIOU. Of the 46 students enrolled in this study, 12 students were interviewed using convenience sampling (Stratton, 2021). Interview data were transcribed, coded, and thematically analyzed to identify recurring patterns and themes. The findings reveal a nuanced picture, with trainee teachers acknowledging both the potential benefits and limitations of identical assignments on student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes. Ultimately, the study underscores the importance of striking a balance between reinforcing learning and personalizing assignments to cater to diverse student needs. The recommendations put forth include the promotion of diverse pedagogical approaches, enhancing teacher training programs, fostering critical reflection, and encouraging further research to refine teaching practices in the context of identical assignments in elementary education in Pakistan.

Keywords: Academic performance, Teacher Training, Learning outcome, Motivation, Elementary Education

Introduction

Homework and classwork are integral components of the elementary education system in Pakistan, significantly influencing students' learning experiences and academic development. The practice of assigning identical homework and classwork to students is a common approach, but understanding the perspectives of trainee teachers regarding the relevance, benefits, and challenges of this practice is essential for shaping the future of education. This research proposed to investigate the beliefs and opinions of trainee teachers in Pakistan on the practice of assigning identical homework and classwork at the elementary level, with the aim of enhancing pedagogical practices and teacher training in the country. In the educational landscape of Pakistan, homework and classwork have been enduring elements of the pedagogical process, serving as primary tools for students to consolidate their learning. These assignments are designed to reinforce classroom instruction and encourage students to engage actively with the material outside of school hours. In elementary education, they take on an even more crucial role as they lay the foundation for a student's academic journey (Yildiz and Kılıç, 2020). The practice of assigning identical homework and classwork, wherein students are tasked with similar or identical exercises, is a familiar and widespread approach.

The practice of identical assignments serves certain pedagogical objectives, such as standardization and consistency in teaching methods, it is not without its complexities and controversies. The perspectives and experiences of trainee teachers in Pakistan are vital in understanding the nuanced impact of this practice. Trainee teachers, being the future educators of the nation, hold the key to shaping the educational landscape, and their beliefs and opinions will significantly influence the direction and effectiveness of elementary education.

The Role of Trainee Teachers

Trainee teachers, often enrolled in teacher education programs, represent a dynamic and diverse group of individuals who are preparing to enter the field of elementary education. They bring with them a blend of enthusiasm, fresh ideas, and a deep commitment to fostering the academic and personal development of students (Neelum, 2013). These aspiring educators have embarked on a journey to inspire and facilitate learning, making their perspectives on teaching practices, like assigning identical homework and classwork, of paramount importance.

The beliefs and opinions of trainee teachers can offer unique insights into the challenges and opportunities of elementary education in Pakistan. Through their experiences in the teacher training process and exposure to classrooms, they gain

first-hand knowledge of the impact of various pedagogical methods. This makes them not only valuable stakeholders but also sources of constructive critique and innovation in the field.

Research Objectives

The main objectives of study were:

- i. To determine the trainee teacher's point of view about teaching.
- ii. To determine the trainee teachers in elementary education in Pakistan perceive the impact of identical homework and classwork on the learning outcomes of students.
- iii. To ascertain the beliefs and attitudes of trainee teachers in Pakistan regarding the effectiveness of assigning identical homework and classwork in promoting student engagement and understanding in elementary education

Research Questions:

The following were the main research questions of the study:

- i. What is the trainee teacher's point of view about teaching?
- ii. How do trainee teachers in elementary education in Pakistan perceive the impact of identical homework and classwork on the learning outcomes of students?
- iii. What are the beliefs and attitudes of trainee teachers in Pakistan regarding the effectiveness of assigning identical homework and classwork in promoting student engagement and understanding in elementary education?

Literature Review

This section of the research paper presents a various aspects of homework within an educational context. Literature reviews provide background in connection to research on trainee teachers' view on getting similar response from students based on rote learning.

The provided literature review delves into various aspects of homework within an educational context. It draws on multiple studies, each offering insights into the advantages and purposes of homework, the key factors to contemplate when crafting homework assignments, and the viewpoints of students and other stakeholders on the subject of homework. Here's a breakdown of the fundamental points covered in this literature review:

Öcal&Özer (2012) underscore several advantages associated with homework, which encompass:

- Reinforcing and solidifying formal learning.
- Enhancing the durability of knowledge acquisition.
- Facilitating the acquisition of new information.
- Fostering students' sense of responsibility.
- Nurturing the habit of diligent study.

Jianzhong (2007), as cited in Şen&Gülcan (2012), argues that the design of homework tasks should be influenced by several variables, including student and parent characteristics, homework types, and assignment goals. Homework is characterized as assignments given by educators to be completed beyond regular school hours. Its primary purpose is to enable students to practice and gain a deeper comprehension of the subject matter, emphasizing independent study and reinforcement.

Research indicates that, while both elementary and high school educators assign homework with the overarching goal of enhancing study skills and time management, elementary school teachers place a greater emphasis on cultivating robust study habits and effective time management skills. This early focus assists students in building practices that will serve them as they progress through the education system (Yildiz and Kılıç, 2020). Educators assign homework not only for content reinforcement but also to foster cognitive growth, motivation, and the development of students' self-regulation skills.

Akçöltekin and Doğan (2013) discovered that ninth-grade students exhibited a favorable attitude towards biology homework. Sarıgöz (2009) reported that ninth-grade students felt that completing their chemistry homework on the same day as the lesson enhanced their comprehension and motivation. Research has further delved into student motivation, distinguishing between internal (autonomous) and external (control-centered) motivations, with a preference for internal motivation within the framework of self-determination theory. Several studies have compiled the opinions of students, parents, and educators regarding homework. These perspectives suggest that homework can contribute to students' academic success, foster self-awareness, and even positively influence students' attitudes towards their teachers.

In Pakistan trainee teachers play a crucial role in the education system, and their perspective on homework is instrumental in shaping effective teaching practices (Neelum. 2013). As these aspiring educators embark on their journey to become qualified teachers, they often grapple with the challenge of crafting meaningful and engaging homework assignments for their students. Homework serves as an extension of classroom learning, offering students the opportunity to reinforce and

apply what they've learned. Trainee teachers must not only understand the pedagogical principles behind homework but also adapt these principles to the specific needs and age groups of their students.

Homework assignments designed by trainee teachers should align with educational objectives, taking into account the diverse learning styles and abilities of their students (Şen and Gülcan 2012). These assignments can help students develop critical study habits, improve time management skills, and gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter. As trainee teachers explore the world of education, they often discover that homework can be a valuable tool for fostering student autonomy, motivation, and self-regulation, which are essential skills that will serve students well throughout their academic journeys.

Furthermore, trainee teachers must be open to ongoing professional development and adapt their perspectives on homework based on emerging research and best practices. By remaining receptive to new ideas and approaches, these educators can continuously refine their strategies for assigning and assessing homework, ensuring that it remains a meaningful and beneficial component of the educational process. In this way, trainee teachers can contribute to the ever-evolving landscape of educational practices, ultimately benefiting their students' learning experiences (Neelum. 2013).

In summary, this literature review offers an overview of the advantages of homework, the considerations for designing effective assignments, the disparities in homework approaches between elementary and high school, and the diverse motivations and perspectives of students, parents, and educators regarding the impact of homework on learning and development.

Significance of the Study

Understanding trainee teachers' perspectives on the practice of assigning identical homework and classwork in elementary education in Pakistan is vital for shaping the future of education in the country. The findings can inform teacher training programs, curriculum development, and pedagogical practices to ensure that new teachers are well-prepared to meet the unique needs of Pakistani students.

Research Methodology

The researcher used descriptive design and used qualitative approach. Qualitative research methods, especially interviews, are preferred for their ability to delve into a topic and capture meaningful data. They are excellent at exploring new situations and understanding the full range of participants' experiences and motivations in context. These techniques are central to the participant's perspective and can easily be explored in unexpected ways during the interview. Ultimately, qualitative methods provide a broad view that quantitative approaches often overlook. The qualitative data obtained from the interviews was transcribed and analyzed thematically. Thematic analysis involved identifying recurring patterns, themes, and categories within the interview data. The research was involve trainee teachers enrolled in teacher education programs engaged in teaching practice at Islamabad region in AIOU who passed teaching practice initial course in previous semester. From 46 enrolled students for this subject by convenient sampling (Stratton, 2021) 12 students gave interviews. Data was collected on onetime snapshot investigation.

Collected Data Interpretation

The qualitative data collected from the interview was organized theme wise in accordance with research objectives and was interpreted. Thematic analysis comprised of six steps i.e familiarization, generating initial codes, search for themes, review of themes, defining themes and write-up of report. Interview data was be transcribed, coded, and analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns and themes.

Initial Coding process

Initial sorting of respondent's answers where categorized by developing the thematic table were frequently focused point were considered to be themes.

Table 1.

Theme	Respondents	f
Trainee Teachers' Motivation	R1,R7,R9,R10,R11,R25,R17,R20,R23,R26,R27,R38,R39,R40,R43,	15
Identical Homework and Classwork	R2,R3,R9,R36,R8,R15,R16,R21,R24,R30,R32,R36,R37,R40,R45	15
Impact on Student Engagement	R4,R5,R6,R27,R28,R29,R20,R22,R23,R31,R33,R38,R40,R42,R45,R46	16
Impact on Learning Outcomes	R12,R13,R14,R16,R17,R21,R25,R26,R28,R29,R34,R35,R39,R42	14
Achieving a Balanced Approach	R1,R2,R15,R16,R22,R23,R33,R34,R40,R41,R42,R44,	12

Data Analysis

This thematic analysis highlights the diverse perspectives and considerations of trainee teachers regarding identical homework and classwork assignments in elementary education.

Table 2.

Theme	Sub-theme	Key Content
Trainee Teachers' Motivation	Aspiration Teaching	for Trainee teachers are driven by a strong passion for teaching, aspiring to positively influence the education of young learners.
Identical Homework and Classwork	Prevalence and Perception	Identical assignments are common in their training settings. Initial perceptions vary, with some seeing them as valuable tools for reinforcing learning while others have reservations.
Impact on Student Engagement	Motivation Disengagement	Identical assignments can have both positive and negative effects on student engagement. Some students find them motivating and engaging, while others express disinterest.
Impact on Learning Outcomes	Positive and Variable Outcomes	Identical assignments can positively influence learning outcomes, provided students are motivated and prepared to engage with the material. The effectiveness varies among students.
Achieving a Balanced Approach	a Personalization and Teacher Training	A balanced approach to homework and classwork is recommended, with an emphasis on personalization to cater to individual student needs and preferences. Teacher training programs should prepare educators to create personalized and engaging assignments.

Theme 1: Motivation and Aspiration for Teaching

What is the trainee teacher's point of view about teaching?

Trainee teachers express their passion for teaching and their desire to contribute to the educational growth of young learners. Their pursuit of a teaching career is driven by the aspiration to impart knowledge and positively influence the future generation.

Response

The decision to pursue a career in teaching stems from my passion for imparting knowledge and contributing to the growth of future generations. Currently, I am a trainee teacher enrolled in a teacher education program.

Trainee teachers are focused on preparing to teach elementary students, typically in the age range of 6 to 12 years. They are specializing in elementary education, with a primary focus on the general subjects taught at the elementary level. Trainee teachers have gained experiences in working with elementary students during their training. This involvement includes classroom observations, assisting with lesson planning and delivery, and participating in student teaching experiences.

Theme2: Commonality of Identical Homework and Classwork Assignments

How do trainee teachers in elementary education in Pakistan perceive the impact of identical homework and classwork on the learning outcomes of students?

Trainee teachers frequently encounter the practice of assigning identical homework and classwork in the elementary education context. This practice is pervasive and commonly utilized in their training settings. Trainee teachers initially perceive identical homework and classwork assignments as a method to reinforce learning. However, they express reservations about the potential limitations of these assignments, particularly regarding their ability to cater to individual student needs and promote critical thinking. Trainee teachers believe that identical homework and classwork assignments play a significant role in reinforcing content covered in class. They recognize the value of practice and application of learning. However, they also acknowledge that these assignments may not sufficiently address the diverse learning needs and abilities of each student.

Response

I initially view the practice of assigning identical homework and classwork as a means to reinforce the learning material. However, I also have some reservations about its potential limitations in catering to individual student needs and promoting critical thinking.

Sub theme: Student Engagement

Trainee teachers say that when it comes to giving students the same homework and classwork, it can have both good and not-so-good effects on how much students get involved in their learning. Some students get excited and find these assignments interesting and helpful for learning. But for others, doing the same kind of work over and over can make them feel bored and less interested in their studies. In simple terms, some students like it, but for others, doing the same homework and classwork can make them lose interest in their studies. So, it's important for teachers to think about different ways to make learning exciting and to keep all students engaged in their lessons.

Sub theme: Learning Outcomes

Trainee teachers believe that assigning identical homework and classwork can have a positive impact on students' learning outcomes. They see these assignments as opportunities for students to practice and reinforce what they've learned in the classroom, which can enhance their understanding and retention of the material. However, trainee teachers also acknowledge that the effectiveness of identical assignments varies among students. It depends on whether students are motivated and prepared to engage with the material. Some students may benefit significantly from these assignments, while others may not engage as effectively, impacting the overall effectiveness of identical homework and classwork in elementary education. This recognition underscores the importance of considering individual student needs and motivations when using identical assignments in teaching.

Response

From my perspective, identical homework and classwork assignments can have a positive impact on student learning outcomes by providing additional practice and reinforcement. However, their effectiveness can vary depending on the students' readiness to engage with the material.

Theme 3: Student Motivation

Trainee teachers have different opinions about how students feel when they get the same homework and classwork. Some students feel motivated by it, especially when they know they can do it well. But for other students, doing the same kind of work can make them feel less motivated because it's not very interesting or doesn't feel like it's meant just for them. In simple words, some students like it and feel motivated, while others don't because it's not very interesting or doesn't feel special to them. So, teachers need to think about how to keep all students motivated and interested in their lessons.

Theme 4: Balanced Approaches and Teacher Training Emphasis

What are the beliefs and attitudes of trainee teachers in Pakistan regarding the effectiveness of assigning identical homework and classwork in promoting student engagement and understanding in elementary education?

In the end, trainee teachers think it's really important to have a balance when it comes to homework and classwork for elementary students. They say it's crucial to think about what each student needs because everyone is different. They want to make sure students get to think and learn in their own way. Trainee teachers also think that the training programs for teachers should teach those more about how to make different kinds of assignments that fit with how each student learns. This way, every student can learn in the best way for them.

In simple words, trainee teachers believe that it's essential to have a mix of different assignments for students in elementary school. They want to make sure that each student's unique needs are considered, and they should have interesting assignments that help them learn. Trainee teachers also suggest that teacher training programs should teach new teachers how to create different types of assignments to match the way each student learns. This will make learning better for everyone.

Response

In closing, I would like to emphasize the need for a balanced approach to homework and classwork in elementary education. While identical assignments have their place in reinforcing learning, it's essential to consider the diverse needs of students and encourage critical thinking through more personalized and engaging tasks. Additionally, teacher training programs could further emphasize strategies for adapting assignments to suit various learning styles and abilities.

It underscores the significance of balancing reinforcement with personalized and engaging approaches to better serve the needs of elementary students. Additionally, it points to potential areas of improvement in teacher training programs to prepare educators for the challenges and opportunities presented by identical assignments.

Findings

The findings highlight several key points.

- Trainee teachers in Pakistan are preparing to teach elementary students, and they frequently encounter the practice of assigning identical homework and classwork in their training settings.
- Their initial thoughts on this practice are mixed, with some seeing it as a way to reinforce learning while others have reservations about its limitations.
- Regarding the impact of identical assignments, trainee teachers report. They acknowledge that such assignments can positively influence learning outcomes, providing additional practice and reinforcement. However, they also recognize that the effectiveness varies among students, contingent on their readiness and motivation to engage with the material.
- Trainee teachers also observe a mixed impact on student engagement, with some students finding these assignments engaging and productive, while others become disinterested due to the repetitive nature.
- In terms of motivation, trainee teachers note that identical assignments can either motivate students, particularly when they are confident in completing them, or demotivate them due to the lack of variety and personalization.

Discussion

The discussion of this research study centers on the multifaceted perspectives of trainee teachers in Pakistan regarding the practice of assigning identical homework and classwork in elementary education. The findings reveal a complex interplay of views on this common pedagogical practice. Trainee teachers, as aspiring educators, play a crucial role in shaping the future of education in Pakistan, and their insights shed light on the potential benefits and challenges associated with identical assignments (Neelum. 2013).

Firstly, the research findings indicate that trainee teachers are driven by a strong passion for teaching and aspire to contribute positively to the education of young learners. This is a promising aspect of their motivation, as dedicated and enthusiastic educators can have a profound impact on their students (Şen and Gülcan 2012). However, it is essential to ensure that this enthusiasm is harnessed effectively to benefit students.

Secondly, the study underscores the prevalence of identical homework and classwork assignments within the training settings for these future teachers. The initial perceptions of trainee teachers regarding these assignments are varied, with some seeing them as valuable tools for reinforcing learning, while others express reservations about their limitations. This disparity in viewpoints reflects the need for ongoing discussions and professional development to refine teaching practices and ensure that identical assignments are employed effectively to enhance learning (Yildiz and Kılıç, 2020).

Thirdly, the impact of identical assignments on student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes is a significant point of discussion. The research shows that these assignments can have both positive and negative effects. While some students find them motivating and engaging, others become disinterested due to the repetitive nature of these tasks. This highlights the importance of considering individual student needs and preferences when assigning homework and classwork. It also emphasizes the role of educators in adapting their teaching strategies to foster student engagement and motivation.

Fourthly, the findings emphasize the importance of achieving a balanced approach to homework and classwork. While identical assignments have their place in reinforcing learning, they are not a one-size-fits-all solution. The study conducted by Hong, Milgram, and Rowell (2004) proposed a comprehensive model involving various education stakeholders to efficiently oversee the homework process. This model takes into account the perspectives of students, parents, and educators, evaluating both academic achievements and emotional processes. Finally, the discussion

highlights the need for critical reflection among trainee teachers and experienced educators alike. This reflection is essential to ensure that teaching practices continually evolve to better meet the needs of students. In conclusion, the discussion of this study reinforces the idea that teaching is a dynamic and evolving profession. Identical homework and classwork assignments, while having their merits, must be applied with consideration of the diverse needs and preferences of students.

Conclusion

- The findings underscore the diverse viewpoints and experiences of trainee teachers, revealing a nuanced picture of the impact of identical assignments on student engagement, learning outcomes, and motivation.
- Trainee teachers are in agreement that identical assignments can have both positive and negative effects on student engagement and motivation. They recognize that the effectiveness of these assignments varies depending on students' readiness and individual preferences.
- The final thoughts of trainee teachers emphasize the need for a balanced approach to homework and classwork in elementary education, taking into account the diverse needs of students and encouraging critical thinking through personalized and engaging tasks. They suggest that teacher training programs should focus on strategies for adapting assignments to suit various learning styles and abilities.
- The findings reveal that trainee teachers are passionate about teaching and aspire to positively influence the education of young learners. They are currently specializing in elementary education, emphasizing general subjects at the elementary level. Identical homework and classwork assignments are common in their training environments, with trainee teachers perceiving them as both reinforcing and potentially limiting. The impact on student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes varies, with some students finding these assignments motivating and engaging while others express disinterest.

In conclusion, the research emphasizes the importance of a balanced approach to homework and classwork, tailoring assignments to meet individual student needs while encouraging critical thinking.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that educational institutions and teacher training programs in Pakistan consider the following:

1. **Diverse Pedagogical Approaches:** Encourage the use of a variety of pedagogical approaches that go beyond identical assignments to cater to the diverse learning needs and preferences of students.
2. **Teacher Training Enhancement:** Enhance teacher training programs to prepare trainee teachers for the challenges of adapting assignments to suit various learning styles and abilities. This should include strategies for creating personalized and engaging tasks.
3. **Critical Reflection:** Promote critical reflection among trainee teachers and educators to help them strike a balance between reinforcing learning and personalizing assignments for students.
4. **Further Research:** Conduct further research to assess the impact of various pedagogical approaches on student engagement, learning outcomes, and motivation in the context of elementary education in Pakistan.

Limitations

While this research offers valuable insights into trainee teachers' perspectives on identical homework and classwork assignments in elementary education in Pakistan, it is important to acknowledge several limitations that may impact the generalizability and depth of the findings:

Sample Size and Diversity

The study's sample size and diversity may be limited, potentially reflecting only a subset of trainee teachers. The findings may not capture the full spectrum of perspectives, experiences, and training backgrounds, leading to potential bias or a limited representation of the broader trainee teacher population.

Geographical and Institutional Scope

The research may focus on specific geographical regions or institutions within Pakistan, which might not be representative of the entire country. Variations in teaching practices, curricula, and training methods across different regions and institutions may not be fully accounted for in the study.

Research Methods

The use of interviews while providing valuable quantitative data, may not fully capture the nuanced perspectives and experiences of trainee teachers. The limitations of self-reporting and potential response bias should be considered in the interpretation of the results.

Subjective Nature of Perceptions

Trainee teachers' perceptions and beliefs are inherently subjective and may be influenced by personal experiences, training programs, and cultural factors. These subjective factors may introduce a level of bias that cannot be fully controlled in the study.

In conclusion, the limitations of this study should be recognized as they may influence the generalizability and depth of the findings. Future research endeavors should aim to address these limitations and provide a more comprehensive understanding of trainee teachers' perspectives on identical homework and classwork assignments in elementary education.

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