

Technical Report

Homework Realities: A Canadian Study of Parental Opinions and Attitudes

Dr. Linda Cameron, & Dr. Lee Bartel
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education,
University of Toronto

For additional information:
Contact: lbartel@chass.utoronto.ca
lcameron@oise.utoronto.ca

2008: Homework Realities: A Canadian Study of Parental Opinions and Attitudes
Linda Cameron, & Lee Bartel
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Bartel, Cameron & Associates Inc
889 Avenue Road
Toronto, ON M5P2K7

Homework Realities: A Canadian Study of Parental Opinions and Attitudes EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Study Context. The purpose of this study was to obtain a Canadian perspective on the issue of homework. Growing societal concern with Homework since the educational reform efforts in the 90's reached a new height in the summer of 2006 with the publication of books by Cohen and by Bennett and Kalish presenting a US perspective. Linda Cameron and Lee Bartel, Associate Professors at OISE, University of Toronto, perceived a lack in Canadian research and so initiated this study in October of 2006.

Method, Sample and Demographics. A 40 item questionnaire was created on a website, an invitation to participate and access to the questionnaire was "seeded" across Canada with emphasis on Ontario, and "snowball" technique was used to obtain a volunteer sample of respondents. The final analysis included 1094 responses from care-givers of 2072 children. The response from Ontario was the heaviest with 950 responses representing 1800 children. Analysis focuses on Ontario data. The Ontario sample represented all 5 major postal code regions, was somewhat skewed to higher educational and income levels, balanced in gender of children, adequately represented all grades, and public, separate, private and home schooling types.

Amount and Type of Homework. Type of homework as well as amount is important to reaction. A significant number of children now receive homework in kindergarten, 28% in Grade 1 and over 50% in Grade 2 report more than 20 minutes of homework a day. Children in Ontario receive statistically significantly ($p < .001$) more homework than the sample from the rest of Canada. From Jr K – Grade 6 "drill and practice" homework is the dominant form and between Grade 7 and 12 it is "projects."

Parents' Comparison of Homework Amount. About 75% of parents believe that their children now have "somewhat" to "much more" homework than they did as a child. There is a significant difference based on educational level with those with less income perceiving children to have much more homework than they had ($p < .0005$).

Help with Homework Given to Children. Parents give much help to their children with homework. Over 80% say they help a Kindergarten to Grade 2 child "usually or always" and this continues at around 77% through Grade 4. There is a very strong positive relationship between parental attitude toward the child's homework and how frequently they help the child (more positive the attitude the more they help ($p < .0005$)). There is also a strong relationship between Parental feeling of competence to help with homework and (a) the frequency with which they help the child ($p < .0005$), (b) how positive they feel the affect of homework is on family relationship ($p < .0005$), (c) the effect they feel it has on the child's achievement. Those whose language is not English or French help more frequently ($p = .02$). than those who report English and French as their language.

Resources used by Child for Homework. It is no surprise that Internet is reported as the most frequently used resource for homework – with no significant difference across income levels. There is some difference in gender with girls using all resources more frequently. Those with incomes below \$40K use the public library and resources at home more than other income levels. School resources are used most heavily in private schools.

Children's Attitude toward Homework. Most noteworthy is the fact that children start in kindergarten with 85% being enthusiastic or willingly cooperative to grade 4 where 61% are very resistant to only grudgingly cooperative. This change is related to the time required by homework – more homework correlates with more negative attitude ($p < .0005$) and therefore higher the grade the more negative ($p < .0005$). The child's attitude is most negative toward "completion" homework ($r = -.29$) somewhat less negative toward projects ($r = -.19$), even less negative toward studying for tests ($r = -.14$) and least negative toward drill & practice ($r = -.07$). The more TV watched the more negative the attitude toward homework ($p = .04$) and the more time spent playing video games, the more negative the attitude toward homework ($p < .0005$) – probably both due to increased pressure from parents. Those children where the language is other than English or French have a significantly less negative attitude toward homework.

Parental Attitude and Sense of Competence. Parental attitude begins very supportive in the lower grades with the majority being "completely supportive" in grade 1 and 2. By Grade Three this drops below 50% and by Grade Four 26% are "Hesitant" to "Strongly opposed." At Grade 8 the "completely supportive" again rises to over half. There is a very strong positive relationship between Parental Attitude towards homework and the Child's Attitude ($p < .0005$). Although the parent generally has a more negative attitude as homework increases, the parent is least negative about projects ($r = -.10$), a little more negative about tests ($r = -.12$), somewhat more negative about Drill & Practice work ($r = -.16$), and most negative about completion homework ($r = -.17$).

Perceived Effect of Homework on Achievement. Parents seem unsure about the positive effect of homework on achievement. This is most so in the upper elementary grades. Only 20% believe homework has a very positive effect on achievement in grade 5 while 40% believe it has a neutral to negative effect in Grade 4.

Other Activities in the Lives of Children. Many children have activities that demand considerable time and compete with homework and family time. For example nearly 60% of boys and 43% of girls were involved in sports activities, 28% of boys and 35% of girls in music activities. Most noteworthy was the very strong data showing that children from homes with \$100K – 150K incomes were most busy with arts, sports, religious, household, and job activities.

Awareness of Homework Policy. Parents were most aware of class teachers' and school homework policy vs. board or provincial policy. Private school parents had most awareness at this level. There was relatively little awareness of School Board Policy. It was not determined in the research whether the schools or school boards actually had policy.

Qualitative themes. Respondents had space for the addition of comments and concerns. This resulted in some 180 pages of qualitative data that was analyzed for themes. Ten themes emerged. The most dominant themes were in two related pairs: (1) **Homework Expectations** and (2) **Amount**: Expectations were too high for the child to accomplish (corroborated by the recent TDSB Student Census) requiring parental assistance, directions/expectations were unclear (even to the parent), and inadequate accommodation for ESL/LD. Amount was simply considered too high in many cases. (3) **Reduces family time** and (4) **Affects family relationships**: The amount of homework puts stress on an already taxed system resulting in feelings of resentment, little life balance, and arguments and power struggles.

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INTRODUCTION

Background and Purpose

The battle for and against homework heated up when Ronald Reagan (March 2, 1984) began saying, “America’s schools don’t need new spending programs; they need tougher standards, more homework, merit pay for teachers, discipline, and parents back in charge.” The seemingly relentless increase in homework was seriously challenged in 2000 by Kralovec and Buell.

The books released in the summer of 2006 by Alfie Kohn, “The Homework Myth” and by Bennett and Kalish, “The Case Against Homework” addressed again this growing problem in the schools in the US. The media response to these books indicated the acuteness with which this problem was felt by the public. Canadian media did multiple stories on the topic and frequently interviewed Linda Cameron, OISE, regarding her opinions on the topic. The lack of Canadian research regarding homework became quickly apparent to Dr. Cameron and consequently she, in collaboration with Dr. Bartel, initiated a study.

The purpose of the study initiated in October of 2006 by Linda Cameron and Lee Bartel, Associate Professors at OISE, University of Toronto, was to obtain a Canadian perspective on the issue of homework. The study entitled, Homework Realities: A Canadian Study of Parental Opinions and Attitudes, was designed to get a sense of what parents’ perspectives were on the amount of homework children received at all levels, how this homework was affecting the children and the home, what factors were affecting this reality, and related data. The study intended to be national in scope but with a significant single province base for solid conclusions.

METHODOLOGY

Survey Design

A questionnaire was designed by the researchers to address amount and type of homework, support and resources available to the child, attitudes toward homework, effects of the homework, activity context for the homework, and parental awareness of school homework policies. General demographic data was gathered and an open-ended comment question allowed for the sharing of expression of opinions and experiences related to homework.

Pilot Testing

The basic structure of the questionnaire was designed in September 2006 and pilot testing with a collaborating sample of OISE graduate students who are also parents began in October. Pilot participants were asked to provide feedback on response categories, clarity, and comprehensiveness (face validity). Revisions were again reviewed until suggestions ceased.

Web-based Implementation

The researchers decided to administer the questionnaire through a web-based, online forum. The questionnaire was mounted on the Monkey Survey research site at the end of November. Survey Monkey is a commercial on-line survey site that allows the user to configure the questionnaire as desired, gives access to survey takers on a limited single-access basis, and provides automatic basic descriptive data analysis.

Ethical Review

In its web-based form, the questionnaire and the research protocol was submitted to the Ethical Review process at the University of Toronto. Approval was received by the middle of November and data gathering began.

Survey Procedure

Because the survey was to have wide distribution and to go to people who have children, a “snowball” sample approach was used. The survey was “seeded” by sending a completion request to the OISE/CTL Department list of graduate students and faculty and the Music Education graduate students at the Faculty of Music. In addition this request was sent to each of the provincial representatives of the Canadian Music Educators’ Association. The link to the survey was posted on the TVO website following an interview with Dr. Cameron on TVO.

The following copy was used in email requests:

Linda Cameron and Lee Bartel are conducting a web-based research study related to kids HOMEWORK. We are using a "snowball" technique where we ask participants to send this on to people they know have kids in school. Please complete the questionnaire on line and please send the following on to others.

To complete the survey simply click on the following link.

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=589362765385\[1\]](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=589362765385[1])

And to help us with this research please send the message below on to others.

Thanks you so much for your help.

PLEASE FORWARD THE FOLLOWING -----

This is an invitation to participate in a research study about students' HOMEWORK. It only takes a few minutes but the results will be valuable.

Homework can be seen as an inevitable part of schooling that results in higher achievement or it can be viewed as an intrusion on personal and family time that would be better spent on other things. In many homes it is currently an issue. For many teachers it is a policy and practice required by system expectations. Very little research has actually been done on parents' experience with their children and homework or their attitudes toward it. We are studying parents' feelings about homework and plan to share the results with media and school boards across the nation.

Please participate in this research study taking the 10 or so minutes this will take by clicking on the following link and completing the survey now. Also help us by forwarding this portion of the message to other parents that you know.

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=589362765385\[2\]](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=589362765385[2])

Thank you for your participation.

The "snowball" was allowed to run until the national response rate reached at least 1200. The survey was taken off-line when 1219 responses had been received. Of this number 20 did not give permission to use their comments in publication resulting in a full set of 1199 cases. Data were then carefully screened for integrity and questionable cases were removed. For example, where it became obvious the person had abandoned the survey after a few questions (probably because of time or a determination that they were not appropriate respondents) or provided anomalous data (e.g., claiming to be a school principal answering for his whole school, and reporting a family income salary of \$40- 60k) cases were removed. Cases that did not provide information in all fields but had persisted to the end of the survey were retained. The total; number of cases entered into analysis was 1094 representing responses from care-givers of 2072 children. The response from Ontario was the heaviest with 950 responses representing 1800 children.

The Sample

The sample in this study was generated through a snowball technique. No specific attempt was made for a representative sample through targeted “seeding” or continued regional acceptance of response. The resultant sample adequately represented the primary postal code regions of Ontario, plus gave a scattered sampling of most of the regions in Canada. With these results, primary analysis will focus on Ontario and the rest of Canada will be used in the manner of a “non-response” validation sample to determine whether the opinions and attitudes in Ontario may be relevant outside of the province.

TABLE 1. SAMPLE REPRESENTATION BY REGION

<i>Postal Code</i>	<i>Region</i>	<i>Number</i>
A	Newfoundland	1
B	Nova Scotia	21
C	PEI	3
E	New Brunswick	0
G	Eastern Quebec	0
H	Metro Montreal	9
J	Western Quebec	4
K	Eastern Ontario	139
L	Central Ontario	324
M	Metro Toronto	390
N	Southwestern Ontario	53
P	Northern Ontario	44
	Ontario Total	950
R	Manitoba	55
S	Saskatchewan	4
T	Alberta	15
V	British Columbia	23
X	NWT & Nunavit	0
Y	Yukon	1
	Undeclared	8
	Total Sample	1094

Data Confidentiality

The questionnaire asked participants to give their Postal Code to allow for identification of region. No names were collected and no electronic “footprint” allowing identification was recorded.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data from the Survey Monkey site were downloaded in raw form into Excel and were then subjected to strict data integrity procedures. Qualitative data from open ended questions was moved into a Word file for thematic analysis. Quantitative data were “reorganized” to allow the tracking of each child individually by all the response categories which was not possible within Survey Monkey. This reformulated and individualized database was analyzed with SPSS.

OVERALL FINDINGS

Scope of this Report

The findings of the Homework Realities Survey are presented in two parts: Ontario Findings and Comparative National Findings. The survey methodology and the “seeding” techniques resulted in a dominance of response from Ontario (response related to 1800 children). This Ontario response is adequate to stand as a valid and reliable sample of parental attitude and opinion. The same is not true for the full National Data set that then is disproportionately weighted for Ontario. Therefore, the approach to presenting the findings is to present Ontario data as the core of the findings, and then to look at the data from the rest of Canada as a small sample to determine to what extent the situation in Ontario represents the rest of Canada.

ONTARIO FINDINGS

1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (n=950)

The 950 respondents to the questionnaire were primarily mothers of the 1800 children represented (Table 2). The 7.5 “others” that responded included siblings, grandparents, aunts, and other non-parental guardians.

TABLE 2. RESPONDENTS

<i>Respondent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Mother	78.6
Father	13.9
Other	7.5

Parental education level (Table 3) indicated a skewness in the sample toward the higher educational levels. This probably resulted from the fact that the “snowball” sample was heavily seeded with OISE graduate students. However, analysis of the results showed that Parent’s Educational Level **IS NOT significantly** correlated on crucial issues for the overall validity of this study. Namely a correlation with:

- Frequency of help given to child ($r = .004$, $p = .86$)
- Time child spends on homework: Mother ($r = -.04$, $p = .11$); Father ($r = .05$, $p = .06$)
- The perception of effect of homework on the child’s achievement: Mother ($r = -.03$, $p = .17$); Father ($r = -.01$, $p = .81$)
- Frequency a tutor helped the child with homework: Mother ($r = .04$, $p = .22$); Father ($r = -.04$, $p = .24$)

As will be seen later, there was a significant correlation between parental educational level and parental attitude toward homework, the attitude of child, and a sense of competence to help the child with homework.

TABLE 3. PARENTAL EDUCATION

<i>Highest Education Level</i>	<i>Mother</i>	<i>Father</i>
Grade School	.6	.8
High School	8.5	11.9
Community College	22.3	23.2
University- Bachelors	44.2	37.6
University – Masters	20.2	17.8
University - Doctorate	3.2	4.8

The sample obtained represented a wide range of economic levels with strongest representation from the middle class level between \$100,000 and \$200,000.00 of gross, before tax household income (44.35% of the respondents). A volunteer sample, as this was, is known by nature to favour higher education, and more successful respondents. Consequently, it is crucial to note that on the matter of homework, economic level seems of little consequence. Statistical analysis of the matter of economic level revealed that there is **no significant** relationship between income level and:

- Frequency of help with homework ($r = .04$, $p = .11$)
- Amount of Time Children spend on homework ($r = .01$, $p = .79$)
- Attitude of children to homework ($r = -.04$, $p = .15$)
- Attitude of Parent toward Homework ($r = .02$, $p = .37$)
- Parental feeling of competence ($r = -.05$, $p = .06$)
- Frequency of help by tutor ($r = -.05$, $p = .11$)
- Perceived effect on child's achievement ($r = -.02$, $p = .57$)
- Perceived effect on family relationships ($r = .05$, $p = .05$)

TABLE 4. GROSS FAMILY INCOME

<i>Total Family Income before Taxes</i>	<i>Percent of Respondents</i>
Not reporting	6.6
Less than \$20,000	1.2
\$20,000 – 40,000	2.9
\$40,000 – 60,000	4.6
\$60,000 – 80,000	10.0
\$80,000 – 100,000	16.1
\$100,000 – 150,000	28.2
\$150,000 – 200,000	16.4
over \$200,000	14.1

2. Demographic Characteristics of the Children (n=1800)

The gender of the 1800 children represented in this survey were distributed very near the normal population parameters. The recent “2006 Student Census: System Overview” by the Toronto District School Board (Yau and O’Reilly, 2007) found that “In the TDSB, both the senior grades (Grades 7 and 8) and secondary schools have a slightly higher enrolment of male than female students (52% versus 48%).” The report further asserts that “this gender split pattern has been consistent throughout the history of the Toronto public school system” (p 8).

TABLE 5. GENDER OF CHILDREN

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Male	50.3
Female	49.7

Since the survey was presented and completed only in English, language selectivity was clearly a factor in this study. Despite that, over 16% of the respondents reported that a language other than English was used in the home. Of that, 8.3% was French leaving only 8.1% of the respondents with a language other than French and English (see Table 6). This was short of a full language representation one would expect in Ontario (especially in Toronto). According to the recent Canada Census analysis of the 2006 Census, 28.3% of the population in Ontario was born outside the country (Immigration in Canada: A Portrait of the Foreign-born Population, 2006 Census: Immigrants in the provinces and territories. Retrieved from: www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/immcit/ontario.cfm). This does not mean, of course, that people born outside the country do not speak English or even that all speak another language in the home. Since this study drew from all over Ontario including rural areas, the expected proportion of non-English speakers might be lower than the overall population since new immigrants tend to cluster in large urban centres. Analysis of the data in this study showed some significant differences between the “other” language respondents vs. the English and French.

TABLE 6. LANGUAGE OF CHILDREN IN HOME

<i>Language</i>	<i>Percent of Respondents*</i>
English	97.6
French	8.3
Other	8.1
Chinese	.8
Czech	.3
Farsi	.3
French & English	.3
German	.5
Greek	.6
Greek & Arabic	.1
Hebrew	.1
Hindi	.2
Italian	2.0
Korean	.1
Malayalam	.1
Polish	.2
Portuguese	.1
Punjabi	.1
Romanian	.3
Roshani	.1
Russian	.2
Serbian	.1
Sign Language	.1
Spanish	.9
Tagalog	.1
Tamil	.1
Turkish	.1
Ukrainian	.3
Urdu	.3
Vietnamese	.1
Yoruba	.1

*Percentages do not add up to 100 because some reported multiple languages.

The parental presence in the home or family context in this sample (see Table 7) showed a slightly higher percentage of children living with two parents (82.1%) than in the recent TDSB Census which reported that for grade 7 and 8 students, 78% lived with two parents (Yau and O’Reilly, 2007, p 13). For “help” support for homework, extended family can be important and so in this study that was surveyed, revealing that 5.2% of the children had extended family in the home.

TABLE 7. THE CHILDREN’S FAMILY CONTEXT

<i>Family Context</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Single Parent	7.7
Single Parent plus Extended Family	1.3
Two Parent	82.1
Two Parent plus Extended Family	3.9
Other	5.0

Important in this study is the representation obtained in the sample from all types of schooling in Ontario – public, separate, private and home schooling (see Table 8). Although the proportions are not precisely representative, good comparisons can be made among the three main forms of schooling.

TABLE 8. TYPE OF SCHOOL ATTENDED BY CHILDREN

<i>Type of School</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Public	64.2
Separate	25.8
Private	9.0
Home Schooling	1.0

This survey gathered information, perceptions, attitudes and opinions from caregivers related to children from junior kindergarten through to grade 12. Because of the changing nature of the relationship and growing independence as children get older, less response was received for the upper grades (see Table 9). Older students possibly do homework away from the home at friends houses, at libraries, etc and so parental knowledge of the type of homework and actual time spent may not be as accurate, parents may feel less responsible, and will be less inclined to respond on a survey. However, there was evidence of convergent validity between the data from student in the TDSB Census 2006 and the data from parents in this study.

TABLE 9. CHILDREN PER GRADE

<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Jr. Kindergarten	73	4.1
Sr. Kindergarten	116	6.4
Grade 1	142	7.9
Grade 2	181	10.1
Grade 3	168	9.3
Grade 4	172	9.6
Grade 5	162	9.0
Grade 6	148	8.2
Grade 7	134	7.4
Grade 8	112	6.2
Grade 9	88	4.9
Grade 10	80	4.4
Grade 11	78	4.3
Grade 12	82	4.6
Not specifying level		3.6

3. Amount and Type of Homework

Type of homework as well as amount is one of the most important dimensions of the homework issue. Noteworthy is the observation that children in Kindergarten now receive homework. And, that a substantial number, 28% in Grade One and over 50% in Grade Two, report having more than 20 minutes of homework a day. The amount of homework clearly increases with higher grades (see Table 10). An important comparison between Ontario and the rest of Canada indicates that children in Ontario receive statistically significantly ($p = .001$) more homework than the sample from the rest of Canada.

TABLE 10. TIME SPENT ON HOMEWORK BY GRADE LEVEL - CATEGORICAL

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Time</i>							
	< 10 min	10- 20 min	20-30	30-45	45-60	60-90	90-120	>120
Jr K	85.7	12.9	1.4	0	0	0	0	0
Sr K	70.5	21.4	6.3	1.8	0	0	0	0
1	29.1	42.6	18.4	7.8	1.4	0	0	.7
2	14.9	33.7	28.2	14.9	7.2	.6	.6	0
3	7.2	24.7	25.9	23.5	12.0	5.4	1.2	0
4	2.9	12.3	24.0	21.6	18.7	15.8	2.9	1.8
5	5.0	15.6	16.3	23.8	25.0	11.3	1.9	1.3
6	4.8	11.6	10.2	24.5	21.1	17.7	5.4	4.8
7	2.2	7.5	12.7	18.7	24.6	23.9	7.5	3.0
8	5.4	3.6	11.7	18.9	21.6	20.7	12.6	5.4
9	2.3	8.0	12.6	10.3	21.8	29.9	10.3	4.6
10	5.1	6.3	7.6	16.5	24.1	22.8	12.7	5.1
11	9.0	6.4	12.8	6.4	21.8	19.2	12.8	11.5
12	8.6	4.9	6.2	7.4	8.6	19.8	25.9	18.5

An important observation in the data is that more boys generally seem to do less homework than girls (Chi Square 26.88, df 7, $p < .001$). Table 11 shows the comparison in the range of time categories and there are larger percentages of girls in the times over 45 minutes per day and larger percentages of boys in the “less than 10” and “20 – 30” categories.

TABLE 11. COMPARISON OF AMOUNT OF HOMEWORK BY GENDER

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Percent of Gender in Homework Time Categories</i>							
	< 10	10- 20	20-30	30-45	45-60	60- 90	90- 120	>120
Male	18.1	16.0	16.8	17.5	14.3	10.5	4.5	2.2
Female	13.1	18.0	14.5	13.8	15.7	14.1	6.4	4.3

Using the categorical responses on homework time, a re-coding was processed using the category mid-point as a number, e.g., a response in the “10 – 20 minute” category as re-coded as 15 minutes. The average time calculated (see table 12) seems to align quite closely with many school board’s policy of 10 minutes of homework per grade level, e.g., grade 5 = 5 times 10 to make 50 minutes of homework per day. However, the raw categorical data and the standard deviations indicate great variation in the amount. Some children clearly have more and some have less.

TABLE 12. AVERAGE TIME ON HOMEWORK CALCULATED FROM CATEGORICAL ESTIMATES

<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>Total Sample</i>		<i>By School Type</i>		
	Average Min	S. D	Public	Private	Separate
Jr K	6.6	4.0	6.8	5.0	6.6
Sr K	9.0	7.0	9.0	10.0	8.2
Grade 1	17.0	13.7	16.2	21.2	18.2
Grade 2	23.0	14.6	21.4	29.1	24.7
Grade 3	30.8	18.9	28.7	39.6	32.6
Grade 4	42.8	25.2	39.8	51.7	46.7
Grade 5	40.4	23.3	38.1	38.4	49.5
Grade 6	49.5	29.9	48.1	54.9	52.4
Grade 7	53.6	28.0	51.7	59.5	58.7
Grade 8	57.5	32.1	52.4	75.2	66.9
Grade 9	58.7	30.6	56.8	125.0	58.0
Grade 10	58.4	31.8	55.5	88.7	53.6
Grade 11	60.6	37.6	62.2	69.7	56.0
Grade 12	75.1	40.3	69.0	110.0	82.7

A comparison of amount of homework by type of school (Table 12) shows quite consistently that separate schools require somewhat more homework than public schools and private schools require the most homework.

Type of homework is a very important consideration because of the learning value and curricular relevance of the time spent by the child (and parent) on the task. Tables 13 – 16 look at four types of homework and the frequency it is received by students. An examination across the grade level reveals that “completion” homework – work that was expected to be done in class but was not – increases from Grade One through Grade Eight and then decreases into High School. “Drill & Practice” homework begins as a major component of homework in Grade One and continues on through Grade Eight. “Projects” begin to become a significant part of the homework in Grade Two, grow in prominence through Grade Six, and continue as a significance part of homework through Grade 12. “Studying for Tests” is more periodic as homework up to Grade Six, although the percentage in “usually” points to the prominence of testing based instruction in the schools in the Primary and Junior levels. Testing then becomes an even more regular part of homework in Grades 7 – 12.

Table 13. Type of Homework: Completion of Work not Done in Class

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Homework is Completion of Work from Class</i>				
	<i>always</i>	<i>usually</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>rarely</i>	<i>never</i>
Jr K	5.2	.0	3.4	13.8	77.6
Sr K	1.1	4.4	9.9	19.8	64.8
1	5.1	8.5	25.4	29.7	31.4
2	5.0	10.1	27.7	34.6	22.6
3	5.6	23.9	33.8	24.6	12.0
4	12.8	22.4	36.5	23.1	5.1
5	9.4	20.8	40.3	24.8	4.7
6	13.1	21.5	35.4	23.8	6.2
7	8.7	20.5	46.5	20.5	3.9
8	7.5	29.0	31.8	25.2	6.5
9	8.6	17.3	38.3	27.2	8.6
10	4.3	27.1	32.9	28.6	7.1
11	7.4	17.6	29.4	29.4	16.2
12	7.9	10.5	26.3	43.4	11.8
Total	7.6	17.5	31.5	26.3	17.0

TABLE 14. TYPE OF HOMEWORK: DRILL & PRACTICE

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percent of Homework is Drill & Practice</i>				
	<i>always</i>	<i>usually</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>rarely</i>	<i>never</i>
Jr K	14.3	17.5	15.9	7.9	44.4
Sr K	15.0	22.4	25.2	15.0	22.4
1	35.3	33.8	18.4	8.8	3.7
2	31.3	31.3	23.3	9.1	5.1
3	32.7	36.5	25.6	3.8	1.3
4	35.8	31.5	21.0	11.1	.6
5	25.5	39.9	26.8	6.5	1.3
6	20.0	42.2	23.7	11.1	3.0
7	14.6	49.2	24.6	8.5	3.1
8	13.9	42.6	25.0	14.8	3.7
9	13.9	36.7	26.6	19.0	3.8
10	9.3	36.0	21.3	22.7	10.7
11	11.9	25.4	31.3	13.4	17.9
12	10.8	24.3	32.4	12.2	20.3
Total	22.9	34.7	24.1	10.8	7.5

TABLE 15. TYPE OF HOMEWORK: PROJECTS

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percent of Homework consists of Projects</i>				
	<i>always</i>	<i>usually</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>rarely</i>	<i>never</i>
Jr K	1.8	3.5	8.8	14.0	71.9
Sr K	3.3	4.4	15.6	23.3	53.3
1	5.8	10.7	24.3	23.3	35.9
2	2.4	16.0	44.4	27.8	9.5
3	5.4	14.1	51.7	24.2	4.7
4	12.8	41.0	34.0	11.5	.6
5	10.9	31.4	50.6	5.8	1.3
6	15.7	45.0	35.7	2.9	.7
7	13.1	53.1	27.7	5.4	.8
8	18.2	54.5	25.5	1.8	.0
9	13.1	48.8	35.7	2.4	.0
10	10.1	69.6	17.7	2.5	.0
11	10.7	60.0	22.7	5.3	1.3
12	20.5	51.3	21.8	3.8	2.6
Total	10.2	35.0	33.0	11.9	10.0

TABLE 16. TYPE OF HOMEWORK: STUDY FOR TESTS

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percent of Homework consists of Tests</i>				
	<i>always</i>	<i>usually</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>rarely</i>	<i>never</i>
Jr K	.0	.0	5.5	3.6	90.9
Sr K	.0	.0	1.2	7.1	91.8
1	21.2	16.9	14.4	19.5	28.0
2	15.2	32.9	27.4	13.4	11.0
3	11.1	30.7	37.9	15.7	4.6
4	17.1	40.5	36.1	5.1	1.3
5	12.9	33.5	42.6	7.7	3.2
6	18.6	40.0	34.3	6.4	.7
7	13.2	50.4	25.6	7.8	3.1
8	13.0	48.1	31.5	4.6	2.8
9	17.9	48.8	29.8	3.6	.0
10	11.3	52.5	33.8	2.5	.0
11	18.9	51.4	24.3	4.1	1.4
12	16.3	56.3	17.5	7.5	2.5
Total	14.0	36.4	28.2	8.5	12.9

Table 17 presents a summary of the four homework types by looking at the top two frequency categories – “always” and “usually.” This shows that “Drill & Practice” is the most dominant form of homework up to Grade Six and then “Projects” and “Studying for Tests” takes over.

TABLE 17. SUMMARY – TYPE OF HOMEWORK (always plus usually):

<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>Percent of Homework by Type</i>			
	Completion	Drill & Practice	Projects	Study for Tests
Jr K	5.2	31.8	5.3	0.0
Sr K	5.5	37.4	7.7	0.0
1	13.6	69.1	16.5	41.1
2	15.1	62.6	18.4	48.1
3	29.5	69.2	19.5	41.8
4	35.2	67.3	53.8	57.6
5	30.2	65.4	42.3	46.4
6	34.6	62.2	60.7	58.6
7	29.2	63.8	66.2	63.6
8	36.5	56.5	72.7	61.1
9	25.9	50.6	61.9	66.7
10	31.4	45.3	79.7	63.8
11	25.0	37.3	70.7	70.3
12	18.4	35.1	71.8	72.6

An analysis of type of homework by School Type (see tables 18 – 21) shows that there is a strong significant difference among schools in the frequency of “completion” homework ($F=12.7$, $df=3$, $p=.0005$) with the separate schools giving more than Public or Private.

There are no significant differences on “Drill” or on “Projects.” There is a significant difference on “Tests” with the Separate Schools giving more ($F=2.8$, $df=3$, $p=.03$)

TABLE 18. TYPE OF HOMEWORK BY SCHOOL TYPE: COMPLETION

School Type	<i>Percent Homework - Completion of Work from Class</i>				
	always	usually	sometimes	rarely	never
Public	6.6	17.3	30.9	27.1	18.2
Private	2.3	16.8	22.9	29.0	29.0
Separate	12.5	17.8	35.6	23.2	10.9
Home	5.9	41.2	23.5	23.5	5.9
Total	7.7	17.6	31.3	26.2	17.1

TABLE 19. TYPE OF HOMEWORK BY SCHOOL TYPE: DRILL

School Type	<i>Percent Homework is Drill & Practice</i>				
	always	usually	sometimes	rarely	never
Public	21.5	35.4	23.3	12.0	7.8
Private	25.0	38.2	23.6	4.9	8.3
Separate	24.3	31.9	27.0	9.8	6.9
Home	12.5	50.0	18.8	18.8	.0
Total	22.5	34.9	24.2	10.9	7.5

TABLE 20. TYPE OF HOMEWORK BY SCHOOL TYPE: PROJECTS

School Type	<i>Percent Homework is Projects</i>				
	always	usually	sometimes	rarely	never
Public	11.1	36.0	31.1	12.4	9.4
Private	6.6	34.6	36.8	5.9	16.2
Separate	8.9	33.2	36.1	12.1	9.7
Home	13.3	40.0	26.7	13.3	6.7
Total	10.2	35.2	32.8	11.8	10.0

TABLE 21. TYPE OF HOMEWORK BY SCHOOL TYPE: STUDY FOR TESTS

School Type	<i>Percent Homework -- Study for Tests</i>				
	always	usually	sometimes	rarely	never
Public	12.7	35.2	29.1	9.9	13.2
Private	15.7	41.0	20.9	4.5	17.9
Separate	16.9	38.0	28.3	6.1	10.7
Home	5.9	41.2	29.4	11.8	11.8
Total	14.0	36.5	28.2	8.4	12.9

4. Parent’s Comparison of Homework Amount

About 75% of parents believe that their children now have “somewhat” to “much more” homework than they did as a child. There is a significant difference based on income level with those with less income perceiving children to have much more homework than they had ($p < .0005$). There is no significant differences based on mother’s education or father’s education.

TABLE 22. FATHER’S COMPARISON OF THE AMOUNT OF HOMEWORK WITH WHEN HE WAS IN SCHOOL BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

	<i>Compare Homework now to when a Child</i>				
	Much less	Somewhat less	The same	Somewhat more	Much more
Grade School	.0	.0	16.7	41.7	41.7
High School	5.9	3.7	15.0	26.7	48.7
Community College	4.8	2.5	17.3	26.6	48.7
University – Bachelors	3.5	7.2	15.5	24.7	49.2
University – Masters	7.8	6.1	14.7	22.9	48.5
University - Doctorate	6.0	6.0	13.1	22.6	52.4
Total	5.0	5.3	15.6	25.1	49.0

TABLE 23. MOTHER'S COMPARISON OF THE AMOUNT OF HOMEWORK WITH WHEN SHE WAS IN SCHOOL BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

	<i>Compare Homework now to when a Child</i>				
	Much less	Somewhat less	The same	Somewhat more	Much more
Grade School	.0	.0	10.0	.0	90.0
High School	7.5	9.7	14.2	21.6	47.0
Community College	7.6	4.4	15.0	24.0	49.0
University – Bachelors	4.5	6.5	15.3	25.0	48.7
University – Masters	4.9	2.5	16.7	28.7	47.2
University - Doctorate	3.9	9.8	23.5	13.7	49.0
Total	5.5	5.5	15.7	24.7	48.6

TABLE 24. COMPARISON OF THE AMOUNT OF HOMEWORK WITH CHILDHOOD BY INCOME LEVEL

	<i>Compare Homework now to when a Child</i>				
	Much less	Somewhat less	The same	Somewhat more	Much more
Less than \$20,000	28.6	19.0	9.5	.0	42.9
\$20,000 – 40,000	4.1	10.2	2.0	32.7	51.0
\$40,000 – 60,000	4.3	11.4	20.0	15.7	48.6
\$60,000 – 80,000	10.1	5.7	12.7	31.0	40.5
\$80,000 – 100,000	8.5	4.6	15.8	25.9	45.2
\$100,000 – 150,000	5.8	5.4	18.3	22.1	48.3
\$150,000 – 200,000	2.2	5.2	14.2	28.5	49.8
over \$200,000	.8	1.7	17.4	23.1	57.0

5. Help with Homework Given to Children

Parents give much help to their children with homework. Over 80% say they help a Kindergarten to Grade 2 child “usually or always” and this continues at around 77% through Grade 4 (see Table 25). There is a very strong positive relationship between parental attitude toward the child’s homework and how frequently they help the child (more positive the attitude the more they help ($r = -.10, p < .0005$)). There is a very strong inverse relationship between grade level and parental help with homework - as the child enters higher grades parents help less with homework ($r = .45, p < .0005$). There is also a strong relationship between Parental feeling of competence to help with homework and:

- the frequency with which they help the child ($r = .19, p < .0005$),
- how positive they feel the affect of homework is on family relationship ($r = .25, p < .0005$),
- the effect they feel it has on the child’s achievement, and
- the parental education: mother ($r = -.16, p < .0005$) father ($r = -.07, p < .0005$)

There is a significant difference in the level of help (frequency) between those who report language other than English or French and the others ($t = -2.36, df = 159, p = .02$). Those whose language is not English or French help more frequently (67.0 in always and usually – overall mean rating of 2.07) while those who report English and French as their language help somewhat less (58.8 always and usually – overall mean rating of 2.30). Father’s Educational Level **IS significantly** correlated with the frequency of help given to child ($r = .08, p = .002$) while Mother’s **IS NOT** ($r = .004, p = .86$)

TABLE 25. PARENTAL HELP WITH CHILD’S HOMEWORK

Grade	Parent helps Child with homework				
	<i>always</i>	<i>usually</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>rarely</i>	<i>never</i>
Jr. K	59.7	11.9	7.5	4.5	16.4
Sr K	60.2	20.4	9.7	4.4	5.3
1	59.6	27.0	9.2	3.5	.7
2	47.5	34.3	14.4	3.9	.0
3	43.4	33.7	17.5	5.4	.0
4	40.4	37.4	15.8	4.7	1.8
5	26.1	29.8	32.3	11.8	.0
6	20.0	34.5	35.2	10.3	.0
7	20.1	29.9	30.6	17.2	2.2
8	17.9	20.5	33.9	25.9	1.8
9	8.1	22.1	41.9	27.9	.0
10	7.5	12.5	41.3	32.5	6.3
11	7.8	11.7	36.4	37.7	6.5
12	5.0	10.0	33.8	37.5	13.8
Total	32.7	26.7	24.3	13.5	2.7

Helping the child with homework is most done by parents but siblings, friends and tutors also play a role. Looking at the “never” column in Table 26 shows the decreasing pattern. Consequently, there is a positive correlation between grade level ($r = -.17$, $p < .0005$) and the frequency of help from a tutor as well as a correlation between the amount of homework and the frequency of help from a tutor ($r = -.20$, $p < .0005$).

TABLE 26. TUTOR HELP WITH CHILD’S HOMEWORK

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Tutor helps child with homework</i>				
	<i>always</i>	<i>usually</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>rarely</i>	<i>never</i>
Jr K	.0	.0	.0	.0	100.
Sr K	.0	.0	.0	.0	100.
1	.0	3.4	8.5	1.7	86.4
2	.0	2.2	2.2	.0	95.7
3	2.1	4.3	6.4	2.1	85.1
4	3.0	6.9	12.9	1.0	76.2
5	3.9	2.9	4.9	2.9	85.3
6	3.4	5.6	5.6	1.1	84.3
7	3.3	3.3	11.1	2.2	80.0
8	3.5	1.2	4.7	2.3	88.4
9	3.4	1.7	5.2	3.4	86.2
10	1.7	1.7	20.7	10.3	65.5
11	3.9	5.9	13.7	7.8	68.6
12	1.7	8.6	13.8	10.3	65.5
Total	2.3	3.6	7.7	2.9	83.5

Similarly, with friends helping with homework -- as the child enters higher grades friends help more with homework. Consequently, there is a very strong positive correlation between grade level and friends' help with homework ($r = .51, p < .0005$).

TABLE 27. FRIEND HELP WITH CHILD'S HOMEWORK

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Tutor helps child with homework</i>				
	<i>always</i>	<i>usually</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>rarely</i>	<i>never</i>
Jr K	.0	.0	2.6	.0	97.4
Sr K	.0	.0	.5	1.2	10.5
1	.0	.0	3.6	1.8	94.5
2	.0	.0	2.2	10.9	87.0
3	.0	.0	4.5	20.2	75.3
4	.0	.0	12.9	30.1	57.0
5	1.0	2.9	13.6	25.2	57.3
6	.0	2.2	24.2	37.4	36.3
7	.0	6.8	21.6	29.5	42.0
8	1.1	4.4	22.2	35.6	36.7
9	.0	1.7	31.0	36.2	31.0
10	1.8	1.8	43.9	26.3	26.3
11	.0	15.7	37.3	31.4	15.7
12	.0	5.0	51.7	26.7	16.7
Total	.3	2.7	18.5	23.9	54.6

There is an inverse relationship between grade level and sibling helping with homework ($r = .18, p < .0005$) – higher the grade, the less help from siblings. However, there is no relationship between the amount of time spent with homework and sibling help

TABLE 28. SIBLING HELP WITH CHILD'S HOMEWORK

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Tutor helps child with homework</i>				
	<i>always</i>	<i>usually</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>rarely</i>	<i>never</i>
Jr K	.0	.0	48.8	4.7	46.5
Sr K	1.4	7.0	43.7	16.9	31.0
1	1.4	5.6	47.9	15.5	29.6
2	1.0	5.8	44.2	13.5	35.6
3	1.0	5.8	44.2	13.5	35.6
4	1.0	6.1	28.6	24.5	39.8
5	.9	4.5	27.0	30.6	36.9
6	1.1	2.2	35.9	23.9	37.0
7	1.0	4.2	26.0	22.9	45.8
8	1.1	2.2	27.5	25.3	44.0
9	.0	1.5	29.2	18.5	50.8
10	.0	1.8	27.3	14.5	56.4
11	1.9	1.9	20.8	13.2	62.3
12	.0	1.7	15.5	29.3	53.4
Total	1.1	3.7	32.7	20.3	42.2

5. Resources Used by Child for Homework

The Internet is reported as the most frequently used resource for homework (see Table 29) and with no significant difference across income levels. There is some difference in gender with girls using all resources more frequently. Those with incomes below \$40K use the public library and resources at home more than other income levels (see Table 30). School resources are used most heavily in private schools.

TABLE 29. USE OF RESOURCES TO COMPLETE HOMEWORK

<i>Type of Resource</i>	<i>Use by Students at all levels</i>		<i>Use by gender</i>		<i>Use by Type of School</i>			
	<i>all levels</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Separate</i>	<i>Home</i>	
School Resources	63.3	47.4	52.6	66.6	72.4	57.1	61.1	
Internet	72.0	49.9	50.1	73.8	71.8	73.7	94.4	
Public Library	41.8	47.2	52.8	44.3	27.6	44.4	61.1	
Materials at Home	64.8	49.1	50.9	70.1	53.8	61.6	66.7	

TABLE 30. RESOURCE USE BY INCOME LEVELS

<i>Type of Resource</i>	<i>Percent Resource Use by Income Levels</i>							
	<i>Under \$20,000</i>	<i>\$20 – 40K</i>	<i>\$40 – 60K</i>	<i>\$60 – 80K</i>	<i>\$80- 100K</i>	<i>\$100- 150K</i>	<i>\$150- 200K</i>	<i>Over 200K</i>
School Resources	52.4	73.6	56.1	67.8	57.8	65.9	65.8	65.2
Internet	76.2	71.7	72.0	72.2	67.1	74.6	73.9	75.5
Public Library	47.6	60.4	35.4	47.2	40.5	46.5	44.7	29.6
Materials at Home	81.0	73.6	62.2	66.1	55.7	69.3	67.5	64.4

6. Children's Attitude toward Homework

This dimension of the study is one of the most important and crucial for the role homework in school policy and classroom pedagogy. Student attitude permeates the emotional climate of the classroom and become an inhibiting factor not only for the student personally but for others in the group. The casual observation that by Grade Four over 25% of children are “somewhat” or “very resistant” to homework is quite important (see Table 31). Consequently it is important to observe that there is a statistically significant relationship between the time required for homework and attitude – more homework more negative the attitude ($r = .12, p < .0005$).

Although other factors like socialization may have a role, it is apparent that there is a significant relationship between the child's attitude toward homework and grade level—the resistance to homework grows as grade level increases ($r = .23, p < .0005$). This is so probably because there is almost direct relationship between grade level and amount of homework ($r = .61, p < .0005$).

Type of homework is also a factor here. The child's attitude is most negative toward completion homework ($r = -.29, p < .0005$), somewhat less negative toward projects ($r = -.19, p < .0005$), even less negative toward studying for tests ($r = -.14, p < .0005$) and least negative toward drill & practice ($r = -.07, p = .009$).

There is a significant relationship between attitude toward homework (resulting from amount of homework) and the amount of time they spend at:

- Watching TV ($r = .05, p = .04$). The more TV watched the more negative the attitude toward homework – probably due to increased pressure from parents.
- Playing Video Games ($r = .20, p < .0005$) The more time spent playing video games, the more negative the attitude toward homework.
- Playing with Toys ($r = -.12, p < .0005$). The more negative the attitude the less time playing with toys
- Self-Initiated activities ($r = -.06, p = .02$). The more negative the attitude the less time spent on self-initiated activities.

These four correlations likely all result from the strong correlation of “activity” with “grade level” (more TV and more video games and less toy playing and less self initiated activities as grade level increases) and the fact that negative attitude toward homework generally increases with higher grade level. Therefore, watching more TV or playing more video games does not result from a negative attitude toward homework, or vice versa, but rather both are related to the fact that at older levels children play more video games, watch TV and ALSO have a more negative attitude toward homework because of the increase in amount of homework.

There is a significant difference ($p = .01$) between overall student attitude toward homework (as reported by parents) between those who report “Other” language at home and those who speak English or French at home (categories “enthusiastic” and “willingly cooperative” combined result in: E & F =55.4, Other =66.1)

TABLE 31. CHILD ATTITUDE TOWARD HOMEWORK

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Child's Attitude toward Homework</i>				
	Enthusiastic	Willingly Cooperative	Grudgingly Cooperative	Somewhat resistant	Very resistant
JrK	50.0	32.7	13.5	1.9	1.9
SrK	42.4	43.4	9.1	4.0	1.0
1	26.5	47.1	18.4	5.1	2.9
2	18.4	45.8	25.1	8.4	2.2
3	7.0	42.7	31.2	14.0	5.1
4	3.7	35.2	35.8	12.3	13.0
5	10.9	42.3	26.9	10.9	9.0
6	5.8	42.4	33.1	13.7	5.0
7	8.3	46.2	27.3	9.8	8.3
8	7.5	49.5	28.0	10.3	4.7
9	9.6	47.0	27.7	12.0	3.6
10	5.1	43.0	27.8	12.7	11.4
11	5.5	35.6	39.7	11.0	8.2
12	3.9	43.4	32.9	9.2	10.5
Total	13.3	43.0	27.4	10.1	6.3

7. Parental Attitude and Sense of Competence toward Homework

Parental attitude begins very supportive in the lower grades with the majority being “completely supportive” in grade 1 and 2. By Grade Three this drops below 50% and by Grade Four 26% are “Hesitant” to “Strongly opposed.” At Grade 8 the “completely supportive” again rises to over half (see Table 32). Although the parent generally has a more negative attitude as homework increases, the parent is least negative about projects ($r = -.10$), a little more negative about tests ($r = -.12$), somewhat more negative about Drill & Practice work ($r = -.16$), and most negative about completion homework ($r = -.17$). This a different order of “dislike” than the child has although they are both most negative about completion homework.

There is a relationship between parental perception of how much homework they had as a child and their current support for homework. As they perceive that their children have more homework than they had, the more negative they are toward their child’s homework ($r = .26$ $p < .0005$).

TABLE 32. PARENT ATTITUDE TOWARD HOMEWORK

Grade	<i>Parent Attitude to Homework</i>				
	Completely Supportive	Somewhat supportive	Hesitant	Somewhat opposed	Very Opposed
Jr K	71.4	14.3	.0	8.9	5.4
Sr K	72.4	14.3	4.1	5.1	4.1
1	62.4	21.8	8.3	3.8	3.8
2	58.0	23.9	8.5	6.8	2.8
3	47.5	33.5	7.6	5.7	5.7
4	40.4	33.5	8.7	9.3	8.1
5	50.3	28.4	7.1	12.3	1.9
6	42.8	34.8	12.3	6.5	3.6
7	47.3	35.9	9.2	4.6	3.1
8	53.4	33.0	3.9	7.8	1.9
9	64.2	28.4	3.7	3.7	.0
10	57.7	26.9	5.1	9.0	1.3
11	57.5	30.1	5.5	2.7	4.1
12	60.3	24.4	5.1	9.0	1.3
Total	54.1	28.3	7.1	6.9	3.6

Although there is not full agreement between parents and child on levels of negative attitude toward type of homework, there is clearly a very strong positive correlation between Parental Attitude towards homework and the Child's Attitude ($r = .32$ $p < .0005$). The less time the child spends at homework the more positive the parental attitude ($r = .18$ $p < .0005$).

Parent's Educational Levels are significantly correlated with the attitude of the child toward homework: Mother ($r = -.07$, $p = .004$); Father ($r = -.08$, $p = .002$). Parent's Educational Levels are also significantly correlated with Parent's personal attitude toward the child's homework: Mother ($r = -.08$, $p = .001$); Father ($r = -.08$, $p = .001$).

An interesting correlation that points to use of "at home" time is the relationship between a positive attitude toward homework, which probably stems from the child having less homework, and other activities in which the child engages. The more positive the parental attitude toward homework, the more time children spend:

- watching TV ($r = -.11$ $p < .0005$)
- watching DVD/Videos ($r = -.07$ $p = .009$)
- listening to music ($r = -.10$ $p < .0005$).

TABLE 33. PARENTAL ATTITUDE IN RELATION TO AMOUNT OF CHILD'S HOMEWORK

<i>Child's Homework</i>	<i>Parental attitude</i>				
	Completely Supportive	Somewhat supportive	Hesitant	Somewhat Opposed	Very Opposed
<10	69.5	15.9	4.7	6.0	3.9
10-20	66.2	21.6	5.0	5.0	2.2
20-30	55.4	33.5	5.0	4.2	1.9
30-45	48.8	34.2	8.5	5.4	3.1
45-60	46.2	31.3	10.0	7.6	4.8
60-90	46.5	31.3	10.1	7.6	4.5
90-120	43.7	29.9	4.6	19.5	2.3
>120	32.7	29.1	10.9	14.5	12.7
Total	54.3	28.1	7.1	6.9	3.6

TABLE 34. PARENTAL ATTITUDE TOWARD HOMEWORK BY SCHOOL TYPE

School Type	<i>Parental attitude</i>				
	Completely Supportive	Somewhat supportive	Hesitant	Somewhat Opposed	Very Opposed
Public	53.7	27.8	7.5	6.6	4.4
Private	63.4	22.8	3.4	9.7	.7
Separate Home	53.1	30.5	7.8	6.3	2.3
Home	41.2	35.3	5.9	11.8	5.9
Total	54.3	28.1	7.1	6.9	3.6

Although the vast majority of parents maintain a considerable sense of competence in relation to homework, it is noteworthy that only 80% feel completely competent even with Grade One students (see Table 35). There is a general decline in “completely competent” as the level gets higher and by Grade 10 over 22% feel “not sure” to “very incompetent.” It makes sense that this perception should be related to parental educational level. Parent’s Educational Levels is significantly correlated with sense of competence to help with homework: Mother ($r = -.16, p < .0005$); Father ($r = -.07, p = .008$). Oddly, home schooling parents have the lowest percentage in “Completely competent” (Table 36).

TABLE 35. PARENTAL SENSE OF COMPETENCE TO HELP WITH HOMEWORK

Grade	<i>Sense of Competence</i>				
	Completely competent	Somewhat competent	Not sure	Somewhat incompetent	Very incompetent
Jr K	96.4	3.6	.0	.0	.0
Sr K	93.8	6.2	.0	.0	.0
1	79.9	14.9	2.2	1.5	1.5
2	76.3	20.9	.6	1.7	.6
3	62.9	30.2	1.3	4.4	1.3
4	50.6	40.0	2.5	3.1	3.8
5	57.7	34.6	1.3	4.5	1.9
6	52.2	34.6	6.6	5.9	.7
7	42.7	43.5	4.6	6.9	2.3
8	43.4	40.6	5.7	8.5	1.9
9	27.2	58.0	6.2	7.4	1.2
10	22.4	55.3	6.6	10.5	5.3
11	16.4	56.2	15.1	8.2	4.1
12	19.5	55.8	10.4	9.1	5.2
Total	55.4	34.1	3.8	4.8	2.0

TABLE 36. PARENTAL SENSE OF COMPETENCE TO HELP WITH HOMEWORK – BY SCHOOL TYPE

<i>School Type</i>	<i>Sense of Competence</i>				
	Completely competent	Somewhat competent	Not sure	Somewhat incompetent	Very incompetent
Public	55.2	33.5	4.0	5.0	2.4
Private	62.1	28.3	2.8	4.8	2.1
Separate Home	54.6	36.5	4.3	3.6	1.0
Home	35.3	52.9	.0	11.8	.0
Total	55.4	34.0	3.9	4.7	2.0

8. Effect of Homework on the Child’s Achievement

Parents seem unsure about the positive effect of homework on achievement. This is most so in the upper elementary grades (see Table 37). Only 20.5% believe homework has a very positive effect on achievement in grade 5 while 40% believe it has a neutral to negative effect in Grade 4.

TABLE 37. PERCEIVED EFFECT OF HOMEWORK ON CHILD’S ACHIEVEMENT.

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Effect</i>				
	Very positive	Somewhat positive	Neutral	Somewhat negative	Very negative
Jr K	37.3	35.3	25.5	2.0	.0
Sr K	47.9	28.7	21.3	2.1	.0
1	45.9	28.1	20.7	3.7	1.5
2	37.5	36.4	21.0	4.0	1.1
3	28.5	36.1	24.7	7.0	3.8
4	24.5	35.8	25.8	9.4	4.4
5	20.5	44.9	25.6	7.7	1.3
6	23.9	37.0	22.5	12.3	4.3
7	25.0	43.2	18.2	10.6	3.0
8	23.6	42.5	24.5	8.5	.9
9	35.7	39.3	21.4	3.6	.0
10	27.8	46.8	12.7	8.9	3.8
11	30.1	39.7	17.8	11.0	1.4
12	29.1	39.2	22.8	8.9	.0
Total	30.6	37.9	22.1	7.3	2.1

TABLE 38. PERCEIVED EFFECT OF HOMEWORK ON CHILD’S ACHIEVEMENT – BY SCHOOL TYPE

<i>School Type</i>	<i>Effect</i>				
	Very positive	Somewhat positive	Neutral	Somewhat negative	Very negative
Public	29.8	36.5	22.6	8.2	2.8
Private	33.8	42.1	19.3	4.1	.7
Separate Home	32.7	39.9	20.2	6.2	1.0
Home	11.8	35.3	52.9	.0	.0
Total	30.7	37.8	22.1	7.3	2.2

10. Other Activities in Child’s Life Competing with Homework

The attitudes and opinions of many parents today are affected by the parenting culture of the 21st century that places great expectation on children’s achievement. Many children participate in activities that demand considerable time and compete with homework and family time. This can exacerbate perceptions of problems with homework. For example nearly 60% of boys and 43% of girls were involved in sports activities, 28% of boys and 35% of girls in music activities (see Table 39). Noteworthy is the data pattern that shows children from homes over \$100K incomes are the most busy with arts and sports type activities. Jobs, however, are associate with lower incomes. (see Table 40).

TABLE 39. OTHER ACTIVITIES FOR CHILD

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Percent of Total</i>	
	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
Music	28.3	35.6
Dance	1.7	31.0
Swim	32.9	38.3
Sports	59.9	43.2
Religious	15.1	16.1
Chores	56.6	53.2
Paid job	9.0	11.4
Other	20.7	31.2

TABLE 40. OTHER ACTIVITIES BY INCOME LEVEL

			<i>Percent Participation by Income Levels*</i>							
			<\$20 K	\$20- 40K	\$40- 60K	\$60- 80K	\$80- 100K	\$100- 150K	\$150- 200K	Over 200K
% of total Sample in income categories**			1.2	2.9	4.6	10.0	16.1	28.2	16.4	14.1
Act- ivity	Gender & # of students									
Music	Boys	249	1.2	4.0	5.2	8.4	10.0	34.5	20.1	16.5
	Girls	310	.3	1.9	2.3	9.0	11.0	31.6	21.9	21.9
Dance*	Boys	15	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.7	20.0	33.3	20.0	20.0
	Girls	270	.4	1.1	3.3	9.6	14.4	30.7	19.3	21.1
Swim	Boys	290	3.1	5.5	2.4	9.7	12.4	33.4	15.5	17.9
	Girls	334	0.0	3.9	4.2	9.3	12.3	32.9	17.1	20.4
Sports	Boys	528	.2	3.2	3.0	6.8	18.6	33.1	19.1	15.9
	Girls	376	0.0	2.1	5.1	6.4	14.4	30.1	21.5	20.5
Religion	Boys	133	2.3	3.0	3.0	13.5	13.5	36.8	8.3	19.5
	Girls	140	1.4	3.6	6.4	12.1	18.6	27.9	12.1	17.9
Chores	Boys	499	1.0	4.2	4.2	11.0	17.4	33.5	16.2	12.4
	Girls	463	.9	3.2	5.2	11.7	14.0	31.5	17.7	15.8
Paid Job	Boys	79	0.0	3.8	5.1	17.7	17.7	34.2	10.1	11.4
	Girls	99	0.0	5.1	9.1	18.2	14.1	23.2	14.1	16.2
Other	Boys	182	2.7	6.0	4.4	9.9	18.1	30.2	11.0	17.6
	Girls	272	1.1	1.8	3.7	9.9	16.5	26.1	21.0	19.9

*NOTE: These percentages indicate only the relative distribution within the activity, not the total number of participants. For example, the total number of boys in dance is 15 while the total number of boys in sports is 528.

** Note: This row indicates the percentage of children that fall into these income categories. Please compare the percent in this row with the occurrence of children in the activities reported.

Children also engage in activities that are typically considered leisure activities. While many parents may believe some of these activities are a waste of time, or possibly harmful and should be limited, many parents expressed concern in the qualitative comments that their children are too pressured and stressed and have too little time to relax. One of the correlates of a positive parental attitude toward homework is the observation that children then get to spend more time:

- watching TV ($r = -.11$ $p < .0005$)
- watching DVD/Videos ($r = -.07$ $p = .009$)
- listening to music ($r = -.10$ $p < .0005$).

There is a gender difference in the “technology” activities as well as the more “risk” associated activity of playing outside. Boys generally watch more TV, play more video games, and play outdoors for greater amount of time. Girls listen to more music and spend more time in self-initiated activities.

TABLE 41. TIME SPENT WATCHING TV

Gender	<i>Minutes Spent Watching TV Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10–20	20–30	30–45	45– 60	60–90	90–120	More than 120
Boys	12.4	7.9	12.9	12.0	28.2	17.1	6.1	3.5
Girls	14.2	7.1	14.1	17.1	23.6	15.2	6.0	2.7
Total	13.3	7.5	13.5	14.6	25.9	16.1	6.0	3.1

TABLE 42. TIME SPENT WATCHING DVD/VIDEOS

Gender	<i>Minutes Spent Watching DVD's/Videos Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10–20	20–30	30–45	45– 60	60–90	90–120	More than 120
Boys	71.0	10.2	6.7	5.8	4.1	1.4	.7	.1
Girls	71.2	11.3	7.3	3.6	3.6	1.5	1.2	.4
Total	71.1	10.8	7.0	4.7	3.8	1.5	.9	.3

TABLE 43. TIME SPENT PLAYING VIDEO GAMES

Gender	<i>Minutes Spent Playing Video Games Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10–20	20–30	30–45	45– 60	60–90	90–120	More than 120
Boys	29.0	18.4	19.1	12.0	11.0	5.5	2.3	2.8
Girls	53.7	18.2	14.3	4.4	4.8	2.5	1.6	.5
Total	41.3	18.3	16.7	8.2	7.9	4.0	2.0	1.6

TABLE 44. TIME SPENT PLAYING WITH TOYS

Gender	<i>Minutes Spent Playing with Toys Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10–20	20–30	30–45	45–60	60–90	90–120	More than 120
Boys	35.8	11.3	14.9	11.8	10.7	7.9	3.3	4.3
Girls	36.5	8.8	16.1	11.5	12.3	8.4	3.8	2.5
Total	36.2	10.1	15.5	11.6	11.5	8.2	3.5	3.4

TABLE 45. TIME SPENT PLAYING OUTDOORS

Gender	<i>Minutes Spent Playing Outdoors Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10–20	20–30	30–45	45–60	60–90	90–120	More than 120
Boys	29.8	9.4	17.3	14.5	18.0	7.3	1.3	2.4
Girls	39.8	10.0	15.3	14.8	12.7	5.2	1.2	1.0
Total	34.8	9.7	16.3	14.7	15.3	6.3	1.2	1.7

TABLE 46. TIME SPENT LISTENING TO MUSIC

Gender	<i>Minutes Spent Listening to Music Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10–20	20–30	30–45	45–60	60–90	90–120	More than 120
Boys	37.4	18.1	17.4	9.1	8.2	5.2	2.5	2.1
Girls	27.7	19.2	20.3	10.8	9.2	6.5	3.7	2.7
Total	32.5	18.6	18.9	9.9	8.7	5.9	3.1	2.4

Table 47. Time Spent in Self-Initiated Activities

Gender	<i>Minutes Spent in Self-Initiated Activities Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10– 20	20-30	30-45	45– 60	60-90	90-120	More than 120
Boys	22.7	19.4	24.3	13.7	11.7	4.3	2.1	1.8
Girls	12.2	17.6	27.5	16.6	15.2	7.2	2.0	1.6
Total	17.4	18.5	25.9	15.2	13.5	5.8	2.1	1.7

An examination of leisure activities by grade level reveals some obvious age-related characteristics – younger children play more with toys, older children play more with video games, but all watch considerable amount of TV. These numbers, however, seem lower (see Table 48) than the findings of the Kaiser Foundation’s study (2005) in “A Teacher in the Living Room” that found 5 and 6 year old spending, on average, 70 minutes watching TV a day plus that amount again on other screen media (retrieved from: www.kff.org/entmedia/upload/7427.pdf)

TABLE 48. TIME SPENT WATCHING TV – BY GRADE LEVEL

Grade	<i>Minutes Spent Watching TV Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10– 20	20-30	30-45	45– 60	60-90	90-120	More than 120
JrK	9.5	7.9	19.0	22.2	17.5	17.5	4.8	1.6
SrK	15.1	10.4	17.9	16.0	21.7	13.2	2.8	2.8
1	18.5	11.9	14.1	14.1	25.2	11.1	3.0	2.2
2	11.7	9.4	17.8	18.3	25.0	12.8	3.9	1.1
3	15.9	9.6	10.8	15.9	24.8	17.8	3.8	1.3
4	20.3	9.5	13.3	13.3	29.1	10.1	3.8	.6
5	9.6	6.4	13.5	18.6	25.0	15.4	8.3	3.2
6	13.0	7.2	11.6	9.4	31.2	18.1	7.2	2.2
7	11.4	6.1	9.8	9.1	28.0	22.7	9.1	3.8
8	10.5	1.9	12.4	15.2	26.7	19.0	8.6	5.7
9	6.0	2.4	6.0	19.3	26.5	21.7	12.0	6.0
10	16.2	5.0	16.2	8.8	21.2	21.2	6.2	5.0
11	6.8	4.1	13.7	12.3	23.3	20.5	11.0	8.2
12	12.7	5.1	15.2	12.7	31.6	11.4	5.1	6.3
Total	13.2	7.4	13.6	14.7	25.9	16.1	6.1	3.1

TABLE 49. TIME SPENT WATCHING DVDs/VIDEOS – BY GRADE LEVEL

Grade	<i>Minutes Spent Watching DVD/Video Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10– 20	20-30	30-45	45– 60	60-90	90-120	More than 120
JrK	52.6	7.0	19.3	5.3	10.5	1.8	3.5	.0
SrK	62.6	15.2	4.0	10.1	5.1	2.0	1.0	.0
1	70.4	12.8	7.2	.8	4.0	2.4	1.6	.8
2	72.2	10.1	10.1	3.0	3.0	1.8	.0	.0
3	73.5	11.6	4.8	4.8	2.0	2.7	.7	.0
4	76.6	9.7	5.5	4.1	2.8	.0	1.4	.0
5	71.7	13.8	4.1	4.8	2.8	2.1	.7	.0
6	74.0	9.4	7.1	4.7	2.4	1.6	.8	.0
7	74.2	12.5	8.3	1.7	1.7	.8	.8	.0
8	75.5	12.2	5.1	5.1	1.0	1.0	.0	.0
9	72.0	6.1	8.5	4.9	7.3	1.2	.0	.0
10	74.0	9.1	3.9	3.9	5.2	1.3	1.3	1.3
11	65.7	7.1	2.9	11.4	8.6	1.4	1.4	1.4
12	67.1	8.2	9.6	6.8	5.5	.0	1.4	1.4
Total	71.3	10.8	6.8	4.7	3.8	1.5	.9	.3

TABLE 50. TIME SPENT PLAYING VIDEO GAMES– BY GRADE LEVEL

Grade	<i>Minutes Spent Playing Video Games Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10– 20	20-30	30-45	45– 60	60-90	90-120	More than 120
JrK	74.5	18.2	3.6	1.8	1.8	.0	.0	.0
SrK	62.9	21.6	7.2	5.2	1.0	2.1	.0	.0
1	51.5	25.8	15.9	3.0	2.3	.8	.8	.0
2	54.1	21.8	15.3	5.3	2.4	.6	.6	.0
3	38.2	21.7	21.7	8.6	8.6	1.3	.0	.0
4	40.1	19.1	21.1	11.2	5.9	2.6	.0	.0
5	38.8	17.8	24.3	5.3	9.2	2.6	.7	1.3
6	27.8	19.5	24.1	10.5	9.0	5.3	2.3	1.5
7	19.0	20.6	22.2	11.1	17.5	6.3	1.6	1.6
8	29.0	20.0	14.0	9.0	12.0	9.0	4.0	3.0
9	20.0	12.5	10.0	23.8	16.2	7.5	5.0	5.0
10	49.4	5.1	10.1	5.1	12.7	8.9	3.8	5.1
11	38.9	5.6	11.1	5.6	9.7	12.5	11.1	5.6
12	48.7	10.5	11.8	9.2	5.3	3.9	5.3	5.3
Total	41.2	18.3	16.8	8.1	7.9	4.0	2.0	1.6

TABLE 51. TIME SPENT PLAYING WITH TOYS – BY GRADE LEVEL

Grade	<i>Minutes Spent Playing with Toys Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10– 20	20-30	30-45	45– 60	60-90	90-120	More than 120
JrK	.0	.0	4.9	14.8	26.2	19.7	11.5	23.0
SrK	.0	5.7	12.4	19.0	19.0	18.1	10.5	15.2
1	5.9	9.6	19.9	14.0	21.3	15.4	8.1	5.9
2	5.6	12.9	25.8	17.4	15.2	16.9	5.1	1.1
3	11.6	12.3	21.9	14.8	21.9	10.3	4.5	2.6
4	17.9	16.7	21.2	17.3	12.8	9.0	3.8	1.3
5	32.2	11.8	21.1	15.8	10.5	5.3	2.0	1.3
6	45.8	18.3	15.3	8.4	6.9	4.6	.0	.8
7	59.3	9.8	13.8	8.9	4.9	.0	1.6	1.6
8	71.9	11.5	9.4	3.1	3.1	.0	.0	1.0
9	83.1	3.9	7.8	3.9	1.3	.0	.0	.0
10	97.1	.0	.0	2.9	.0	.0	.0	.0
11	93.8	3.1	1.5	.0	1.5	.0	.0	.0
12	86.8	1.5	4.4	1.5	.0	4.4	.0	1.5
Total	36.0	10.0	15.5	11.7	11.6	8.2	3.6	3.4

TABLE 52. TIME SPENT PLAYING OUTDOORS – BY GRADE LEVEL

Grade	<i>Minutes Spent Playing Outdoors Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10– 20	20-30	30-45	45– 60	60-90	90-120	More than 120
JrK	43.9	7.0	19.3	14.0	10.5	5.3	.0	.0
SrK	38.1	12.4	10.3	12.4	13.4	8.2	2.1	3.1
1	34.1	8.1	15.6	17.0	17.0	5.2	1.5	1.5
2	36.7	10.2	19.3	14.5	10.8	6.6	.6	1.2
3	31.8	9.9	18.5	18.5	18.5	2.6	.0	.0
4	34.0	9.2	14.4	17.0	16.3	6.5	.7	2.0
5	25.0	11.8	15.8	16.4	21.7	6.6	2.6	.0
6	27.1	6.8	21.8	21.8	12.8	9.0	.8	.0
7	21.8	11.3	21.8	15.3	21.8	4.0	.8	3.2
8	33.7	12.9	12.9	17.8	13.9	5.9	1.0	2.0
9	42.0	9.9	16.0	9.9	9.9	9.9	1.2	1.2
10	44.0	9.3	16.0	9.3	13.3	5.3	.0	2.7
11	52.4	6.3	14.3	3.2	17.5	4.8	1.6	.0
12	55.1	5.8	7.2	1.4	7.2	8.7	5.8	8.7
Total	34.8	9.6	16.4	14.8	15.3	6.2	1.2	1.6

TABLE 53. TIME SPENT LISTENING TO MUSIC – BY GRADE LEVEL

Grade	<i>Minutes Spent Listening to Music Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10– 20	20-30	30-45	45– 60	60-90	90-120	More than 120
JrK	36.8	26.3	21.1	5.3	8.8	1.8	.0	.0
SrK	46.7	18.1	18.1	5.7	2.9	4.8	1.9	1.9
1	41.4	25.6	18.8	6.8	6.0	.8	.0	.8
2	43.9	24.9	15.0	6.4	5.2	2.9	1.2	.6
3	41.8	24.2	21.6	8.5	2.6	1.3	.0	.0
4	42.6	18.1	18.7	7.7	7.7	2.6	1.9	.6
5	41.2	24.2	14.4	9.8	8.5	1.3	.7	.0
6	35.8	21.9	22.6	7.3	9.5	1.5	1.5	.0
7	25.8	20.3	23.4	12.5	7.8	7.0	2.3	.8
8	25.7	10.5	26.7	17.1	9.5	7.6	2.9	.0
9	16.9	12.0	24.1	8.4	8.4	13.3	6.0	10.8
10	6.2	5.0	12.5	21.2	18.8	21.2	7.5	7.5
11	1.4	2.8	14.1	21.1	23.9	9.9	15.5	11.3
12	3.9	6.5	10.4	11.7	16.9	26.0	13.0	11.7
Total	32.7	18.7	18.8	10.0	8.6	5.8	3.0	2.4

TABLE 54. TIME SPENT IN SELF-INITIATED ACTIVITY – BY GRADE LEVEL

Grade	<i>Minutes Spent in Self-Initiated Activity Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10– 20	20-30	30-45	45– 60	60-90	90-120	More than 120
JrK	19.4	14.5	25.8	17.7	12.9	6.5	1.6	1.6
SrK	10.4	25.5	31.1	15.1	5.7	6.6	3.8	1.9
1	14.7	25.0	24.3	16.2	10.3	7.4	1.5	.7
2	10.6	22.9	29.6	16.8	13.4	5.0	.6	1.1
3	14.7	22.4	27.6	16.7	14.1	1.9	1.3	1.3
4	8.9	23.4	31.0	12.0	16.5	5.1	2.5	.6
5	16.8	15.5	25.8	17.4	16.1	7.1	.6	.6
6	18.8	15.9	31.2	13.0	12.3	7.2	.7	.7
7	21.5	20.0	19.2	16.9	8.5	8.5	1.5	3.8
8	21.9	11.4	31.4	10.5	17.1	3.8	2.9	1.0
9	23.8	11.9	21.4	21.4	11.9	2.4	2.4	4.8
10	28.8	5.0	21.2	13.8	18.8	3.8	6.2	2.5
11	27.8	13.9	16.7	12.5	16.7	5.6	5.6	1.4
12	26.9	16.7	12.8	10.3	16.7	9.0	2.6	5.1
Total	17.4	18.5	25.9	15.1	13.5	5.7	2.1	1.7

TABLE 55. TIME SPENT WATCHING TV – BY ECONOMIC LEVEL

Economic Level	<i>Minutes Spent Watching TV Per Day</i>							
	Less than 10	10– 20	20-30	30-45	45– 60	60-90	90-120	More than 120
Less than \$20,000	9.5	9.5	23.8	.0	9.5	23.8	.0	23.8
\$20,000 – 40,000	20.0	6.0	4.0	18.0	22.0	16.0	12.0	2.0
\$40,000 – 60,000	23.9	.0	9.9	4.2	22.5	19.7	9.9	9.9
\$60,000 – 80,000	22.0	4.3	14.0	11.6	22.6	14.0	7.9	3.7
\$80,000 – 100,000	8.2	7.4	10.9	16.8	30.1	19.9	5.9	.8
\$100,000 – 150,000	9.8	6.8	15.6	14.8	28.7	16.4	5.3	2.7
\$150,000 – 200,000	14.7	8.8	12.1	15.1	25.4	13.6	7.7	2.6
over \$200,000	15.5	10.2	18.8	17.6	20.8	11.4	3.7	2.0
Total	13.5	7.2	14.0	14.7	25.7	15.7	6.2	2.9

11. Awareness of Homework Policy

Although it was not determined in this research whether the schools or school boards actually had homework policies, it was considered an important aspect of parental knowledge related to homework. In this sense the “not sure” response is the most telling. It does at the same time indicate some level of priority for the teacher and the school to have a policy and to communicate it. Parents were most clearly aware of class teachers’ and school homework policy vs. board or provincial policy. Private school parents had most awareness at this level. There was relatively little awareness of School Board Policy.

TABLE 56. TEACHER’S HOMEWORK POLICY BY TYPE OF SCHOOL

	<i>Teacher’s Homework Policy</i>			
	No policy	Communicated expect- ations but no formal policy	Clearly stated policy	Not sure
Public School	4.0	46.6	37.9	11.6
Private School	6.8	40.1	48.3	4.8
Separate School	8.6	40.9	39.9	10.6
Home School	.0	35.3	52.9	11.8

TABLE 57. SCHOOL HOMEWORK POLICY BY TYPE OF SCHOOL

	<i>School Homework Policy</i>			
	No policy	Communicated expect- ations but no formal policy	Clearly stated policy	Not sure
Public School	7.3	31.0	35.0	26.7
Private School	2.8	20.7	63.4	13.1
Separate School	8.8	34.9	33.4	22.9
Home School	5.9	23.5	35.3	35.3

TABLE 58. BOARD HOMEWORK POLICY BY TYPE OF SCHOOL

	<i>Board Homework Policy</i>			
	No policy	Communicated expectations but no formal policy	Clearly stated policy	Not sure
Public School	6.1	14.0	29.4	50.5
Private School	3.2	4.0	23.2	69.6
Separate School	9.2	22.9	22.6	45.3
Home School	5.9	11.8	35.3	47.1

TABLE 59. PROVINCIAL HOMEWORK POLICY BY TYPE OF SCHOOL

	<i>Provincial Homework Policy</i>			
	No policy	Communicated expectations but no formal policy	Clearly stated policy	Not sure
Public School	8.3	8.8	14.0	68.9
Private School	6.3	4.0	15.9	73.8
Separate School	12.7	11.6	15.9	59.7
Home School	6.2	12.5	25.0	56.2

ONTARIO QUALITATIVE DATA

Qualitative Dimension of the Study:

The majority of respondents completed a qualitative comment and opinion question in the survey. This resulted in some 180 pages of qualitative data that was subjected to thematic analysis for the most prominent opinions. The top 10 opinions (perspectives, concerns) raised are as follows (all participants gave permission to use quotations in publication). These themes are presented here in the order of dominance determined by the number of “like comments” in the qualitative responses.

1. Homework Expectations

Respondents expressed the opinion that the expectations of homework completion were too high for the child to accomplish (corroborated by the recent TDSB Student Census) requiring parental assistance, directions/expectations were unclear (even to the parent), and inadequate accommodation for ESL/LD.

“I feel that my child is being asked to complete homework that is too difficult for her to do on her own. She needs the help of one or both parents. This seems to me to be inappropriate. I do not mind helping my child with homework, but it seems that at least she should be given at least some homework that she can complete on her own.”

“It would seem that the teachers are either too rushed or can't be bothered to communicate well what is expected from the homework assignments.”

“The main problem with the homework coming home is that it contains errors or the directions are not clear.”

“It comes home without them knowing what to do. Some of it hasn't even been taught yet! Very aggravating.”

“All projects/homework require parental assistance due to children not understanding or not being able to meet the teacher's expectations due to complex instructions and when a child does attempt at a project by themselves, the teacher has ridiculed the student in front of their classmates because their project/homework was poorly made.”

“I can only imagine the struggles that new immigrants, ESL families, single parents, and those from disadvantaged socio-economic groups must have when they are not able to take on the role of ‘home-schooling’ that today's education system forces upon us.”

“I believe the issue stems from not only the amount of homework but also how complicated it is. ... I am also fortunate because my son's teachers provide us with a weekly sheet of the topics that will be covered so that we can continue to study this at home.”

2. Reduces Family Time

Families are under great stress of activity and achievement today. Homework is often seen as an incursion on what should be discretionary family time. In this time-management oriented society, the time allocated to school seems clear – it is the time they attend. One parent stated it this way: “My children are in the educational institution for 6.5 hours per day. I feel this should be sufficient time to complete any school related tasks. I am with them for significantly less time and would prefer to use this time engaging in activities to promote our relationship and increase bonding in order to reduce their stress levels.” Consequently, parents often expressed feelings of resentment toward homework and the effect it has on family balance.

“I feel that homework infringes on what little family time we have together. Instead of being able to play games, or hang out together, we have to get the homework done.”

“Our family finds all of our free time is crushed by the pressure of homework.”

“ I simply hate homework ... as a busy mom, I don't want to have to come home and drag homework out of my kids, and the homework my kids bring home is relevant, good and meaningful ... it's just not how I would choose to spend the precious (little!) time I have with my children.”

“Homework starts too young. Children are in structured activities all day between school and daycare. For working parents – as soon as you get home you have to start in on all of the assigned homework. This is impacting the quality time you are able to spend as a family unit. Under the age of 10 I highly question how homework actually contributes to learning outcomes. I believe that if kids had time for free play, family time and outdoor activity – academic results would actually be higher in the end.”

3. Too Much Homework!

The quantitative part of the study clearly revealed that parents believe their students are getting more homework than they had as children. The qualitative comments made it very clear that many believe the amount of homework is too much.

“The amount of text books a ten year old child is expected to carry home on her back! At times the bag has weighed over 40 lbs.”

“Although I appreciate her teacher's high expectations, I feel that the amount of homework is unrealistic.”

“My son has way too much homework of all kinds: projects, busy work, frequent tests and quizzes to study for and reading assignments.”

“Way too much homework for a child in grade 4 has caused him to dislike school. He started out as an enthusiastic student and now cries each night when it is time to do his homework which sometimes takes over one and half hours to complete.”

“I’m finding that my oldest son is coming home at times with way too much homework. He is given 2, sometimes 3, chapters out of a work book to be completed by the next day. Its becoming a nightmare for my wife and I. It’s a lot like we are tag teaming him at times to complete just one chapter of homework.”

4. Affects Family Relationships

Not only does homework reduce family time, but it becomes a primary source of arguments, power struggles, and disruptive to building a strong family.

“The oldest son is very resistant to homework and it is a power struggle in our house to get him to do it.”

“I find homework extremely disruptive to building a strong family. The number of fights and stressful tension has been numerous, it has put the parent in a position they are not willing, equipped or prepared to do effectively.”

“Fights over homework with my children are common and very upsetting.”

“Homework has become an ever-present albatross around our family's neck.”

“The family stress caused by the homework requirements were not worth the "grade," and we were fine with having his final report card state that "Homework Completion" was "S" (Satisfactory) rather than Good or Excellent”

“We as parents find our marital stress is based primarily on the rigors of school and academic marks.”

5. Quality vs. Quantity

Parents recognize that considerable time and family stress is invested in homework. If they then perceive this to be of little value or busy work they become less supportive. Parents expressed the opinion that homework should be new learning extensions and engagements instead of review or drill.

“Far too much homework, of little value. Too much is expected of parents in terms of helping out. Too much drill work, too much class work completion.”

“Sometimes homework is just busy work. And if your child has already mastered the skills, and is competent, there is no use in doing the stuff repeatedly and is a waste of time.”

“That there is so much quantity, I wonder if the benefits of learning from the work is being outweighed by the negative effects such as less ‘down’ time, less family time, stress of completing assignments, emphasis on completing work instead of learning something.”

“I think most of the assigned homework thus far has been either busy work and a complete waste of time or it is part of the curriculum that the teacher has not had time to cover and is sending it home to extend the school day.”

6. Stress Level - Burn-out, Low Self-esteem

“I am worried about my daughter burning out on school and not being able to handle the higher expectations when she gets to later grades.”

“Recently, I was very upset to hear my youngest son say that he hated school because of all of the homework.”

“One of my daughters has some LD issues related to reading and comprehension. She therefore finds homework and school very stressful.”

“... I am sickened that my daughter has so much homework and cannot enjoy more of a carefree existence. At age 11, she has so many worries about homework at the end of the day and consequently takes a long time to fall asleep.”

7. Children Need Unstructured Play Time

“Homework infringes on time that the child should be getting physical activity.”

“My main concern about this much homework at this age is that it does not allow my daughter to spend time doing outdoor things after school with neighbouring children.”

“Evening time for youngsters should be spent enriching their lives with music, sports, dance, play which has much more positive long term effects than mindless worksheets.”

“Two working parent families are busy enough and want to have some quality time with our children after a long day of work. The children have also spent their day in school, learning, and working hard and now need a break to get outside and play or go to an activity where they can get some exercise. They should rarely have work to do at home, other than reading.”

8. Project Work

Parents made many comments about projects. They generally feel that projects are assigned with the expectation of parental assistance and that grading depends on quality parental input. This raises unhealthy competition among parents and places too great a time demand on parents.

“Most parents I know admit that they do the majority of the project work with some assistance from the child... Pretty inconsistent for those children that don't have both parents at home or parents that work shift or long hours.”

“ The amount of input required by parents, not just supervision but actual leg work, hunting down resources and buying supplies, that is required is too much and doesn't reflect what the child could accomplish on his own.”

“... The number of team projects has also increased. The majority of students are bussed and therefore need to meet outside requiring coordination of schedules not only within our own family but with other families. It is very stressful at times. ...”

“school projects: parental involvement is critical and those with fancy colour computer or pictures from books get higher marks or the projects with “extras” that cost money also get higher marks... it doesn't seem equitable”

9. Positive Home/School Connection

Parents see value in homework when it contributes to a home/school connection and a positive extension of learning in the classroom.

“I like doing some homework with my son because it helps me to be involved and know what he is doing in school.”

“I don't mind helping my children with homework exercises, it is a way to really know what they are learning and capable of doing.”

“...It is also a window into the classroom to see what is going on.”

“The homework gives me an opportunity to see first hand how well my children are managing the curriculum. It keeps me in touch with their progress.”

10. Promotes Good Work Habits - Time management

“ I think that doing homework helps to develop discipline and responsibility.”

“For both of my children, it has been a very positive experience, as it teaches time management, prioritizing, and the work is always worth doing.”

“I would like to see more homework in all subjects. My experiences with my child is that a routine has been set in place since he has started school. All homework is to be completed first before any curricular activity and school is the priority in our family. I think this has helped my son, as it is second nature for him now and he enjoys completing his homework early so all other activities can still be met.”

ONTARIO COMPARED WITH THE REST OF CANADA

Sample Details: The study sample resulted in data related to 1800 children in Ontario and 255 from the rest of Canada. Ontario data was analyzed in detail as presented above. Comparisons were calculated on some key variables to get a sense of the relative status of these homework factors in Ontario. The results were as follows:

Time Spent on Homework

There is a statistically significant difference between Ontario and the rest of Canada in the time children spend on homework ($t= 3.47$, $df= 1978$, $p = .001$).

Ontario average 39.8 minutes

Rest of Canada average 32.6 minute

Amount of Homework by Type

There is a strongly significant difference in the amount of homework consisting of projects between Ontario and the rest of Canada with Ontario having more projects ($t = -4.33$, $df=1811$, $p < .0005$).

There is no significant difference in the reported amount of completion, drill & Practice, or study for tests.

Attitude of Children

There is NO Significant difference between Ontario and the rest of Canada in the attitude of children toward homework ($t=1.14$, $df=1871$, $p=.25$).

Attitude of Parents

There is a significant difference between Ontario and the rest of Canada in the attitude of parents toward homework with parents in Ontario being more negative ($t=2.42$, $df=1861$, $p<.02$)

Helping Children with Homework

There is a significant different between Ontario and the rest of Canada in the frequency of parents helping children homework – parents in Ontario help more frequently ($t=-3.85$, $df=1973$, $p<.0005$).

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Homework Realities: A Canadian Study of Parental Opinions and Attitudes

Thank you for volunteering to complete this survey related to homework and how it is affecting you and others. We would like your permission to use the data you supply in publications and public presentations and to quote from any comments you make in this survey. We will ask for postal code to identify location and some other limited demographic information. We are gathering no personal information electronically (such as email address or internet footprints). Only the information you supply directly here will be available to us.

1. Do you agree to allow us to use the data you supply for publication or presentation?

Yes, I agree [] No, I do not agree []

2. I am answering this questionnaire as:

Mother []

Father []

Grandparent []

Guardian []

Sibling []

Other [] (Please specify) _____

3. Your Postal Code or Zip Code: _____

4. How many children do you have in school? 1 2 3 4 5 Other ___

5. How many pre-school children do you have? 0 1 2 3 4 5 Other ___

6. What languages are spoken at home?

English [] French [] Other [] Please specify _____

7. Type of family

Single Parent []

Two Parent []

Single Parent plus extended family []

Two parent plus extended family []

Other [] Please specify _____

8. Parent's Education - what is the highest level of education completed?

	Mother	Father
Grade school		
High School		
Community College		
University – Bachelors		
University – Masters		
University – Doctorate		

9. Total Family Income before Taxes

Income level	
Less than \$20,000	
20,000 – 40,000	
40,000 – 60,000	
60,000 – 80,000	
80,000 – 100,000	
100,000 – 150,000	
150,000 – 200,000	
Over \$200,000	

10. What is the grade level of each child in school?

	jk	sk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Child 1														
Child 2														
Child 3														
Child 4														
Child 5														

11. What is the gender of each child in school?

	Male	Female
Child 1		
Child 2		
Child 3		
Child 4		
Child 5		

12. What type of school does the child attend?

	Public	Private	Separate	Home- schooling
Child 1				
Child 2				
Child 3				
Child 4				
Child 5				

13. On average how much time does each child spend on homework per school night?

	Less than 10 min	10–20 min	20–30	30–45	45–60	60–90	90–120	More than 120
Child 1								
Child 2								
Child 3								
Child 4								
Child 5								

14. How frequently does Child 1 get help with homework from?

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Parent					
Brother or sister					
Friend					
Paid Tutor					
Other					

[Questions 15 – 18 – same question for child 2- 5]

19. What kind of homework does Child 1 have?

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Completing work to be done in school					
Drill and practice to supplement school work (e.g. math sheets, music instrument practice)					
Project type extensions to school work					
Studying for tests					

[Questions 20 – 23 – same question for child 2- 5]

24. What is your child's attitude toward homework?

	Enthusiastic	Willingly cooperative	Grudgingly cooperative	Somewhat resistant	Very resistant
Child 1					
Child 2					
Child 3					
Child 4					
Child 5					

25. What is YOUR attitude toward the teacher's assignment of this child's homework:

	Completely Supportive	Somewhat supportive	Hesitant	Somewhat opposed	Very opposed
Child 1					
Child 2					
Child 3					
Child 4					
Child 5					

26. How competent do YOU usually feel helping your child with homework?

	Completely competent	Somewhat competent	Not sure	Somewhat incompetent	Very incompetent
Child 1					
Child 2					
Child 3					
Child 4					
Child 5					

27. What resources do you or your child draw on to help with homework?

	Resources from the school	Internet	Community library	Books available at home
Child 1				
Child 2				
Child 3				
Child 4				
Child 5				

28. What effect do you believe this homework is having on the child's academic achievement?

	Very positive	Somewhat positive	Neutral	Somewhat negative	Very negative
Child 1					
Child 2					
Child 3					
Child 4					
Child 5					

29. How has this child's relationship with homework affected your family?

	Very positively	Somewhat positively	Not at all	Somewhat negatively	Very negatively
Child 1					
Child 2					
Child 3					
Child 4					
Child 5					

30. What other activities is this child engaged in?

	Music Lessons	Dance Lessons	Swim Lessons	Sports teams	Religious programs	Household chores	Paid job	Other
Child 1								
Child 2								
Child 3								
Child 4								
Child 5								

31. How much time does this child spend in an average day watching TV shows?

	Less than 10 min	10-20 min	20-30	30-45	45-60	60-90	90-120	More than 120
Child 1								
Child 2								
Child 3								
Child 4								
Child 5								

32. How much time does this child spend in an average day watching DVDs/videos?

	Less than 10 min	10– 20 min	20– 30	30-45	45– 60	60-90	90- 120	More than 120
Child 1								
Child 2								
Child 3								
Child 4								
Child 5								

33. How much time does this child spend in an average day playing computer/video games?

	Less than 10 min	10– 20 min	20– 30	30-45	45– 60	60-90	90- 120	More than 120
Child 1								
Child 2								
Child 3								
Child 4								
Child 5								

34. How much time does this child spend in an average day playing imaginatively with toys?

	Less than 10 min	10– 20 min	20– 30	30-45	45– 60	60-90	90- 120	More than 120
Child 1								
Child 2								
Child 3								
Child 4								
Child 5								

35. How much time does this child spend in an average day playing outdoors alone or with other children without direct supervision by an adult?

	Less than 10 min	10– 20 min	20– 30	30-45	45– 60	60-90	90- 120	More than 120
Child 1								
Child 2								
Child 3								
Child 4								
Child 5								

36. How much time does this child spend in an average day listening to music?

	Less than 10 min	10–20 min	20–30	30–45	45–60	60–90	90–120	More than 120
Child 1								
Child 2								
Child 3								
Child 4								
Child 5								

37. How much time per day does your child spend engaged in self-initiated and self-directed activities related to learning: For example reading a book, writing a story, drawing or painting, researching something of interest, composing a song, etc

	Less than 10 min	10–20 min	20–30	30–45	45–60	60–90	90–120	More than 120
Child 1								
Child 2								
Child 3								
Child 4								
Child 5								

38. Compared to when you were a child, the amount of homework today is

Much less	Somewhat less	The same	Somewhat more	Much more

39. What policy does each of the following have related to homework?

	No policy	Communicated expectations but no formal policy	Clearly stated policy	Not sure
Class- Teacher				
School				
School Board or district				
Province or State				

40. PLEASE: Tell us about your concerns or experience related to homework

Appendix 2. Ethics Approval



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
Office of the Vice-President, Research and Associate Provost
Ethics Review Office

PROTOCOL REFERENCE #18954

November 13, 2006

Prof. Linda Cameron
Dept. of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
of the University of Toronto
252 Bloor Street West
Toronto, ON M5S 1V6

Dear Prof. Cameron:

Re: Your research protocol entitled, "The Homework Realities Survey"

ETHICS APPROVAL

Original Approval Date: November 13, 2006
Expiry Date: November 12, 2007

We are writing to advise you that a member of the Education Research Ethics Board (REB) has granted approval to the above-named research study, for a period of **one year**, under the REB's expedited review process. Ongoing projects must be renewed prior to the expiry date.

The following consent document (revised November 10, 2006) has been approved for use in this study: Email Cover Letter. Participants should receive a copy of their consent form.

During the course of the research, any significant deviations from the approved protocol (**that is, any deviation which would lead to an increase in risk or a decrease in benefit to participants**) and/or any unanticipated developments within the research should be brought to the attention of the Ethics Review Office.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your project.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "B. Murphy".

Bridgette Murphy
Ethics Review Coordinator

xc: Prof. A. Cole (Chair, Education REB)