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# Co-curricular Activities and Students' Academic Achievement in Cross River State, Nigeria

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# Abstract:

The key essence of the research was to evaluate the understanding of students in the Cross River State of the assignment and academic performance of secondary school students. The analysis employed one research question and one null hypothesis. On the basis of the variable under review, literature was analyzed. For the report, the ex post facto design was adopted. There were 15,080 SS2 students in all 272 public secondary schools in the state of Cross River. For the study, a pool of 1, 029 students were used. For data collection, an instrument called "Students Perception of Assignment and Academic Achievement Questionnaire (SPAAQ) was used." The instrument's reliability was estimated at .77 using the Cronbach Alpha reliability equation. The research also contained data from school administrative reports, which were the academic performance records of students for 2018 promotion exams collected from school authorities in English language, mathematics and biology. Descriptive statistics and One Direction Measurement of Variance (ANOVA) were used to interpret the collected data. The results of the research found that this interpretation of assignments/homework greatly affected the academic performance of students. It is also concluded that the understanding of student assignment affects the academic performance of Cross River State senior high school students. It was proposed that teachers go additional mile to make students conscious, based on the above finding, that all the tasks provided to them are helpful to their self-development and personal growth.

**Keywords:** Students perception of assignment, Homework, Academic achievement, Students, examination, Secondary schools

# 1. Introduction

A country's development is inseparably attached to its system of education, since acquisition of knowledge is a light that shows humankind the correct path to toe and also a bedrock for the development and progress of a nation. Acquisition of knowledge does not just bestow information, aptitudes and instills values, however it is additionally liable for building human capital which breeds, drives and sets mechanical development and monetary development. Acquisition of knowledge in its broadest significance is any means by which an individual gains knowledge, information and understanding or acquires attitudes and skills.

There has been a stressing pattern throughout the years that school children inCross River State have continued to perform poorly in external examinations especially in Senior Secondary Examinations. Numerous studies have shown that academic failure has a major effect on the career of an individual and puts a high financial strain on families and community (Bigdeli & Malekzadeh, 2005). The existence of an abnormal mentality is one of the most critical considerations for academic failure. In other words, the factors correlated with accomplishments and failures will dictate attitudes and habits that influence the potential performance or failure of a person. Many factors impact learning performance and thus many interacting factors, such as not performing school home work/assignments, may cause low academic performance of Cross River State students.

Homework/assignments among teachers, parents and educators have often been a subject of contention. Homework challenges focus around out-of-class events around quantity, consistency, and time constraints. Ultimately, it is the student who must use his or her own discretion as to whether homework tasks are done, when and how. The results of homework have been studied by scholars. The correlation between completion of homework and student accomplishment has been questioned. It explored the issues of how much homework is helpful and whether parental intervention helps students develop healthier learning habits. The concerns of the teachers, the core actors, remain largely undisclosed, however. Homework is typically allocated by instructors with the best possible motives, but can create tension between school and home. Shared consensus between parents, teachers, and educators may be missing in the aims and advantages of assigning homework. At the primary educational level, comprehensive study literature is available on parental values and interest in homework. There has been less research, however, about how students interpret the meaning and advantages of homework. In addition, a point to ponder is the perspective of students on assignment/homework. That is taken for granted by some students. In view of the above, the researcher therefore examined the impact on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Cross River State of students 'perception of assignments/homework and social relationships.

#### 1.1. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine Students' perception of assignment on senior secondary school students' academic achievement in Cross River State.

#### 1.2. Research Questions

To what extent does Students' perception of assignment influence students' academic achievement?

#### 1.2.1. Statement of Hypothesis

Students' perception of assignment/homework does not significantly influence their academic achievement

#### 2. Literature Review

Homework in jurisdictions all over the world has been an issue of study and media interest (Hallam, as quoted in Turanli, 2009). Clearly, both inside and outside of academia, it is an important topic. Academic success in Nigeria is a challenge that parents, educators and students themselves still stress. In primary, secondary and tertiary schools, homework has taken up the lives of most students. Although several news accounts suggested the students were burdened with so much of it, homework in today's college curriculum continues to be a normal occurrence. It has led to improved academic success of students (Lim, Wai & Wai, 2008).

Homework can be referred to as supplementary work to be done outside the classroom much of the time to improve school learning, and it is said to be one of the most divisive problems between children and parents (Chew, Teong & Ishak, 2016). Nearly every stakeholder in education has something good to talk about homework. Though students typically do not like to do homework, they find it helpful and respect the teachers who regularly give homework (as cited in Turanli 2009, Hallam).

On the other hand, as Turanli (2009) quoted, Bursuck maintained that homework improves student attendance, builds self-discipline and healthy study habits. Involvement in the homework of their children often allows parents to track the efforts of their children. Too much homework, however, decreases the time students could use to relax and socialize Baumgartner, Bryan, Donahue and Nelson as cited in (Turanli, 2009), Hong and Lee as cited in Turanli 2009, in line with this statement, argue that the desires of students are not sufficiently taken into account and they also recommend that they should not give any homework at all.

As cited in Turanli (2009), Van explained the purposes of offering homework to create relationships between schools, students and parents so that they can more closely track the learning process of the child. And that assigning homework is embedded in the preferences of parents may be that certain parents use homework to assess the success of teachers and schools of their children. Parents think the homework activities improve the level of learning and train students for their tests. Several studies indicate a strong association between the time spent on homework and academic achievement, but (Van, as quoted in Turanli 2009) insists that this is not a relationship of cause and effect, while Walberg, Paschal and Weinstein (Turanli, 2009) assumed that homework has a positive influence on academic achievement. Furthermore, McReymonds (2005) argues that, along with its advantages, the problems homework may bring to the lives of students and parents should also be considered. This is because parents are often forced to support their children with their homework, which may be too complicated or too much for the child at times.

As quoted in Turnali (2009), Hallam claims that a certain amount of homework boosts academic results, but more of it would not cause any further increase. In the same way, Kohn (2006) claims that there is not enough evidence to say that homework has led to academic achievement and that even though they are not assigned any homework, the academic success of students would not decrease. Some evidence indicates that a little' homework may contribute to more academic achievement than a lot' of homework does. As cited in Turanli (2009), Walberg, Paschal and Weinstein also differ a lot in their views on the correct amount of homework. As quoted in Turanli (2009), Van suggests allocating 20-30 minutes of kindergarten homework to second-grade children and 30-40 minutes of grade three through six homework every day. As quoted in Turanli (2009), Cooper proposes giving pupils 10 minutes of homework for the first year and adding 10 more minutes for each additional year.

#### 3. Methodology

The thesis followed an ex-post-facto analysis style. The thesis was done in the state of Cross River, which is one of the 36 states of Nigeria. Cross River State, as presently created, is located within Nigeria's tropical rain forest region. It is situated between 5o32' latitude and 4o27 'north of the equator and 7o50' longitude and 9o28' east of the Greenwich Meridian. The sample population comprised all 15,080 SS2 students in all 272 public secondary schools in the state of Cross River. Of the students, a total of 7,142 are men, while 7,938 are women.

The methodology of stratified random sampling was implemented for the analysis. The survey for the analysis consisted of 1,037 randomly chosen SS2 students from 30 public schools. The data for the analysis was obtained in two

steps. Step one included the use of a questionnaire entitled "Students Perception of Assignments and Academic Achievement Questionnaire" (SPAAQ). Phase two included the extraction of the score of students from school records in the 2018 promotion test (English Language, Mathematics and Biology). Phase two included the extraction of the score of students from school records. There were four sections of the questionnaire: Parts A, B, C and D. Part A collected data from the respondents regarding their demographics such as gender and age. Section B was a Likert-type scale of five elements with four-point answer alternatives that assessed the magnitude of the interpretation of assignments by students. Part C was a 15-item, 4-point Likert style scale that assessed the interpretation of assignments/home work by students. In order to obtain a reliability coefficient of .77, the reliability of the instrument was determined using the Cronbach alpha reliability system. In responding to the research questions, descriptive statistics (simple percentages and bar graphs) and One Direction Analysis of Variance were used.

#### 4. Result/Finding

The goal of this article was to establish the degree to which the interpretation of assignment of students affects the academic achievement of students. In addressing the research question, basic percentages were used to balance the levels of academic achievement of students against their perception of assignment in order to measure the degree to which the perception of assignment of their students affected academic achievement.

As seen in Table, the result revealed that of the 233 subjects with a low perception of assignment/homework, 29.6 percent, 60.1 percent and 10.3 percent respectively had a low, moderate and high level of achievement in English, while of the 440 subjects with a moderate perception of assignment/homework, 13.9 percent, 73.6 percent and 12.5 percent respectively had a low, low and low perception of assignment/homework. The findings have evidently demonstrated that the understanding of assignment/homework as essential supports academic achievement in the English language. The findings in Table 1 also revealed that of the 233 subjects with a low perception of assignment/homework, 28.8%, 64.8% and 6.4% respectively had a low.

64.8% and 6.4% respectively had a low, moderate and high level of achievement in mathematics, while of the 440 subjects with a moderate perception of assignment/homework, 14.8%, 69.5% and 15.7% had a low intermediate and higher perception of assignment/homework, respectively.

Variables	Perception of	Ν	Low	Moderate	High	Total
	Assignment/Homework		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
English Language	Low	233	29.6	60.1	10.3	100
	Moderate	440	13.9	73.6	12.5	100
	High	356	6.7	63.2	30.1	100
	Total	1029	15.0	67.0	18.1	100
Mathematics	Low	233	28.8	64.8	6.4	100
	Moderate	440	14.8	69.5	15.7	100
	High	356	9.6	63.8	26.7	100
	Total	1029	16.1	66.5	17.4	100
Biology	Low	233	25.8	67.8	6.4	100
	Moderate	440	12.0	72.7	15.2	100
	High	356	4.2	69.1	26.7	100
	Total	1029	12.4	70.4	17.2	100
Overall academic achievement	Low	233	40.8	59.2	0.0	100
	Moderate	440	21.8	71.4	6.8	100
	High	356	11.0	66.0	23.0	100
	Total	1029	22.4	66.8	10.9	100

Table 1: Proportions of Subjects Who Were Low, Average and High in Academic Achievement across Levels of Perception of Assignment/Homework

of the 356 subjects that had a strong understanding of assignment/homework, 9.6%, 63.8% and 26.7%, respectively, had medium, moderate and high degrees of accomplishment in mathematics. Apparently, the findings have found that task/homework perception encourages academic success in mathematics.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that of the 233 subjects who had a poor perception of assignment/homework, 25.8%, 67.8% and 6.4% had medium, moderate and high levels of accomplishment in biology, respectively, while of the 440 subjects who had a moderate perception of assignment/homework, 12.0%, 72.7% and 15.2% had low, moderate and

high levels respectively. The findings have evidently suggested that the interpretation of assignment/homework by students as essential encourages academic achievement in biology.

Finally, the results found that 40.8 percent, 59.2 percent and 0.0 percent of the 233 subjects with poor perception of assignment/homework had low, moderate and high overall academic achievement, respectively, while 21.8 percent, 71.4 percent and 6.8 percent of the 440 subjects with moderate perception of assignment/homework had strong, moderate and high academic achievement, respectively. Apparently, the findings have found that the interpretation of assignment/homework as important by students encourages overall academic achievement.

The findings of the One-way Study of Variance revealed, as presented in Table 2, that the interpretation of assignment/homework by students had a significant impact on their achievement in the English language (F=64.795; df=2, 1026; p<.05); achievement in mathematics (F=27.649; df=2, 1026; p<.05); achievement in biology (F=46.536; df=2, 1026; p<.05) and overall academic achievement (F=75.525; df=2, 1026; p<.05). The null hypothesis that the interpretation of assignment/homework by students does not substantially impact their academic performance is thus dismissed for achievement in English Language, Mathematics and Biology by default. Such studies indicate that the understanding of assignment/homework greatly affects the academic success of students.

A post hoc study was performed using the Fishers Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison test to look for the cause of the difference, considering the significant F-ratios. The findings as presented in Table 3 revealed that participants with a low level of assignment/homework perception had slightly lower mean achievement in English relative to those with a moderate level of assignment/homework perception (MD=-4.37; p<.05) and those with a high level of assignment/homework perception with those who had a high degree of perception of assignment/homework (MD=-4.38; p<.05). In comparison found that participants with a modest level of perception of test taking had a substantial lower mean score in English Language.

Variable	Level of	Ν	Mean	SD
	Assignment/Homework			
English Language	Low	233	45.25	10.45
	Moderate	440	49.62	9.25
	High	365	54.00	8.27
	Total	1029	50.15	9.77
Mathematics	Low	233	46.28	8.66
	Moderate	440	50.53	9.87
	High	365	52.26	9.94
	Total	1029	50.17	9.88
Biology	Low	233	45.44	9.40
	Moderate	440	49.67	9.40
	High	365	53.21	9.95
	Total	1029	49.94	10.01
Overall academic	Low	233	136.97	22.90
achievement	Moderate	440	149.82	20.28
	High	365	159.47	22.70
	Total	1029	150.25	23.27

Table 2: One-Way Analysis of Variance for Perception of Assignment/Homework and Students' Academic Achievement

	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-ratio	p-level
English Language	Between groups	11004.345	2	5502.173	64.795*	.000
	Within groups	87124.110	1026	84.916		
	Total	98128.455	1028			
Mathematics	Between groups	5130.309	2	2565.154	27.649*	.000
	Within groups	95188.198	1026	92.776		
	Total	100318.506	1028			
Biology	Between groups	8559.467	2	4279.734	46.536*	.000
	Within groups	94356.254	1026	91.965		
	Total	102915.721	1028			
Overall academic achievement	Between groups	71431.186	2	35715.593	75.525*	.000
	Within groups	485196.004	1026	472.901		
	Total	556627.190	1028			

Table 3 \*Significant at .05 alpha level; p<.05 For academic performance in Mathematics, subjects with a poor level of assignment/homework perception had a slightly lower mean compared to those with a moderate level of assignment/homework perception (MD=-4.25; p<.05) and those with a high level of assignment/homework perception (MD=-5.98; p<.05). Other pair wise comparison found that as compared to those with a high level of perception of assignment/homework (MD=-1.72; p<.05), participants with a modest level of perception of assignment/homework had a substantial lower mean score in mathematics.

For academic performance in Biology, participants with a poor level of assignment/homework perception had a slightly lower mean score relative to those with a moderate level of assignment/homework perception (MD=-4.23; p<.05) and those with a high level of assignment/homework perception (MD=-7.77; p<.05). Other pair wise comparison found that as compared to those with a high level of perception of assignment/homework (MD=-3.54; p<.05), participants with a modest level of perception of assignment/homework had slightly lower mean score.

In terms of average academic performance, participants who had a poor level of assignment/homework perception had a slightly lower mean score compared to those who had a reasonable level of assignment/homework perception (MD=-12.85; p<.05) and those who had a high level of assignment/homework perception (MD=-22.50; p<.05). Other pair wise comparison found that in comparison with those with a high level of perception of assignment/homework (MD=-9.65; p<.05), participants with a modest level of perception of assignment/homework had a slightly lower mean score of overall academic achievement.

Variable	Perception of Assignment/Homework	N	Mean	Mean Difference	p-level
English	Low	233	45.25	-4.37*	.000
Language	Moderate	440	49.62		
	Low	233	45.25	-8.75*	.000
	High	356	54.00		
	Moderate	440	49.62	-4.38*	.000
	High	356	54.00		
Mathematics	Low	233	46.28	-4.25*	.000
	Moderate	440	50.53		
	Low	233	46.28	-5.98*	.000
	High	356	52.26		
	Moderate	440	50.53	-1.72*	.012
	High	356	52.26		
Biology	Low	233	45.44	-4.23*	.000
	Moderate	440	49.67		
	Low	233	45.44	-7.77*	.000
	High	356	53.21		
	Moderate	440	49.67	-3.54*	.000
	High	356	53.21		
Overall academic achievement	Low	233	136.97	-12.85*	.000
	Moderate	440	149.82		
	Low	233	136.97	-22.50*	.000
	High	356	159.47		
	Moderate	440	149.82	-9.65*	.000
	High	356	159.47		

Table 4: Fishers Least Significant Difference Post Hoc Test for Perception of Assignment/Homework and Students' Academic Achievement \*Significant at .05 Level; P<.05

# **5. Discussion of Findings**

The results of study question one revealed that the interpretation of assignment/homework by students as essential encourages academic achievement. Testing the related theory found that the interpretation of assignment/homework had a huge effect on the academic performance of students. The result also found that the understanding of assignment/homework had a major effect on the academic performance of the students. The result so f the research attributed Isangedighi's (2011) hypothesis that the richness of the perception of the child shapes the nature of what is learned and that learners learn better or see as of much importance what makes sense to them. But if students consider assignment/homework as important or as meaningful to them as students, then any assignment or homework

will be seriously done, and this would promote learning and lead to greater achievement. Turanli (2009) observed, in addition to the above, that homework has a positive impact on academic achievement.

Similarly, the association between homework and the academic performance of students was explored by Munillo and Martinea- Garrido (2014). In terms of setting up home work for their students and drawing on home work in the classroom, the research investigated the behaviours of teachers. The results of this study showed that in all schools, most teachers set up home work. It was not too impressive, though to follow up activities in terms of testing and fixing home jobs. Barrera (2017) performed a review to assess if homework planners have any significant effects on the academic success of 16 students in seventh grade. The findings found that students who completed and submitted their assignments on time had the best Arts State evaluation scores for mathematics and English language. Therefore, homework managers have a positive impact on the academic success of pupils.

#### 6. Conclusion

From the results of this study, it was concluded that perception of assignments/homework significantly influenced students' academic achievement.

#### 7. Recommendations

Based on the finding of the study, it was recommended that teachers should go extra mile to make students aware that all the assignments given to them are beneficial to their self-development and personal growth.

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