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Benefits of Learning Without Homework for Middle School Students

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this senior capstone is to examine the benefits of learning without homework for middle school students. The research draws on the experiences of teachers in Monterey County, who provide personal input and teaching philosophies on this topic. Throughout the use of the literature review, three teacher interviews, and fifty anonymous student surveys, the findings indicate that learning without homework is essential, and in-class workshops have a positive impact on middle school student's academic success. Thus, teachers should recognize that learning without homework and in-class workshops plays a vital role in educating the growing minds of middle school students that could unlock their potential to accomplish academic success.

Introduction and Background

There is no stringent rule that middle school students should be assigned homework, so we should invest in learning alternatives. Introducing a new way to learn without homework and in-class workshops to middle school students could be the key to unlocking students' academic success. This research will explore the benefits of learning without homework and a new approach to learning by identifying different approaches; it will show the impact of no homework on student learning outcomes. By examining these topics, it is clear that learning without homework is a new approach, and there are numerous ways to use no homework to enhance student learning and engagement in the classroom. This new approach of not assigning homework can encourage students to develop critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills. One study by Tisza, Markopoulos, and King (2023) found that effective creative workshops benefit student engagement, promote hands-on critical thinking skills, and enhance learning outcomes. Another study by Bennett (2017) showed that social issues play a part in a student's success and get an inside perspective from students on what styles of learning strategies they most benefit from. Learning without homework can be a great way to engage students and participate in what they can discover inside and outside the classroom. Homework has become an ineffective tool in supporting and measuring students' learning. Let's enhance students' learning outcomes by making critical learning and inside-classroom workshops a central part of the school curriculum.

Since learning without homework is a new approach, there are some concerns that teachers and parents have, like why even change the homework system? Homework often requires students to know the class material, additional outside reading materials, and extensively more. As a result, students feel overwhelmed, overworked, and have little to no time to do

activities or participate in their communities. The social-economic status of the family also plays a role in a student's success. Students from low-income families and under-resourced schools may miss out on the benefits of not assigning homework and participating in class workshops that enhance cognitive development, increase creativity, and improve academic performance. The lack of access to after-school programs, tutors, and parent involvement can all affect a student's homework success. This lack of in-class, hands-on education can also contribute to disparities in higher education and career engagement, as students from more affluent backgrounds are most likely to have access to private tutors, parents involved, and other opportunities that can help them further their college or professional success. As such, addressing the topic of learning without homework is critical to ensuring that all students have equal opportunities to succeed academically and professionally.

Despite assigning homework, it does not measure middle school students' success; in recent years, many people have begun to advocate and incorporate workshop learning in the academic classroom. Research conducted by Sur and Ates (2022) found a positive and statistically high relationship among middle school students reading and listening comprehension skills through in-class workshops and lessons. Not assigning homework does not mean less work or changing work for students, but finding alternatives for in-class can make a significant difference in students' learning outcomes. Sur and Ates' (2022) research data were collected by using the Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (RCAT) to assess students' reading comprehension skills, the Listening Comprehension Achievement Test (LCAT), and the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT). It gave insight into the perspective that creative thinking skills and comprehension skills are more applicable to learning than assigning homework. It is essential for students to feel that they are part of the curriculum and enjoy what they are learning;

it assists in keeping them engaged and motivated. Traditional homework does not incorporate and accommodate every student's needs. With the help of students, teachers and their curriculum can change to better fit students learning without homework. Langberg et al. (2018) research demonstrated that students with ADHD have more difficulty completing homework and often fail. Having classroom-based intervention programs that fit every student's needs opens doors for students' success. When students have options for hands-on activities, they are more likely to be interested in the material and, thus, more likely to learn from it. Intervention performance could support other classrooms, teachers, and students to develop satisfactorily creative thinking skills.

Furthermore, all middle school teachers and administrators can benefit from this senior capstone research project. The senior capstone research delves into the depths of how learning without homework that can be used as a powerful tool to enhance critical thinking skills and cognitive development inside the classroom. Incorporating learning without homework into the middle school curriculum can create a delightful and pleasurable learning atmosphere, as well as keeping students involved and motivated to bring their attribution into the classroom. Offering insightful guidance in class challenges students to think outside of the box and learn real critical thinking skills rather than memorization skills through homework. Students can correspondingly work together in class, creating their own curriculum goals and catering to the unique needs of each student while developing a balanced school work and social life. This senior capstone study can also reach out to administrators, such as school principals, by providing them with the information to make school-wide curriculum changes. The school system is constantly changing, and it should not stop at just one district, but also on a larger scale to inform various school districts about making changes in the middle school curriculum to nourish student academic success without homework.

As an aspiring educator, I am passionate about the idea of learning without homework for middle school students. The primary question I propose to seek the answer in my research is: How does learning without homework benefit middle school students? The related questions are: What is learning without homework? And what does it entail? What does the literature say about the benefits of learning without homework for middle school students? What are the teachers' perspectives on the benefits of not assigning homework to their middle school students? The follow-up questions concerning research are: How do middle school students feel about learning without homework, according to teachers? What could be done for teachers to help their middle school students learn without homework? In order to pursue my research further, a literature review will be conducted to explore the benefits of learning without homework in the next section.

Literature review

In this literature review, we will explore the benefits of learning without homework for middle school students. It will consist of examining different approaches and their impact on students' learning outcomes. Additionally, we will address the challenges associated with overworked and unsupported middle school students, affecting their success outcomes, while exploring ways for teachers to effectively integrate in-class workshops into their lesson plans to benefit students academically. This review will provide valuable perspicuity for educators, school districts, administrators, and parents striving to enhance the academic success of middle school students learning without homework.

Every student has a different way of learning and has different circumstances at home. Assigning homework to students is assuming they have time after working hard at school and having a support system or help at home. Some students are failing not because of their academic

proficiency but because of not completing their homework, according to a study by Wilson and Rhodes (2010). Wilson and Rhodes (2010) assessed the various reasons students do not and will not complete their homework assignments while expressing their frustration. Furthermore, the research discovered that 64% of students state that homework serves little to no purpose, while 87% agree that teachers assign too much homework.

It has been demonstrated that homework does not always lead to academic success but leaves students feeling unsupported and frustrated. According to research published by Maltese, Tai, and Fan (2012), students who had low grades at the beginning of the year did more just to try and catch up over the academic school year, and contrarily, students who earned high grades were not participating in class throughout the year. In this instance, homework became an obstacle race to get a better grade and was not used as a purpose for students' learning development. Students are often left frustrated about the lack of help, understanding, and completion when homework is assigned. Moreover, homework is restricting students' critical thinking ability. Students need a platform during school to support their development as creative and critical scholars. Bennett (2017) uncovered that homework depends on each teacher's philosophy toward learning; homework can become a meaningless and ineffective tool in supporting and measuring students' learning. It was noted in the study that some educators assign homework that creates memorization and not learning outcomes. Middle school students prefer that they have in-class interventions and hands-on activities that relate to what they are learning to develop complex thinking skills that best support their learning environment (Bennett, 2017).

Research has shown that middle school students are suffering from high levels of anxiety and stress due to the amount of homework they are assigned every day (Katz, Buzukashvili &

Feingold, 2012). Bautista's (2013) study reveals that homework actually adds to a student's daily struggle of families trying to balance work, outside-school activities, and family time. If a student's life outside of school is more school, they will not have time to be children and explore to become their own person and contribute to their communities. Learning without homework includes students being involved and active in their communities, sports, and extracurricular hobbies. Students who are less stressed about homework tend to be more present and immersed in the classroom. In some circumstances, there are students who concentrate on the sense of competence and see homework as motivation. However, some students' homework stress measures did correlate with the negative effects of self-efficacy in homework (Dudley & Shawver, 1991). Also, students with learning disabilities have a wide range of difficulties with homework assignments and experience higher levels of stress (Katz, Buzukashvili, & Feingold, 2012). Middle school students should not be stressed about homework, but instead, teachers should redirect and engage in their students' learning outcomes inside the classroom.

Learning without homework can be a collaborative action between parents and teachers to aid students in developing critical social skills, such as teamwork skills, communication skills, cooperation, and empathy. Some strategies for learning without homework include setting an appropriate work environment, managing time, handling distractions, monitoring motivation, and controlling negative emotions (Xu, 2009). To measure the use of homework, Xu (2009) used the Homework Management Scale to conduct the study and found that 42% of the students reported that they often make efforts to arrange their homework environment, but prefer to have a more interesting curriculum learning and working as a class. Other research has found that parents approve of learning without homework and believe it promotes a sense of community and teamwork among students by having better workshops during class (Keith et al., 1986). These

findings indicate that learning without homework can have a positive impact on students' social development.

Some of the key priorities that affect learning without homework are parents, social environment, and the equality of time students spend with family. Kralovac and Buell's (2001) study revealed that homework can be effective but also prevents children from spending more time with family and outside activities. Concerns about the effectiveness and apprehension of homework have been growing throughout the State. Homework is extra work that is brought home and can quickly pile up. It also has disrupted time for students who play a part in the community. Students furthermore struggle with not having parents to help them with their homework because of language barriers, not having higher education, not having access to technology, and having no other educational resources for their children.

Learning without homework is a new approach but one that has already been adopted in South Africa's Western Cape schools. Research has shown that creativity positively correlates with academic and career success. With the Western Cape's no-homework policy, they are testing out the balance and benefits for middle school students while still positively affecting them (Pfeiffer, 2018). Creativity and collaboration in the classroom can lead to innovation and problem-solving skills, which are essential skills for higher education and career aspects (Mustafa et al., 2019). Teachers and administration are working hard to find a balance of learning with and without homework that best supports and challenges while providing every student their own time to develop as a student and person (Blazer, 2009).

The review of literature on the benefits of learning without homework and the integration of class workshops for the academic success of middle school students is extensive and one that will take time to develop. Despite some studies not supporting learning without homework, it is

essential to note that many other studies have shown positive effects of learning without homework and in-class interventions on student learning outcomes. It remains a critical area of research in education specialization and for the further support of all students. Studies have shown that learning without homework can improve student's engagement, collaboration, and scholastic performance.

Methods and Procedures

This section describes the methods and procedures used to collect the data to seek the answers to the research questions posed in the Introduction and Background section. Besides reviewing of the literature, interview of four teachers and survey of students, in two distinct eighth-grade and two seventh-grade classes were selected for the research project. The aim of this project was to analyze and compare the different approaches used by each teacher to acquire a more profound understanding of how learning without homework impacts middle school students on their academic journey. The selection criteria for the four teacher participants were as follows: (a) qualified secondary school teachers); (b) Monterey County teachers; (c) one teacher from Gonzales Middle School, one from Monterey, and two from Salinas; and (d) susceptibility to research participation and talk about their experiences. The three teachers who were interviewed (See Appendix A ~ Teacher Interview Questions) and one teacher who was surveyed are from different schools (See Appendix B ~ Teacher Survey Questions), allowing for a comparison of how diverse the field of learning is without homework and integrating in-class workshops into middle schools' with a set of anonymous Student Survey (See Appendix C ~ Anonymous Student Questionnaires) to promote academic success.

Teacher A teaches seventh grade in Salinas, California, while Teacher B teaches eighth graders in Gonzales, California. Teacher C teaches eighth grade in Salinas, California, and Teacher D is from Monterey, California. The teacher interviews and survey conducted on October 3rd provided valuable insights into how diverse learning without homework and integrating in-class workshops into middle schools facilitate academic success. By analyzing the perspectives of each teacher from different demographics and teaching philosophies, the research project strived to understand how learning without homework can promote middle school students' academic success and gain a deeper understanding of how learning without homework impacts students on their unique education expedition. In the next session, the results and discussion will be conducted to explore the benefits of learning without homework.

Results and Discussion

In this selection, we present the results of a study that investigated the effects of learning without homework for middle school students. The study used a mixed-methods approach that involved interviewing teachers about their experiences with assigning and not assigning homework for their middle school students and surveying three classes of students to examine the impact on student academic success. The discoveries of this study reveal that learning without homework and focusing on incorporating in-class workshops into the curriculum can have a positive impact on middle school students' academic success. In the following paragraphs, we will discuss the results of our study in detail, including the statistical analysis performance and providing a comprehensive interpretation of the findings.

To support the secondary research topics for this project, three teachers were interviewed and were asked six questions (See Appendix A). One teacher was surveyed and asked five questions (See Appendix B). The aim of these interviews and surveys was to gain insight into

whether learning without homework helps students succeed academically and to understand if teachers and students comprehend more in-depth through in-class workshops, as well as their ideas and teaching philosophies surrounding the use of homework. The subsequent paragraphs are structured and organized around the secondary or related questions presented in the Introduction and Background section.

1. What is learning without homework? And what does it entail?

During the initial interview, I posed a question about the teacher's previous experience with their philosophies on homework and if they would integrate workshops into their classroom practices. The aim was to obtain valuable information to help address my secondary research question. Teacher A responded, "I have been teaching for over twelve years, and my teaching style has upgraded. Learning without homework means that students get to have a more creative and critical understanding of what they are learning in class because I am more than just teaching. I give a lesson, and then they work on math problems, writing skills, and science hand activity lessons. My students run the class after I give my introduction on whatever topic we are learning about that week. Students learn more by doing hands-on activities together than with a piece of paper that I probably won't get back" (Teacher A., personal communication, 3 October 2023). Teacher B responded, "Learning without homework means that students complete everything they need to do/ learn within the classroom setting. For example, if I assign a worksheet for math and they don't finish it in class, that adds to their list of homework. I expect it to be done in class or for homework and turned in the next morning. Students will lose those points if the homework is not turned in" (Teacher B., personal communication, 3 October 2023). Teacher C responded, "Learning without homework is introducing a learning objective to the students in class without the requirement and expectation for the student to do repetitive work at

home going over the same subject matter in class. I would rather my students work hard in class and have their time at home for themselves. From experience, homework tests students on memorization and repetitiveness, not if they actually learned the material from class” (Teacher C., personal communication, 3 October 2023). Overall, the teachers communicated their teaching philosophies and strived to have their students develop cognitive, social, and connective skills in the classroom.

2. Do you give homework? If so, how much homework do you give out a week?

The two questions I asked to support my research were: “Do you give homework?” and “If so, how much homework do you give out a week”? The four teachers agreed that learning without homework is a new way of learning and teaching, but two agreed that learning could be more pleasurable and engaging for students by incorporating in-class workshops into the classroom and not assigning homework. Students can immerse in new ideas from classmates, retain knowledge if they are working on projects, and get to involve themselves creatively without homework. Teacher C responded, “I do not give out homework. All classwork is done at school. The only work that students do at home is any work they do not finish during class time or if they are absent and miss a lesson. My students are much more present during my class because they have more hands-on responsibilities” (Teacher C., personal communication, October 3, 2023). Teacher B responded, “Currently, I am the language arts, history, and science teacher. For language arts, we have a schoolwide policy that students in TK-5th grade should be reading for at least 20 minutes, and 6-8th grade students should be reading for 30 minutes daily. We require that middle school students read one approximately 150-page book a week and take a comprehension test on it that is at their independent level. To aid in that comprehension, we assign them to write a daily summary or book connection of about 8-10 sentences. They are

supposed to talk about their book with a family member and have the parent/ guardian sign the summary. I don't assign any other homework in ELA, history, or science. It is expected that they complete the assignments during class. If they are slow or procrastinate, then they do have to finish it for homework" (Teacher B., personal communication, October 3, 2023). Finding a balance that works for each student's unique learning development is essential to their success, and teachers are to support each one of their needs, as both Teachers A and C noted in their responses.

3. What are the teachers' perspectives on the benefits of not assigning homework to their middle school students?

To support my research question, I asked the teachers: "What are the teachers' perspectives on the benefits of not assigning homework to their middle school students?" All the teachers agreed that there are benefits to not assigning homework to their middle school students. It can be used to motivate students inside the classroom, keep them engaged in learning, and help them collaborate with classmates. Moreover, teachers can focus more on providing hands-on activities and in-class workshops to facilitate students' critical, cognitive, and creative thinking skills. Teacher A mentioned that if they had more time to structure in-class workshops instead of focusing on giving out homework, it would result in better-engaged students. Students can learn more in-depth and new knowledge and gain a deeper understanding while learning without homework. According to teacher A, who teaches seventh grade in Salinas, "There is a category in the gradebook for homework. A student can be doing excellent in class, exams, and presentations, but if they are not turning in homework, it does, unfortunately, affect their grade. I try not to give out a lot of homework for that reason. I would rather have a student engaged while in class than stressed about their homework assignments from other classes. Homework does not

always reflect what a student knows or understands” (Teacher A., personal communication, October 6, 2023). Homework has been shown to have little to no effect on students' learning abilities. Teacher C firmly believes in not assigning homework to have more satisfactory and involved students. Students’ concentration can be increased, and teamwork can be created in the classroom by not assigning homework. As well as students get to focus on more personal matters after school. According to teacher C, who teaches eighth grade, “I am so honored that my students are comfortable enough to be honest with me. I have encountered problems with assigning homework because of technology access, after-school hobbies, and sports, and some students are responsible for their siblings after school or need help that is not provided after my teaching hours. Students should spend time with their families, just like when I clock out. Family time is important for a growing mindset and learning to become a well-rounded individual. There is no need to be another stressor in my student’s lives; it is unrealistic for me to do that to them” (Teacher C., personal communication, October 3, 2023). Teacher A suggested spending more time creating lesson plans that have better hands-on elements in activities to make learning without homework a sufficient alternative for more teachers to have better-engaging students. For example, suppose students are truthfully focused and engaged during class, demonstrating they gain knowledge from accomplishing in-class workshops; in that case, there is no need for homework to be provided because the students have already shown they have learned. According to teacher A, “When my class is super engaged and interested in what they are learning and doing, that is when I know I am doing a good job in their learning outcome. My students do not need homework because they have proven they can work together and collaborate with other groups, demonstrating they have implemented what I taught them. That is learning! Not handing back a piece of paper.” (Teacher A., personal communication, October 6, 2023). This can help

students sufficiently understand what they are learning because they are actively doing it with classmates and the teacher while developing their own critical thinking skills and not just sitting at a desk. Letting the students creatively and actively pick what they are interested in is recommended by Teacher C. Their interest in the lessons makes students feel like their voice matters and increases engagement, resulting in learning without homework. However, according to Teacher B, who teaches seventh grade, “I want my students to have creativity, but I want to challenge them more in class and with homework. I believe homework is part of their school responsibilities” (Teacher B., personal communication, October 3, 2023).

4. How do middle school students feel about learning without homework?

To support my research question, I asked the teachers: “How do middle school students feel about learning without homework?” Teacher A responded, “My advice to current and future teachers is to take every student into consideration with everything you do. We became educators to help our students and push them to be the best academic version of themselves, all while we take a little responsibility for creating an overall empathic, intelligent, and caring human being. So, when I asked my students how they felt about learning without homework, they needed clarification. My students said that I have already been doing that. They have been learning without me assigning homework to them; they are doing academically and mentally better than when I first met my middle schoolers. I know they will continue to be more promising” (Teacher A., personal communication, October 3, 2023). Teacher B’s students were excited to hear that they could have the opportunity not to have homework. Teacher B responded, “All of my students were excited with your questions, and we had a very interesting conversation about learning without homework, especially since I am a teacher who does assign homework. My students even suggested that we should try to do more learning as a class and not individual work

so they can prove that they don't need extra homework. They were so good at making their case that I sincerely considered trying it out. I firmly believe in assigning homework because it keeps them seeing and thinking about the material from class and sets them up for higher education" (Teacher B., personal communication, October 3, 2023). Teacher C replied, "My students already do not get assigned homework, and they succeed both in and outside school. They love learning from me and each other during class because those skills can be applied outside my classroom. I am very fortunate that my students care so much about their community that they repeatedly put their input and arguments on what can be done to improve their district, classrooms, and community. Because they are learning without homework, they are more engaged in participating in class and fighting for things that are important to them" (Teacher C., personal communication, October 3, 2023).

5. What could be done for teachers to help their middle school students learn without homework?

To support my research question, I asked: "What could be done for teachers to help their middle school students learn without homework?" Teacher A responded, "I can truly go on forever talking about what can help us as teachers. First, we need something as simple as our district and principal's support. When I first started here, I had so much pressure from other teachers and my principal to assign homework, but I stuck to my belief that students learn more by doing than by writing on a piece of paper. I am so happy that I stuck to it because it worked! To not brag, my eighth graders are doing much better than they did in seventh grade when they had an extreme pile of homework. They now have critical thinking skills that they apply in class and outside of class. Teachers need support to freely teach what works for students, just like students need our support to teach them" (Teacher A., personal communication, October 3, 2023.). Teacher B

believes that more support from the parents should be required. According to Teacher B, their class struggles a lot with homework completion, causing them to fail. Teacher B continues, “That is the million-dollar question. I have noticed that since COVID, there has been a very significant motivation problem in middle school students in general. Many students want to wait to get the answers from someone else and don’t seem to mind if they aren’t passing their classes. Parents aren’t as engaged or supportive as they once were” (Teacher B., personal communication, October 3, 2023). Teacher C had sentiments similar to Teacher A, stating that teachers should consider taking courses on how to reteach materials that include the students more to improve learning without homework. Teacher C further explains, “As teachers, we should be allowed to proceed with any teaching strategy that works for our students, including to decide not to assign homework. I am thankful my student’s parents agree and support their children not having homework so we can focus and use our time in class more effectively and constructively. We need this kind of support from the administration, district, and principal. Each teacher has their philosophies that should be implemented in their classrooms” (Teacher C., personal communication, October 3, 2023). Being open-minded and taking the initiative to support middle school students is the key to academic success.

Each teacher gave thoughtful responses to the questions while providing their own experiences and observations. Considering the response from each teacher, it is evident that the majority believe that learning with homework for middle school students is beneficial in several ways. Each teacher has their own teaching philosophies and spends a different amount of time incorporating student in-class workshops and hands-on activities into their lessons, which may have impacted the outcomes for various students. According to the literature, learning without homework is still split in the middle, but more teachers agree that learning without homework

positively impacts middle school students. It was attainable to compare the teaching styles of various Monterey County teachers because each responded to each question from a unique perspective and were very passionate about the topic. The teacher's responses were consistent with literature that encourages learning without homework for middle school students.

The results of the anonymous student survey were conducted to understand the effects of learning without homework (See Appendix C). The anonymous survey contained five questions related to the benefits of learning without homework and what students do outside the classroom with no homework, with 50 students participating from seventh and eighth grade. A majority of students have reported that learning without homework has a positive impact on their learning experiences and development. For instance, 46 students stated that they learn better without homework. It has made them better participators, communicators, and has made lessons enjoyable and impactful. Additionally, 38 students shared that they have other hobbies outside of school, like sports, being a part of debate teams, community members, and so much more they get to do because they had such impactful lessons during class. Moreover, 45 students firmly believe that homework does not benefit a student's learning outcome, but it tests whether or not one can remember an answer to a question without having to think more in-depth. An astonishing 48 middle school students reported that they would rather have in-class workshops and hands-on activities at school than have homework. Students stated that they learn more with multiple people around them while developing life-applicable skills because they are working together critically. It encourages them to explore new ideas and create a positive learning atmosphere. Finally, 38 students stated they do not enjoy having homework because they want to enjoy having a balanced life in school and life to support them in remaining engaged in class.

Based on the results of the survey, it can be concluded that learning without homework has a positive impact on student learning. The majority of the students reported that learning without homework keeps them engaged in class, which assists in developing critical and cognitive skills while establishing teamwork skills to better understand the lessons. All while not disrupting students' social, hobbies, and community lifestyle.

Problems and Limitations

The study on learning without homework for middle school students is new in Monterey County, and it will face challenges. Despite its valuable findings, only three teachers could witness its benefits and recommendations. I had hoped to collaborate with more teachers, but I was limited by time constraints. Moreover, I had planned to observe a seventh-grade class currently learning without homework, interview one more eighth-grade teacher, and distribute anonymous surveys to one more sixth-grade class. This approach would have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of learning without homework on students' learning journeys. However, unfortunate teacher scheduling prevented me from accomplishing this goal. As a result, I was only able to interview three middle school teachers and collect anonymous surveys from 50 students. Despite this setback, I was still able to analyze the information from the interviews and the anonymous surveys to produce influential conclusions.

Recommendations

Learning without homework is a crucial part of becoming a well-rounded student, and it has been shown to have substantial benefits for academic success in middle school students. Therefore, it is essential for schools to continue to support teachers' approach to learning without homework, as well as integrate more in-class workshops into the curriculum. Based on the research from the literature review, we can see how learning without homework enhances multiple aspects of a student's academic success and engagement in the classroom. The teacher

interview also provided competent insight into teachers' philosophies regarding the importance of learning without homework to provide students with critical and partnership skills in the curriculum. Some recommendations I have include teachers attending seminars to better educate themselves on the many possibilities that could help their student's learning styles to engage secondary school learners further. These teachers should be experts in hands-on activities that support each student's learning techniques and develop a deeper understanding of what they are learning. Teachers can also collaborate with other teachers who assign homework to bring awareness that learning without homework benefits students in multiple subjects like science, math, and language arts to give students a well-rounded education that sparks their creativity and engagement inside the classroom. In order to facilitate learning without homework, parents can play an influential role. Teachers who do not assign homework may motivate parents to encourage their children to participate more in their community and create a healthier school and personal life balance. Schools can build a community that appreciates students' hard work in class and encourages children's ability to participate in their own communities if they choose to—creating a well-rounded student. Finally, fieldwork can also elevate when it comes to learning without homework and in-class workshops. Getting students outside and learning about things surrounding them is a fun way to engage them. Sources like MEarth or Forest Learning can expose students to a wide variety of learning styles that they might not have encountered otherwise, all while developing confidence and critical thinking skills.

Conclusion

Overall, this study examined the research question, “How does learning without homework benefit middle school students?” The result findings indicated that the benefits of learning without homework and a new approach to learning by identifying different approaches proved that learning without homework is beneficial to middle school students. Various benefits connected with in-class workshops in the curriculum include improved cognitive development, critical thinking, and enhanced student engagement that is helpful to apply to every classroom. Through different teaching philosophies, such as in-class workshops instead of homework, exploring the curriculum outside of the classroom, and fieldwork, students can become versatile learners, benefiting not only their academic performance but also their personal lives. By taking the findings from various teachers in Monterey County, the research was able to provide personal experiences and beliefs on this topic. The students’ results revealed that they also prefer and benefit from learning without homework, with their teachers focusing on implementing in-class learning. The research also showed that students enjoy not having homework and would instead learn through hands-on activities and in-class workshops in their lessons to apply teamwork and cognitive learning.

Learning without homework is just not assigning homework; it is essential for academic success for critically developing middle school students. It is necessary for schools to recognize the key role of learning without homework and in-class workshops in the education of developing minds. While some teachers are doing their best to integrate learning without homework and in-class workshops, they need more support from other teachers, administration, and resources to create a better learning environment. Having in-class workshops not only gets students collaborating but also could have an impact on their overall academic success. Learning

without homework could enhance their critical thinking, cognitive development, and community-building skills. By supporting learning without homework, students can participate and engage in class to demonstrate and execute their full academic success.

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Appendix 1

Teacher Interview Questions

1. What is learning without homework? And what does it entail?
2. Do you give homework? If so, how much homework do you give out a week?
3. What are the teachers' perspectives on the benefits of not assigning homework to their middle school students?
4. How do middle school students feel about learning without homework?
5. What could be done for teachers to help their middle school students learn without homework?
6. Do you believe that homework correlates to a student's future success?

Appendix 2

Teacher Survey Questions

1. What is learning without homework? And what does it entail?
2. Do you give homework? If so, how much homework do you give out a week?
3. What are the teachers' perspectives on the benefits of not assigning homework to their middle school students?
4. What could be done for teachers to help their middle school students learn without homework?
5. What are the potential consequences of assigning homework to the middle school curriculum?

Appendix 3

Anonymous Student Survey Questionnaire

1. Do you think you learn better without homework? Please explain your answer.
2. What do you do outside of school when you do not have homework? Please explain your answer.
3. Do you think not having homework will benefit your learning outcome? Please explain your answer.
4. Would you rather have hands-on activities at school or have homework? Please explain your answer.
5. Do you enjoy having homework? Please explain your answer.