

Scientific Evaluation of Student Assignments at Basic Education Level

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“A patient pursuit of facts, and cautious combination and comparison of them, is the drudgery to which man is subjected by his Maker, if he wishes to attain sure knowledge.”

- Thomas Jefferson

ASSIGNMENTS are effective means to assess students’ learning results. Students can consolidate their knowledge through school assignments and use their knowledge to solve problems. Assignments include in-class assignments and after-class assignments. In-class assignments are not only a basic component of classroom teaching, but also assessment of students’ mastery of knowledge. After-class assignments are complementary to students’ classroom learning and of equal value to in-class assignments. At basic education levels, proper assignment loads are necessary. Students’ learning lacks assessment without assignments; Learning without assessment is unacceptable and even brings disastrous consequences (Bai, 2010).

On the other hand, emphasizing the necessity of assignments does not mean that the role of assignments should be over exaggerated, which will cause students excessive assignment loads. Numerous studies have shown that at present, students’ assignment burden is too heavy in some countries and regions, especially in Southeast Asia (OECD, 2019). Excessive assignment loads deprive students of time for other activities and hinder students’ healthy development.

Therefore, we should evaluate the role of student assignments in a scientific way to avoid the simple “one size fits all” approach. Liu and Hudang (2021) discussed how to examine students’ assignments at basic education levels from specific perspective. They examined different explanations of academic burden, and analyzed objective assessment indexes and factors influencing students’ academic burden. From a humanistic stance, this paper puts

forward some pertinent views and suggestions on how to address the issue of student academic burden reasonably.

To sum up, at basic education levels, school assignments, as an important component of teaching activity, are extensions of and supplements to classroom teaching, and are learning tasks to be fulfilled by students independently (Xiao, 2014). Thus, it is essential to examine assignment design scientifically to improve the effectiveness of assignments. When giving full play to the role of school assignments in student learning, we should also standardize assignment design to avoid excessive schoolwork burden.

References

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