

Studying at home: worth it?

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Homework time and its effect on students' academic achievement is a relevant subject with worldwide repercussion. Nevertheless, although transcendental, this issue has been studied for primary education mostly by correlational studies and their results are somewhat mixed. The current research aims at contributing to this literature by using a student fixed-effects approach to study the relationship between homework time and students' academic achievement across 24 countries. We argue that this procedure let us get closer to causal estimates – compared to much of the existing literature – by capturing differences in homework time amongst the same student across different school subjects. Our main results show that the amount of time that primary school children devote to homework is not related to their academic achievement in that subject. This result is held across all the analysed countries and robustness checks. Hence, this may indicate that the quality of the homework assigned to primary school pupils may not be enough, so it should be improved to help students' make a better use of their time.

Keywords: homework time; student fixed-effects; PIRLS; TIMSS; Spain.

Acknowledgements: This work has been partly supported by the by the *Ministerio de Economía, Industria y Competitividad* under Research Project ECO2017-88883-R, *Consejería de Innovación, Ciencia y Empresa de la Junta de Andalucía* under PAI group SEJ-532 and the *Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte* under scholarship FPU2014 04518.