



When Homework Creates Worry

A new tool for noticing students' negative homework experiences

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Research in Brief

Researchers developed the Homework Disaffection and Worry Scale (HDWS) to measure two negative reactions students may experience during homework: disaffection and worry. The study involved 821 eighth-grade students in public schools in Istanbul. Confirmatory factor analysis supported a two-dimensional structure, with separate but strongly related dimensions for disaffection and worry.

The researchers found that higher HDWS scores were associated with lower homework effort, lower expectancy that students could succeed, and lower perceived value of homework. Worry was also negatively associated with academic achievement. The two dimensions were strongly related, but the two-factor model fitted the data better than treating them as a single construct. The authors report adequate reliability for the scale and moderate test–retest stability.

The study suggests that teachers should look beyond whether homework is completed. A student who avoids homework, feels negative about it, or repeatedly worries about failure may need a different kind of support. The authors suggest that the HDWS could help teachers and school counsellors identify groups experiencing more negative homework reactions and inform more autonomy-supportive assignments. The findings should be interpreted within the study's limits: the validation was conducted with students in Istanbul and was developed around the Turkish educational context. Further validation is needed with other age groups, subjects, school settings, and cultures.

✓ Try Tomorrow

- Ask students occasionally what makes a homework task feel difficult, boring, stressful, or worthwhile.
- Offer choices in topic, method, or order of completion when the learning objective allows it.
- Review whether homework duration and difficulty are appropriate for students' current level and interests.

★ One Key Takeaway

Homework completion alone may hide negative emotional and cognitive experiences that affect effort and learning.

Keywords

homework, disaffection, worry, motivation, student emotions, middle school, assessment

Source Article

Avci, S., Xu, J., Özgenel, M., & Avcu, A. (2026). "Measuring Homework Disaffection and Worry in Secondary School Students: Development of Homework Disaffection and Worry Scale." *International Journal of Psychology and Educational Studies*, 13(2), 74–87. DOI: 10.52380/ijpes.2026.13.2.1622.