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## **Investigating the Perception of Diploma Students Towards Assignment**

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### **1. Introduction**

Education is the key to a brighter future, but what happens when the quest for academic excellence becomes an overwhelming burden? In the context of Malaysia, students are grappling with the weight of excessive assignment, leading to detrimental effects on their well-being and academic performance. As researchers delve into this issue, scholarly articles shed light on the challenges faced by Malaysian students and highlight the urgent need for reform in the education system. In the pursuit of academic success, students worldwide are no strangers to the demands of assignment. However, the situation becomes particularly concerning when the volume of assignment assigned to students reaches a tipping point. In Malaysia, a country that places a high premium on educational achievements, this essay explores the implications of excessive assignment on Malaysian students, drawing insights from scholarly articles that examine the unique challenges faced by students in this context. As a scholarly endeavour, research plays a pivotal role in identifying and addressing critical issues within the educational landscape. In the case of Malaysia, numerous studies have delved into the impact of excessive assignment on students. For instance, an article by Lee et al. (2019) highlights the significant association between excessive assignment and students' well-being, particularly their mental health. The study found that Malaysian students who reported higher levels of assignment stress exhibited elevated symptoms of anxiety and depression. These findings underscore the urgent need to reassess the assignment load imposed on students to safeguard their overall well-being. Moreover, academic performance is a key concern for both students and educators. Excessive assignment may inadvertently hinder students' academic progress rather than enhance it. A study conducted by Tan et al. (2018) explored the relationship between assignment volume and academic achievement among Malaysian secondary school students. The findings indicated that while assignment in moderate amounts demonstrated a positive association with academic performance, excessive assignment had a diminishing effect. Students who faced an overwhelming workload struggled to maintain their academic standards, leading to lower overall achievement levels. These findings highlight the need to strike a balance between homework expectations and the promotion of effective learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the cultural context in Malaysia plays a significant role in shaping students' experiences with excessive assignment. A study by Lim (2020) examined the influence of cultural expectations on the assignment load of Malaysian students. The findings revealed that societal pressure to excel academically and achieve high grades influenced both teachers' assignment practices and students' perceptions of assignment. Students felt compelled to complete an excessive amount of assignment to meet cultural expectations, leading to heightened stress levels and compromised well-being. This research calls for a comprehensive understanding of the cultural factors that contribute to the phenomenon of excessive assignment in Malaysia. A scholarly article by Yusof et al. (2019) examined the impact of assignment policy reform on student well-being and academic performance. The study found that implementing guidelines that regulate assignment volume and promote a healthy work-life balance positively influenced students' mental health and academic achievement. These findings emphasize the significance of evidence-based policies and guidelines to alleviate the burden of excessive assignment and create a supportive learning environment. In conclusion, this essay aims to talk about some ways that could effectively help students deal with excessive assignment that poses significant challenges for Malaysian students, affecting their well-being and academic performance. Scholarly articles shed light on the detrimental consequences of excessive assignment and highlight the need for reform within the education system. It is crucial to strike a balance between academic expectations and students' holistic development. By implementing evidence-based policies, Malaysia can create an educational environment that fosters well-being, promotes effective learning, and ensures the overall success of its students.

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### **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### *2.1 Excessive assignments impact on well-being and academic performance.*

The increasing workload of assignment has become a major source of stress and anxiety among students, leading to detrimental effects on their mental health. Studies have shown that students who are overwhelmed with assignment experience increased stress levels, leading to decreased motivation and concentration in their studies. A study conducted by the National Education Association found that high school students who reported spending over two hours on assignment per night had significantly higher stress levels compared to those with less assignment. (NEA Today). Many students report feeling overwhelmed and anxious due to the pressure of completing numerous assignments within tight deadlines. According to a survey conducted by the

American Psychological Association, teenagers who feel overwhelmed with assignment report higher levels of stress and anxiety, which can contribute to mental health issues. (APA). A heavy assignment load can result in inadequate sleep, which affects students' cognitive functioning and ability to retain information and which is closely linked to mental health issues such as depression and anxiety.

### ***2.2 Excessive amount of assignment impact on promoting meaningful learning and critical thinking, instead encouraging rote memorization and superficial understanding.***

Too much assignment leaves students with limited time for extracurricular activities and self-care, hindering their holistic development. Excessive assignments often leave students with little time to engage in sports, hobbies, or other activities that promote well-rounded development. Lack of free time due to excessive homework can lead to increased sedentary behavior and reduced opportunities for socializing, which are crucial for healthy development. A research study published in the Journal of Educational Psychology revealed that students who spend more time on assignment have less time available for extracurricular activities, which are crucial for their social and emotional development. (Journal of Educational Psychology). When students are overloaded with assignment, they may resort to shortcuts such as copying answers or relying on online resources without truly understanding the concepts. The heavy reliance on repetitive assignment tasks often promotes surface-level learning and memorization rather than deep understanding and critical thinking skills. (Cooper, H.2001). The Battle Over Homework). Limited time and high volume of assignment often leave students with no opportunity for in-depth exploration or critical thinking, undermining the development of analytical and problem-solving skills.

### ***2.3 Heavy load of assignments creates an inequitable educational environment, disproportionately affecting students with diverse learning needs and limited resources.***

The excessive emphasis on assignment places undue pressure on students, inhibiting their creativity and stifling their natural curiosity. Students with learning disabilities or limited access to educational resources may struggle to complete extensive assignments, widening the achievement gap. Assignment that requires internet access or specific materials can disadvantage students from low-income backgrounds who may not have equal access to such resources. Research has shown that students from disadvantaged backgrounds, who may lack access to educational resources or parental support, are disproportionately affected by high assignment loads, leading to widening achievement gaps. (Epstein, J. L., et al. (2002). School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action). Spending a significant amount of time on assignment leaves little room for students to explore their own interests and pursue creative endeavors. Students may feel constrained by the demanding workload of assignment, leaving little time or mental energy for creative exploration and pursuing their own interests.(Kohn, A. (2006). The Homework Myth). The rigid structure of assignments often discourages students from exploring alternative approaches or thinking outside the box, limiting their creativity.

### ***2.4 Assignment is the overwhelming burden of assignment diminishes the quality of family time and contributes to a strained parent-child relationship.***

When students are buried in assignment, it reduces the time available for meaningful interactions and shared activities with their families. Parents may feel obligated to take on the role of assignment enforcers, leading to conflicts and strained relationships within the family dynamic. A study published in the Journal of Marriage and Family found that excessive assignment requirements were associated with increased family conflict and decreased quality of parent-child interactions. (Journal of Marriage and Family).

### ***2.5 Assignments increase student engagement and individualized learning experiences.***

Assigning excessive assignment often prioritizes completing tasks over deep understanding and engagement with the subject matter. A more balanced approach that emphasizes quality over quantity would allow students to focus on meaningful learning experiences tailored to their individual needs and interests. Assigning excessive amounts of assignment tends to prioritize completing tasks over fostering deep understanding and personalized learning experiences for students.

(Darling-Hammond, L., et al. (2019). Pathways to New Accountability Through the Every Student Succeeds Act). The excessive assignment load undermines the potential for students to explore their own interests and pursue independent learning outside the classroom. Overwhelming assignment requirements can leave students with little energy or time to explore topics of personal interest or engage in

self-directed learning. Independent exploration and learning outside the classroom foster curiosity, autonomy, and a love for learning, all of which are hindered by an excessive assignment load. A lack of balance between academic responsibilities and personal well-being can lead to physical and emotional burnout, negatively impacting students' long-term academic performance.

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## **3.0 Research Methodology**

This study uses a quantitative research design. 5 Likert scales were used in survey questionnaires and the samples were chosen at random. A total of 105 participants responded the questionnaire and the total score with percentage was presented in the findings of study.

#### 4.0 Research Findings

Figure1: Assignment equips students with the ability to think beyond what is taught in class.

1. Assignment equips students with the ability to think beyond what is taught in class.  
105 responses

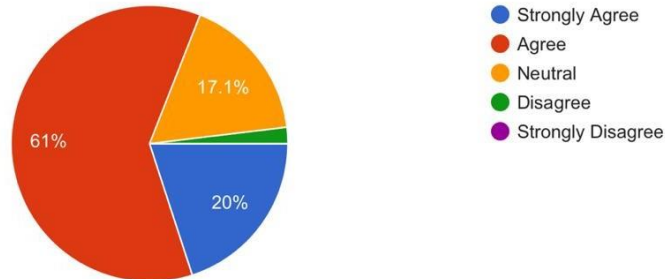


Figure 1 shows the perception of respondents and they were asked about assignment equips students with the ability to think beyond what is taught in class. Almost 61% agree, 20% strongly agree and 17.1% were neutral. There were no one responses on strongly disagree.

Figure 2: Students with too much assignments have elevated stress levels.

2. Students with too much assignments have elevated stress levels.  
105 responses

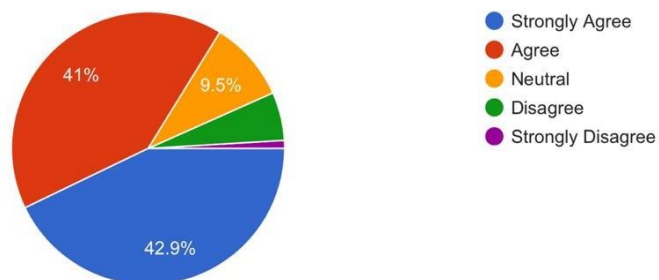


Figure 2 shows the perception of respondents and they were asked about students with too much assignments have elevated stress levels. Almost 42.9% strongly agree, 41% agree and 9.5% were neutral.

Figure 3: Excessive assignment leads to detrimental effects on students' well-being and academic performance.

3. Excessive assignment leads to detrimental effects on students' well-being and academic performance.  
105 responses

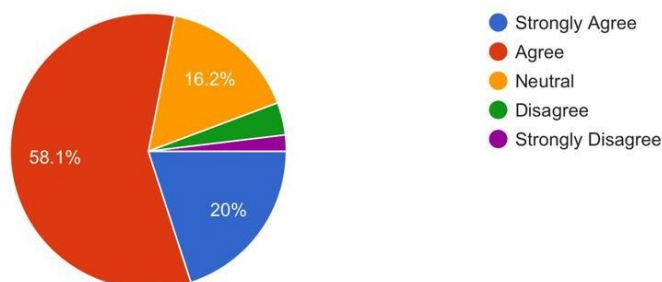


Figure 3 shows the perception of respondents and they were asked about excessive assignment leads to detrimental effects on students' well-being and academic performance. Almost 58.1% agree, 20% strongly agree and 16.2% were neutral.

Figure 4: Higher-achieving students those who may have more assignments are at particular risk for stress-related health issues including sleep deprivation, weight loss, stomach problems and headaches.

4. Higher-achieving students – those who may have more assignments – are at particular risk for stress-related health issues including sleep deprivation, weight loss, stomach problems and headaches.  
105 responses

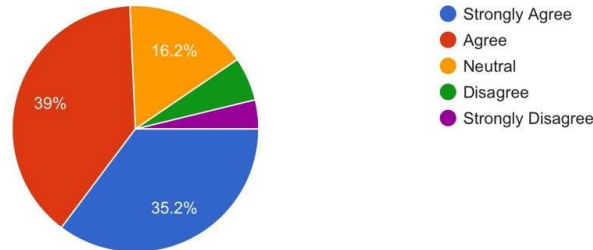


Figure 4 shows the perception of respondents and they were asked about higher-achieving students those who may have more assignments are at particular risk for stress-related health issues including sleep deprivation, weight loss, stomach problems and headaches. Almost 39% agree, 35.2% strongly agree and 16.2% were neutral.

Figure 5: Malaysian students who reported higher levels of assignment stress exhibited elevated symptoms of anxiety and depression.

5. Malaysian students who reported higher levels of assignment stress exhibited elevated symptoms of anxiety and depression.  
105 responses

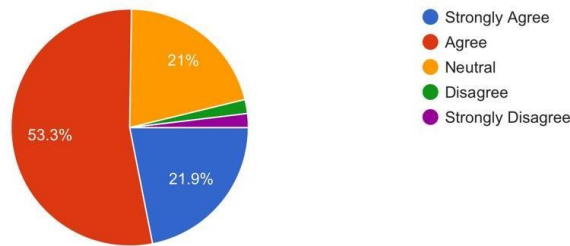


Figure 5 shows the perception of respondents and they were asked about Malaysian students who reported higher levels of assignment stress exhibited elevated symptoms of anxiety and depression. Almost 53.3% agree, 21.9% strongly agree and 21% were neutral.

Figure 6: Excessive assignment may inadvertently hinder students' academic progress rather than enhance it.

6. Excessive assignment may inadvertently hinder students' academic progress rather than enhance it.  
105 responses

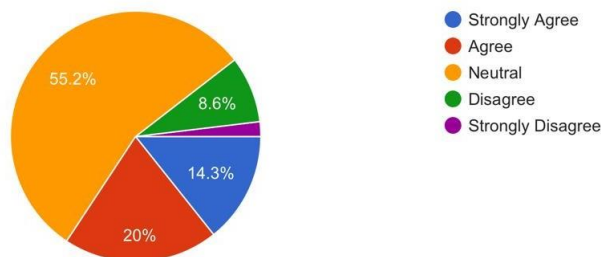


Figure 6 shows the perception of respondents and they were asked about excessive assignment may inadvertently hinder students' academic progress rather than enhance it. Almost 55.2% were neutral, 20% agree, 14.3% strongly agree and 8.6% disagree.

Figure 7: Implementing guidelines that regulate homework assignment and promote a healthy work-life balance positively influenced students' mental health and academic achievement.

7. Implementing guidelines that regulate homework assignment and promote a healthy work-life balance positively influenced students' mental health and academic achievement.

105 responses

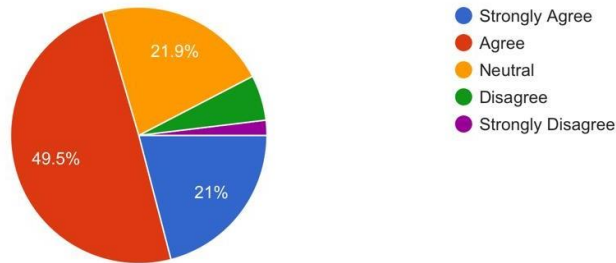


Figure 7 shows the perception of respondents and they were asked about implementing guidelines that regulate homework assignment and promote a healthy work-life balance positively influenced students' mental health and academic achievement. Almost 49.5% agree, 21.9% were neutral and 21% strongly agree.

Figure 8: Spending too much time on assignment means that students were not meeting their developmental need or cultivating other critical life skills.

8. Spending too much time on assignment means that students were not meeting their developmental need or cultivating other critical life skills.

105 responses

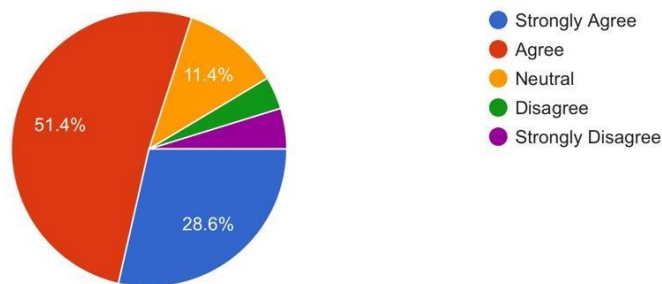


Figure 8 shows the perception of respondents and they were asked about spending too much time on assignment means that students were not meeting their developmental need or cultivating other critical life skills. Almost 51.4% agree, 28.6% strongly agree and 11.4% were neutral.

Figure 9: Assignment load led to sleep deprivation and other health problems.

9. Assignment load led to sleep deprivation and other health problems.

105 responses

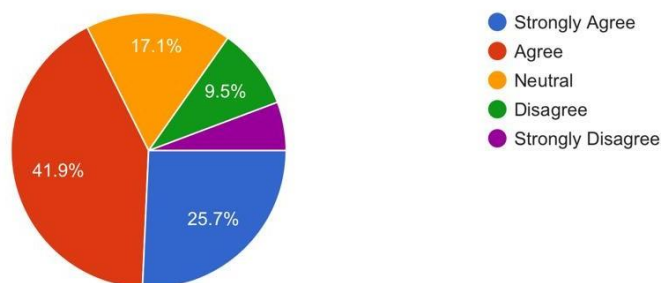


Figure 9 shows the perception of respondents and they were asked about assignment load led to sleep deprivation and other health problems. Almost 41.9% agree, 25.7% strongly agree, 17.1% were neutral and 9.5% disagree.

Figure 10: Nowadays, students do assignment simply to get points and neglect the essence of learning.

10. Nowadays, students do assignment simply to get points and neglect the essence of learning.  
105 responses

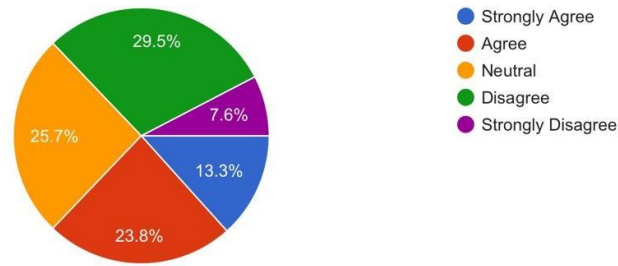
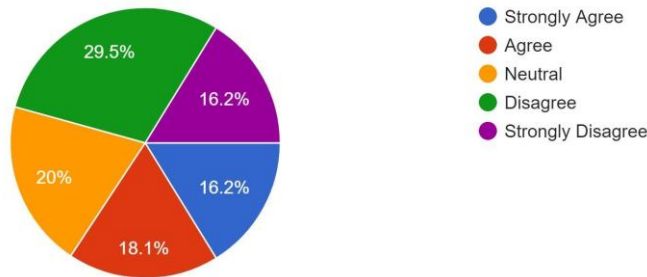


Figure 10 shows the perception of respondents and they were asked about nowadays, students do assignment simply to get points and neglect the essence of learning. Almost 29.5% disagree, 25.7% were neutral, 23.8% agree, 13.3% strongly agree and 7.6% strongly disagree.

Figure 11: Studying and doing assignments is the main and most important part of a student's life.

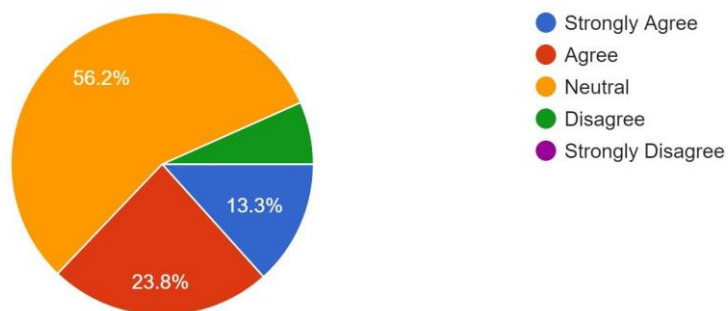
11. Studying and doing assignments is the main and most important part of a student's life.  
105 responses



According to the finding, 29.5% of students choose disagree option. This mean they think studying and doing assignments is not the main and most important part of a student's life. Almost 20% choose neutral which means studying and doing assignments is the most important of a student's life , 18.1% students choose agree and 16.2% choose strongly disagree and strongly agree study is the most important part of their life.

Figure 12: 80% of adolescent problems are related to their assignment pressure.

12. 80% of adolescent problems are related to their assignment pressure.  
105 responses

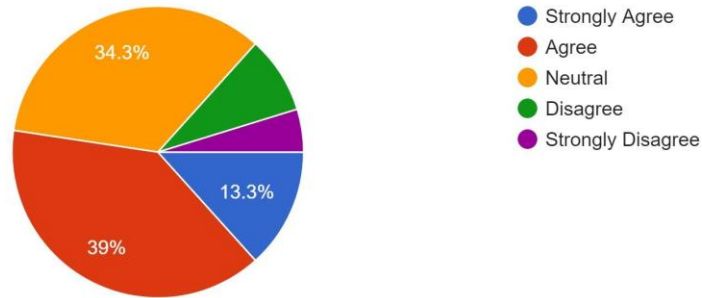


According to figure 12, 56.2% of students choose neutral and 23.8% of students agree that adolescent problems are related to their assignment pressure. 13.3% of students choose strongly agree for this question, and there is no one responses from disagree and strongly disagree option.

Figure 13: Students will fail important exams due to the pressure of assignment.

13. Students will fail important exams due to the pressure of assignment.

105 responses

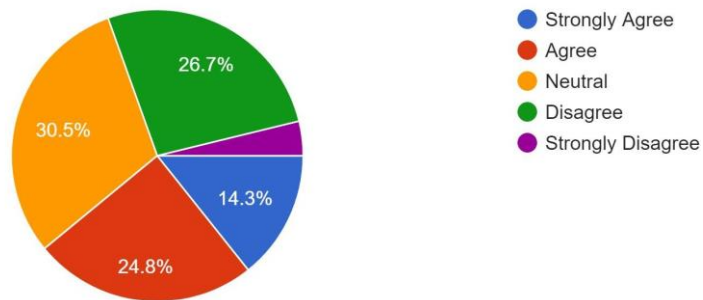


According to figure 13, 39% of students choose agree and 34.3% of students choose neutral that they will fail important exams due to the pressure of assignment. 13.3% of the students choose strongly agree for this question, and there is no one responses from disagree and strongly disagree option.

Figure 14: The quality of assignment performance will affect the future of students.

14. The quality of assignment performance will affect the future of students.

105 responses

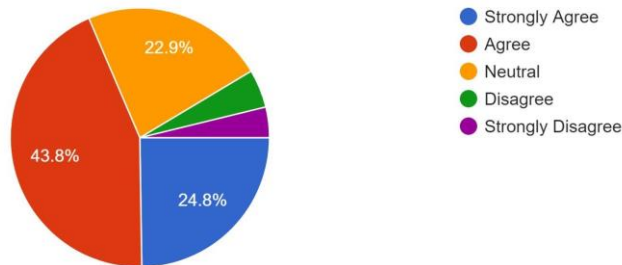


According to figure 14, 30.5% of students choose neutral and 26.7% of students choose disagree that the quality of assignment performance will affect the future of students. 24.8% of the students choose agree and 14.3% of the students choose strongly agree for this question, and there is no one responses from strongly disagree option.

Figure 15: Making a timetable and executing according to the content on the timetable makes it easier to get things done efficiently.

15. Making a timetable and executing according to the content on the timetable makes it easier to get things done efficiently.

105 responses

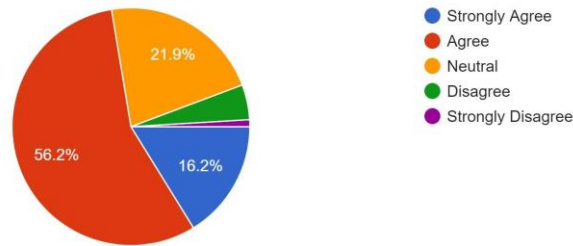


According to the finding, 43.8% of students choose agree option. This mean they are think making a timetable it easier to get things done efficiently. Almost 24.8% choose strongly agree which means making a timetable it easier to get things done efficiently. 22.9% of students choose neutral and there is no one responses from disagree and strongly disagree option.



Figure 16: The pressure exerted by parents can easily affect the efficiency of students in doing assignment.

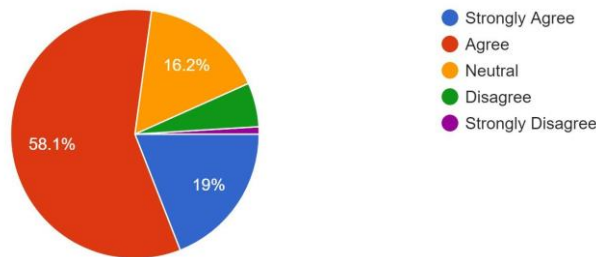
16. The pressure exerted by parents can easily affect the efficiency of students in doing assignment.  
105 responses



According to the finding, 56.2% of students choose agree option. This mean the pressure exerted by parents can easily affect the efficiency of students in doing assignment. Almost 21.9% of students choose neutral and 16.2% of students choose strongly agree which means the pressure exerted by parents can easily affect the efficiency of students in doing assignment. There is no one responses from disagree and strongly disagree option.

Figure 17: Adjusting the schedule will be helpful on assignment completion for students.

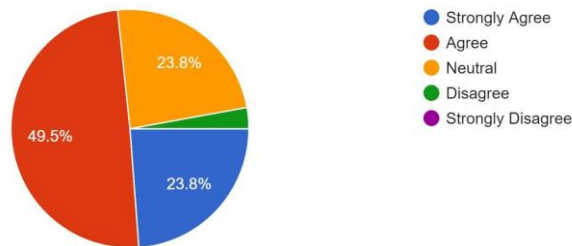
17. Adjusting the schedule will be helpful on assignment completion for students.  
105 responses



According to figure 17, 58.1% of students choose agree and 19% of students choose strongly agree that adjusting the schedule will be helpful on assignment completion for them. 16.2% of the students choose neutral and there is no one responses from strongly disagree option.

Figure 18: Parents' education and companionship can affect assignment completion of the students.

18. Parents' education and companionship can affect assignment completion of the students.  
105 responses



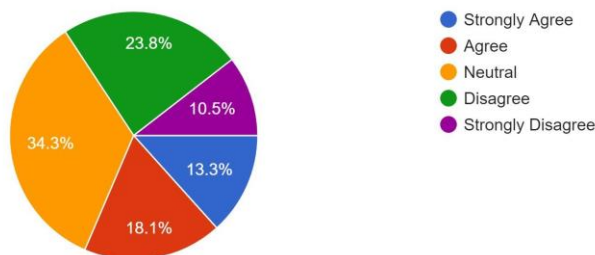
According to figure 18, 49.5% of students choose agree and 23.8% of students choose strongly agree and neutral that parents' education and companionship can affect assignment completion of the students. There is no one responses from disagree and strongly disagree option.



Figure 19: The pressure of assignment will make students work harder and be serious.

19. The pressure of assignment will make students work harder and be serious.

105 responses

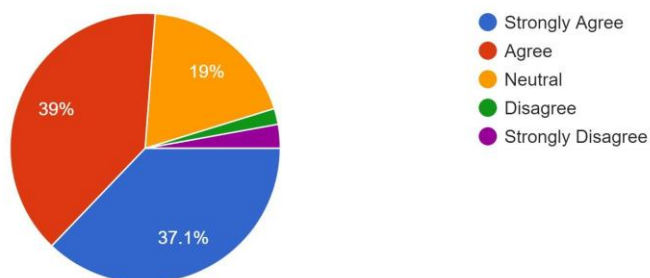


According to the finding, 34.3% of students choose neutral option. Almost 23.8% students choose disagree which means they don't think the pressure of assignment will make their work harder and be serious. 18.1% of students choose agree is mean they think the pressure of assignment will make their work harder and be serious. 13.3% of students choose strongly agree and 10.5% of students choose strongly disagree.

Figure 20: Language issues can also slow down the speed at which student's complete assignments.

20. Language issues can also slow down the speed at which student's complete assignments.

105 responses



According to figure 20, 39% of students choose agree and 37.1% of students choose strongly agree that language issues can also slow down the speed at which student's complete assignments. 19% of the students choose neutral and there is no one responses from disagree and strongly disagree option.

## 5.0 Conclusion

Malaysian students who reported higher homework stress showed elevated symptoms of anxiety and depression. Today, students do homework just to get grades, ignoring the essence of learning. In the survey, many students felt that excessive homework could inadvertently hinder a student's academic progress, rather than enhance it. Excessive homework contributes to increased student stress levels and can also adversely affect student well-being and academic performance. Besides that, too much homework can lead to sleep deprivation and other health problems.

Once the homework is too much, the students will fail the important exams. High-achieving students have more homework and are also particularly prone to stress-related health problems. Many students agree that making a timetable and following what is on the timetable makes it easier to get work done efficiently.

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