EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING THE CHOICE THEORY OF GLASSER TO TEACHERS ON IMPROVEMENT OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION

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Abstract
Improvement of students' academic qualification is one of the main concerns of any educational system, then psychological and counseling theories may be applied in the way of reaching the point. This research investigated the effectiveness of training the Choice Theory of Glasser to teachers on improvement of students' academic qualification. The study was One Group Pre-Post Test Quasi Experimental Design. Statistical universe included all teachers of Sarv Abad( a city in Iran, Kurdistan Province) Education Office and teachers in Ghaleji Secondary School were selected as sample conveniently. 8 sessions of training the Choice Theory were implemented for teachers. Within-Subject ANOVA was applied to analyze data; results showed significant difference between students' scores in pre and post test(P<0/01). Training the Choice Theory could affect and improve students' academic qualification.

Key Words: Academic qualification, choice theory, Glasser, Sarv Abad

INTRODUCTION
Educating today’s children is in constant flux. Keeping students motivated and eager to learn is an important task. Educators must use strategies to keep students engaged in their learning and provide an education that will meet the needs of today’s society. According to Hatch and Bowers (2002), the primary mission of school counselors is to support and encourage academic achievement. Many school counselors often try to work in isolation to meet the needs of students, even though the ratio of students to counselors is usually very high. This approach might indicate success, but only for a small number of students, usually the very high or very low achieving students. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA,2005) has provided a clear and concise definition of what constitutes a school counseling program in the modern age: A school counseling program is comprehensive in scope, preventative in design and developmental in nature. The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs is written to reflect a comprehensive approach to program foundation, delivery management and accountability. School counseling programs are designed to ensure that every student receives the program benefits. (p.13).

School counseling programs exist to provide services and implement programming that has a positive impact on student achievement. In this study, the influence of a school counselor-directed training program for educators that teaches the theory and methods of William Glasser’s Choice Theory and Reality Therapy was examined. The beliefs behind the teacher training program are that school climate will improve, and as a result achievement scores will increase. William Glasser’s model focuses on improving the responsibility level of students by helping them realize that they are in control of themselves. This often increases intrinsic motivation. One of the theories about why achievement will increase as a result of using choice theory and reality theory methods is because students will be more intrinsically motivated to learn.
The ASCA Model (2005) suggests that school counselors need to be more active in the systemic processes of the school and collaborate with teachers, parents, administration, and outside services to provide comprehensive services to a larger number of students. A school counseling based intervention program of training teachers and staff is one way that a school counselor can use systemic methods to collaborate with school personnel to reach more students (ASCA, 2005).

Training teachers how to utilize the theory and strategies of William Glasser’s (1998) CT/RT is an example of a collaborative and systemic intervention program that is aligned with ASCA (2005) and the Education Trusts’ definition of the role of the school counselor (The Education Trust, 2009). The premise of the program operates on the belief that if the classroom climate is a positive learning environment, then motivation will increase, behavioral problems will decrease, and school attendance will improve, which ultimately leads to enhanced academic success (Glasser, 2010).

The main precept of choice theory is based on the idea that people choose behaviors to attempt to meet their basic needs met. Glasser describes the five basic needs that all humans possess as love and belonging, fun, freedom, power, and survival. The needs do not exist on a hierarchy; rather, everyone has different levels of need strength (Glasser, 1998). Glasser (1998) believes that relationships are paramount to living a healthy life and that all ills can be traced back to a relationship deficit or problem.

Theoretically, if a person’s basic needs are not met, then he or she will act in a way to get his or her needs met. For instance, a student who does not feel powerful may be disruptive in class to feel more in control. If a teacher recognizes that the student does not feel powerful in his or her life, then a teacher might respond with giving the student an opportunity to gain power in a healthy way. As a result, the power is met in a positive way and the need to disrupt to meet his or her power need will dissipate. Many times teachers might have to share their power to allow students to have some influence on the classroom climate and rules. This can be very difficult for teachers to do; however, the results are usually worthwhile. A high school teacher in Detroit, Michigan who uses reality therapy in her classroom reports “I had to give up power, to gain power” (Agency for Instructional Technology DVD, 1994). She has seen an increase in student participation, motivation, and achievement, and a decrease in discipline infractions (Agency for Instructional Technology DVD, 1994).

Glasser believes that CT/RT is a perfect match for improving achievement in schools. He wrote the books Schools without Failure in 1969, Control Theory in the Classroom in 1986, The Quality School in 1990, and Every Student Can Succeed in 2000. Some schools across the country have incorporated Glasser’s ideas according to his program for implementation and are categorized as “quality schools”. Currently there are schools that are labeled as quality schools across the United States of America (Wubbolding, Roby, & Brickell, 2011).

Glasser purported that part of the reason CT/RT is effective in the classroom is because students begin to operate from an internal locus of control rather than an external locus of control. The act of learning becomes a part of a student’s quality world, and intrinsic motivation becomes more meaningful than extrinsic rewards (Glasser, 1992/1998). Deci, Ryan, and Koestner (1999) completed a meta-analysis of research studies measuring the impact of intrinsic rewards compared to extrinsic rewards to change behavior. The results showed that intrinsic rewards were significantly better than extrinsic rewards for creating positive change. Extrinsic rewards might work at first, but after the extrinsic reward was removed, the unwanted behaviors resumed (Deci,Ryan, & Koestner, 1999).

Parish (1992) discussed the importance of teachers being able to model efficient behaviors that help students learn about CT/RT. If teachers are continually operating from an external focus, then it will be next to impossible for students to be able to operate from an internal locus of control and get their basic needs met (Parish, 1992). Therefore, teachers need to realize how they feel when they are valued, given tasks they perceive as meaningful, and not coerced to behave in certain ways as an educator, spouse, parent, etc.(Glasser,1990; Parrish, 1992). Chances are that teachers will feel more motivated to perform well in their role, just as students will be more motivated to achieve.
As mentioned above, the role of the school counselor is to remove barriers to learning that ultimately affect school achievement. A school counseling based intervention program of training teachers and staff is one way that a school counselor can use systemic methods to collaborate with school personnel to reach more students; so the intent of this study is to determine if training the Choice Theory of Glasser to teachers improves students' academic qualification.

**METHOD**

The study was One Group Pre-Post Test Quasi Experimental Design. Statistical universe included all teachers of Sarv Abad (a city in Iran, Kurdistan Province) Education Office and teachers in Ghaleji Secondary School were selected as sample conveniently. After giving monthly report cards to students in September, teachers of one classroom (included 24 students) were asked to participate in a training course on the basis of Choice Theory of Glasser in order to improve academic qualification of students. School counselor was in charge of performing the course. 8 sessions of training the Choice Theory were implemented for teachers which lasted 1 month. After giving monthly report cards to students in December, researchers compared scores of students in September and December. Within-Subject ANOVA was applied to analyze data. Description of 8 training sessions illustrated in Table1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session no</th>
<th>Session description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction of the project, commitment to perform the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Changing attitudes of teachers from previously applied methods to the new pattern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Discussion and debate about job satisfaction and its relation with the concept “joyance” of Glasser which is neglected in the schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Description of theoretical basis of Choice Theory, quality world, involvement, failure identity, self-worth, love and being loved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>7 harmful behavior and 7 positive alternative behavior in Choice Theory of Glasser for real life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7 harmful behavior and 7 positive alternative behavior in Choice Theory of Glasser for school and classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Formative evaluation and pay more attention to aptitude-based tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Reviewing previous sessions, make clear ambiguities and misunderstandings, make oneself ready to teach and perform in the school which due to our behaviors and Choice Theory would be more like to real life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESULTS**

As mentioned earlier, in this study students' scores of two different periods (before training and after training) were compared together. In Table 2 mean of 24 students' scores have been listed (pre training and post training).

Table 2. Mean of scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lessons</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean(pre training)</th>
<th>Mean(post training)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persian literature</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13.625</td>
<td>14.917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian language</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13.917</td>
<td>15.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12.625</td>
<td>14.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>15.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13.688</td>
<td>15.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14.979</td>
<td>18.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13.396</td>
<td>14.292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic language</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14.062</td>
<td>14.485</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As seen in table 2. Mean of scores in all lessons promoted. Within-Subject ANOVA was applied to consider if there is significant difference between scores of pre and post training which its result shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Tests of Within-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure: MEASURE_1</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sphericity Assumed</td>
<td>32.736</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32.736</td>
<td>101.774</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenhouse-Geisser</td>
<td>32.736</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>32.736</td>
<td>101.774</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huynh-Feldt</td>
<td>32.736</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>32.736</td>
<td>101.774</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower-bound</td>
<td>32.736</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>32.736</td>
<td>101.774</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error(factor1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.322</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sphericity Assumed</td>
<td>7.398</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.322</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenhouse-Geisser</td>
<td>7.398</td>
<td>23.000</td>
<td>.322</td>
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<td>.322</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As considered in table 3. there is significant difference between scores in pre and post training ($F_{(1,23)} = 101.774, P<0.001 \eta^2=0.816$). It means training Choice Theory (C/T) of Glasser resulted in higher academic achievement.

DISCUSSION

Findings of current study showed training C/T to teachers can improve academic achievement of students. This result has been gained by Egan and Judson (2008). It can be said to explain the findings of the current study that the school/classroom climate plays a role in improving student achievement (Mitchell, Bradshaw, & Leaf, 2010). In Mitchell, Bradshaw, and Leaf (2010), school climate is defined as “the shared beliefs, values, and attitudes that shape interactions between the students, teachers, and administrators (p. 3)”. The belief that students need to experience a positive environment in the classroom, consisting of mattering (Dixon & Tucker, 2008), love and belonging (Glasser, 1988), and safety (Heydenberk, Heydenberk & Bochnowicz, 2006) is essential for students to experience positive educational outcomes. Neibuhr and Neibuhr (1999) found that high school freshman who reported experiencing positive student-teacher relationships had higher grade point averages then their peers. This relates to Glasser’s need of love and belonging being met and as a result, the students showed higher achievement.

Motivation is often connected to academic success. In educational research literature, there are two commonly defined philosophies of motivation: 1) extrinsic motivation and 2) intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation consists of giving a student an incentive or reward for completing a task. Rewards might be tangible, such as candy or a special privilege, or might consist of praise or receiving a high grade. The avoidance of an unpleasant activity or punishment is another method of employing extrinsic motivation methods (Dev & Poonam, 1997). Extrinsic motivation can be beneficial at first, but not long lasting (Glasser, 1988). Intrinsic motivation is defined as “the performance of activities for their own sake in which pleasure is inherent in the activity itself (Berlyne, 1965; Deci, 1975 as cited in Gottfried, 1985, p. 631).” Academic intrinsic motivation is characterized by a mastery orientation, curiosity, persistence, a high degree of task involvement, and the learning of challenging, difficult, and novel tasks (Gottfried, 1990). Gottfried’s (1990) findings showed that students in grades 4-9 with higher levels of academic intrinsic motivation showed significantly lower academic anxiety, higher school achievement, and reported more positive perceptions of their academic abilities than their peers who had
lower levels of academic intrinsic motivation. In younger elementary students, the findings remained concurrent and showed that academic intrinsic motivation was significantly related to achievement (Gottfried, 1990). An approach that some elementary schools use to increase student achievement is through increasing intrinsic student motivation (Covington, 2000). It has been recognized that intrinsic motivation level and achievement level are positively correlated (Gottfried, 1990). The integration of reality therapy methods in the classroom is one technique used to increase intrinsic motivation of students (Glasser, 1992/1998). If a student has his or her basic needs met through experiencing a positive school climate, then motivation to learn will increase and students will work harder, thus improving achievement (Neibuhr & Neibuhr, 1999).

Another explanation for the finding is related to teacher-student relationships. What is taught and how it is taught exert tremendous influence on student performance and learning. “Children,” Ashworth (1990) asserts, “are keenly aware of where they stand in the school community and of how they are perceived by other students and teachers” (p. 3). “By nature,” Ashworth (1990) adds, “human beings are social creatures...biologically intended to live, work, play and succeed together...deeply influenced by others and how they treat us” (p. 6). For Perry (2001), the “capacity to form and maintain relationships is the most important trait of humankind—without it, none of us would survive, learn, work, or procreate” (p. 32). In positive teacher-student relationships, Payne (2005) states “emotional deposits are made to the student, emotional withdrawals are avoided, and students are respected” (p.111). Moos (1979) and Goodenow (1993) suggest teachers who show personal involvement with students show those students that they are respected. These feelings of respect motivate and engage students toward increased positive productivity and academic achievement (Wentzel, 1997). There is abundant research stressing the importance of teachers caring for their students and believing that these students can learn and holding high expectations for them as learners. 

REFERENCES


