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

Omar Kianipour
Allame Tabataba'i University
Department of Psychology and Educational Sciences
Tehran- IRAN
knkiani60@gmail.com

Barzan Hoseini
Allame Tabataba'i University
Department of Psychology and Educational Sciences
Tehran- IRAN
awin.barzan@gmail.com

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 teahers in Ghaleji Secondary School were selected as sample conveniencely. 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 teahers in Ghaleji Secondary School were selected as sample conveniencely. 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: Summary of 8 sessions

Session no	Session description
1	Introduction of the project, commitment to perform the project
2	Changing attitudes of teachers from previously applied methods to the new pattern
3	Discussion and debate about job satisfaction and its relation with the concept "joyance" of Glasser which is neglected in the schools
4	Description of theoretical basis of Choice Theory, quality world, involvement, failure identity, self-worth, love and being loved
5	7 harmful behavior and 7 positive alternative behavior in Choice Theory of Glasser for real life
6	7 harmful behavior and 7 positive alternative behavior in Choice Theory of Glasser for school and classroom
7	Formative evaluation and pay more attention to aptitude-based tasks
8	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

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 taining and post training).

Table 2. Mean of scores

Lessons	N	Mean(pre training)	Mean(post training)
Persian literature	24	13.625	14.917
Persian language	24	13.917	15.875
Mathematics	24	12.625	14.25
Chemistry	24	13.5	15.75
Biology	24	13.688	15.042
Theology	24	14.979	18.062
English language	24	13.396	14.292
Arabic language	24	14.062	14.485

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

Measure:MEASURE_1

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Factor1	Sphericity Assumed	32.736	1	32.736	101.774	.000	.816
	Greenhouse-Geisser	32.736	1.000	32.736	101.774	.000	.816
	Huynh-Feldt	32.736	1.000	32.736	101.774	.000	.816
	Lower-bound	32.736	1.000	32.736	101.774	.000	.816
Error(factor1)	Sphericity Assumed	7.398	23	.322			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	7.398	23.000	.322			
	Huynh-Feldt	7.398	23.000	.322			
	Lower-bound	7.398	23.000	.322			

As considered in table 3. there is significant difference between scores in pre and post training($F_{(1,23)}$=101.774, P<0.001 η^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 (Barr & Parrett, 1995). Numerous studies suggest a connection between teacher beliefs and how they teach or fail to teach children (White-Clark, 2005). The relationship between a teacher and a student, therefore, is the foundation upon which learning rests. For many students, their successes or failures are largely dependent upon the relationships they enjoy or fail to enjoy with their teachers. Kohn (2006) suggests most children do not fail due to their cognitive abilities but because they feel unwelcome, detached, or alienated from significant others in the educational environment. Effective teachers care about their students and demonstrate that they care in such a way that their students are aware of it. According to Thayer-Bacon and Bacon (1996), "Teachers who care about their students are remembered, effect change, stimulate growth, and are more likely to be successful at teaching their students" (p. 255). Research indicates that children who are securely attached to significant adults become more curious, self-directed and empathetic. Such relationships foster achievement, autonomy and altruism (Brendro et al., 1990). Students need to feel affirmed and to be assured they are valued. They need to be challenged and they need to know they can succeed at a high level of expectation. Teacher expectations can be very powerful and can influence a student's attitudes and actions and lead to success or failure (Tomlinson & Eidson, 2003). The research supports that relationships between teachers and students are critical for academic achievement and school success. According to its 2002 *Set for Success* report, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation (Blankstein, 2004) asserts, "positive relationships are essential to a child's ability to grow up healthy and achieve later social, emotional, and academic success" (p. 59). Lewis (2000) also concluded that fostering relationships between children and adults provides opportunities for them to "see each other in new ways" (p. 643). According to Glasser (1992), "The better we know someone and the more we like about what we know, the harder we will work for that person" (p. 30). Similarly, Ryan and Patrick (2001) found that students who believe that their teachers care about them perform better on tests.

WJEIS's Note: This article was presented at International Conference on New Trends in Education and Their Implications - ICONTE, 26-28 April, 2012, Antalya-Turkey and was selected for publication for Volume 2 Number 2 of WJEIS 2012 by WJEIS Scientific Committee.

REFERENCES

Agency for Instructional Technology (1994). *Managing the disruptive classroom: Strategies for educators*. DVD-Video. Bloomington, IN: AIT.

American School Counselor Association. (2005). *The ASCA national model: A framework for school counseling programs, Second Edition*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Ashworth, J. (1990). *Circle of courage*. Retrieved from www.augie.edu/dept/educ/ andrews/coc_knowledge_base_narrative.doc.

Barr, R. D., & Parrett, W. H. (1995). *Hope at last for at-risk youth*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Blankstein, A. M. (2004) *Failure is not an option*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Brendro, L. K., Brokenleg, M., & VanBocken , S. (1990). *Reclaiming youth at risk: Our hope for the future*. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.

Covington, M.V. (2000). Goal theory, motivation, and school achievement: An integrative review. *Annual Review of Psychology 51*, 171-200.

Deci, E.L., Ryan,R.M. & & Koestner, R. (1999). A meta-analytic review of experiments examining the effects of extrinsic rewards on intrinsic motivation. *Psychological Bulletin 125(6),* 627-668.

Dev, & Poonam C. (1997). Intrinsic motivation and academic achievement. *Remedial and Special Education 18* (1*)*.12-15.

Dixon, A.L & Tucker, C. (2008). Every student matters: Enhancing strengths-based school counseling through the application of mattering. *Professional School Counseling 12*(2), 123 – 127.

Egan, K. & Judson, G. (2008). Of whales and wonder. *Educational Leadership, 65*, 21- 25.

Glasser, W. (1988). *Choice theory in the classroom.* New York: HarperCollins.

Glasser, W. (1990). *The quality school.* New York: Harper and Row.

Glasser, W. (1992). *The quality school: Managing students without coercion.* New York: HarperCollins.

Glasser, W. (1998). *The quality school: Managing students without coercion*. New York: HarperCollins (Original work published 1992).

Glasser, W. (2010). *Every student can succeed*. Los Angeles: William Glasser. (Original work published 2000).

Goodenow, C. (1993). Classroom belonging among early adolescent students: Relationships to motivation and achievement. *Journal of Early Adolescence, 13*(1), 21-43.

Gottfried, A.E. (1985). Academic intrinsic motivation in elementary and junior high school students. *Journal of Educational Psychology 77*(6)*,* 631-645.

Gottfried, A.E. (1990). Academic intrinsic motivation in young elementary school children. *Journal of Educational Psychology 82*(3), 525-538.

Hatch, T. & Bowers, J. (2002). The block to build on. *ASCA School Counselor*, 39(5,(12-19.

Heydenberk, R.A., Heydenberk, W.A., & Bochnowicz, J.A. (2006). Improving class climate with the check-in strategy. *Thinking Classroom 7*(3), 5-10.

Kohn, A. (2006). *Beyond discipline from compliance to community*. Alexandria: Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Lewis, A. C. (2000). Listening to adolescents. *Phi Delta Kappan, 81*(9), 643.

Mitchell, M.M., Bradshaw, C.P., & Leaf, P.J. (2010). Student and teacher perceptions of school climate: A multilevel exploration of patterns of discrepancy. *Journal of School Health 80(6),* 271-280.

Moos, R. H. (1979). *Evaluating educational environments.* San Francisco: Jossey–Bass.

Niebuhr, K.E. & Niebuhr, R.E. (1999). An empirical study of student relationships and academic achievement. *Education 119*(4), 679-682.

Parish, T (1992). Ways of assessing and enhancing student motivation. *Journal of Reality Therapy 11(2),* 27-36. Payne, R. (2005). *A framework for understanding poverty* (4th ed.). Highlands, TX: aha! Process Inc.

Perry, B. D. (2001). Raising a nonviolent child: The power of attachment. *Scholastic Parent & Child, 9*(2), 32.

Ryan, A. M., & Patrick, H. (2001). The classroom social environment and changes in adolescents' motivation and engagement during middle school. *American Educational Research Journal, 38*, 437-460.

Thayer-Bacon, B., & C. S. Bacon. (1996). Caring professors: A model. *The Journal of General Education 45(4),* 255-256.

The Education Trust (2009a). *History of TSCI.* http://www.edtrust.org/node/139.

Tomlinson, C. A., & Eidson, C. C. (2003). *Differentiation in practice: A resource guide for differentiating curriculum*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Wentzel, K. R. (1997). Student motivation in middle school: The role of perceived pedagogical caring. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 89*(3), 411-419.

White-Clark, R. (2005). Training teachers to succeed in a multicultural climate. *Principal, 84*(4), 40-44.

Wubbolding, R.E., Robey, P., & Brickell, J. (2010). A partial and tentative look at the future of choice theory, reality therapy, and lead management. *International Journal of Reality Therapy, 29* (2) 25-33. Retrieved from http://www.lmu.edu/Assets/Student+Affairs+Division/Judicial+Affairs Journal+Article+Choice+Theory.pdf