Investigating the Role of Family Training in Academic Achievement of Slow-Learner Boy Students of Elementary School in Karoon County during 2015-16

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Abstract

The present study aimed at investigating the role of family training in academic achievement of slow-learner boy students of elementary school. A sample consisting of 30 persons was selected by simple random sampling method and then divided into two groups: experiment group (15 students) and control group (15 students). The statistical population includes all boy students of Elementary school of Karoon County in schooling year of 2015-16. In this study, quasi-experiment method with pretest and posttest types was used together with control group and it researcher-made test was used for collecting the information, and t-test of independent groups was used for analyzing the data. Results indicate that there is a significant relationship between academic performance of slow-learner students whose parents have passed the family training in school and those students whose parents have not received the training. Significance level was lower than 0.05 and it showed that family training plays an important role in academic achievement.

Key words: Family Training, Academic Achievement, Slow-Learner Student.
Introduction

Paying full attention to the education in each society is the best and most important investment of the future of that society and each year, thousands students at the beginning of each schooling year leave home for school. School besides the family is most fundamental structure which is responsible for preparing and equipping its members with the necessities related to the personal and social life. One of the most important principles and cases to which much attention should be paid is to consider the personal differences among the students. From among these differences, is the cognitive capability including intelligence the rate of which is not the same among all students. As a result, special attention should be paid to it, since type and speed of training should be coordinated with the cognitive capabilities of students. A relative wide range of students in ordinal schools, while sitting beside other students with significant intelligence difference and using the facilities the same as theirs, are slow-learner students. Slow-learner students are those whose intelligence test score is 70-85. On the basis of estimates from the normal distribution, this group accounts for 13.6% of the population. Slow-learner students are 10 times more than those students who are known as Schizophrenia in US and 2 times more than the normal amount of attention-deficit hyperactive students. This group studies hard in school and is not allowed to use the special educations. On the other hand, they do not easily cope with the special educational systems. Most parents state that presence in school and communication with the school personnel is an annoying experience (Shaw, Grimz & Bellman, 2005).

Investigations show that many countries all over the world have taken steps achieving this aim that these students attend ordinary schools as much as possible and enjoy the public and education facilities the same as other students and also they would not be labeled as exceptional and different students (Peter, Kelly, Lorna, Chan, 1993). Iran also defined the educational status of slow-learners in ordinary school since schooling year of 1996-97. When this group entered this school for the first time, special educational services were offered to them and their families by applying the exceptional teachers and consultants and gradually the services decreased so that currently they receive no special training (Farighi, 2010).

Such negligence to this group of students has made the slow-learner students to be failed drastically and in fact they receive the least training and their future is vague. Seifnaraghi & Naderi (2010) believes that compared to the in average performance of normal peers, slow-learners are lower is most learning fields and they can act and achieve more as much as possible by appropriate training programs (Seifnaraghi & Naderi, 2010). From among these training programs is family training. The important role of family in educating the children is obvious. It is the sacred center of family which raises and delivers the family members. Before going to school, children spend their time in family. Even during the school age, except 6 hours a day, they spend their times in home and are affected by all aspects of family. Conducting family training courses can help in overcoming the student problems (Vafadaar, 1995). Holding the family training classes is one of important ways for the family to play its effective role, to nurture the children and help them in training together with the teaching – learning activities in school (Comprehensive Instruction on Family Training, 1998). It is necessary to mention that leaving the slow-learners in ordinary school without taking their abilities into account and also lack of enough trainings waste a huge amount of annual budget of education, make the basis...
repeated and finally make the students frustrated and bored. In view of what mentioned above, the main issue is whether the family training affect the academic performance of slow-learners?

**Research objective:**
Investigating the role of family training in academic achievement of slow-learner boy students of elementary school in Karoon Count in schooling year 2015-16

**Research Hypothesis**
This study includes one objective and one hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between family training and academic achievement of slow-learner boy students of elementary school.

**Theoretical basics and literature:**
In this section, at first, the principal concepts and theoretical basics related to the research topic are discussed and then studies and researches inside and outside the country are described briefly.

**Family**
One definition of family which is more comprehensive is the one given by Karl Rogers. “Family is a semi-closed system which serves as the internal communications and has members who have established different statuses and authorities in family and society and play its role with regards to the content of statuses, thoughts and family connections which are emphasized by society”. (Foghani-Raeisi, 1999)

**Family Training**
Family training is a type of group education which includes wide range of training programs and helps them to develop desirably their knowledge and abilities in the field of children education. Family training also serves as prevention and prevents social and emotional inconsistencies and helps the mental improvement of children. It is attempted in family training that they become familiar with the principles and concepts of children development and how to behave the children in various states and identify and know the problems and inconsistencies of children in different stages of life and learn how to behave each. The main objective of these sessions is to help parent as a whole to discuss the problems and issues of their children in society and after discussing and examining them in group and finding social solutions they can implement the lessons learned inside the family (Kakia, 2005). It should also be noted that since most attitudes, values, life patterns and emotions are taught in home and before the formal training, but family training, in fact, means applying systematically the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which affect the human development in playing their roles in family and society.

In most families, there are children who have considerable differences with their peers in terms of intelligence quotient and mind. Different classifications have been made in psychology for this type of children one of which is in education point of view, as explained below.
Classifying the mentally retarded children:
Education scientists classify the mentally retarded people into four groups in educational point of view: a) slow-learner; b) trainable mentally retarded; c) educable mentally retarded; d) totally dependent mentally retarded.

a) Slow-learner children: due to low mental development, members of this group are not able to learn the matters and solve issues like ordinary people and their peers. Slow-learners, in fact, have the highest degree of mental development among the mentally retarded groups and it is the biggest group among the mentally retarded groups; their IQ (intelligence quotient) ranges 80% and 90%. The obvious feature of mentally retarded people, especially slow-learners, is that they learn slowly or forget quickly. Therefore, emphasizing on repetition and training continuity is a necessity based on this fact and success can be achieved only by patience and continuity is attained under the shadow of training and sustainability.

b) Trainable mentally retarded children: this people constitute about 2% of all school-age children and their IQ is between 50% and 70%. Trainable mentally retarded children cannot enjoy training programs of ordinary classes enough. These children are trainable anyway and are able to learn the least public information and formal lessons such as reading, writing, counting and proper occupational skills and also they can use education in managing their life.

c) Educable mentally retarded: This group includes 3% of the whole society and they have IQ in range 25% - 50%. Mental retardation of most educable mentally retarded children is due to disease, brain lesions and internal disorders, etc. These persons are not able to manage their life independently and lack the social and economic self-sufficiency. These children need support, supervision and guidance.

d) Totally dependent mentally retarded: Due to severe mental and physical retardation, this group of children are not able to learn the matters and also are not educable in their affairs and not adaptable with environment and social consistency. Their IQ is less than 25% and that’s why they are in tremendous need to continuous help in personal activities. These children are never able to learn, speak or carry out their simplest things if life such eating and wearing (Afrooz, 1996).

As mentioned above, one group of mentally retarded children in slow-learners for which there are principles to which close attention should be paid.

General principles of slow-learner students
Slow-learner students have the cognitive ability lower than the average. Their learning process is slow. But the problem with these students is not so much that they should be put in special classes and these principles should be taken into account while training them: 1) they have problems with abstract thinking; 2) long term concentration is difficult for them; 3) they may have problems with express themselves and they may not speak fluently; 4) compared to their peers, they learn more slowly; 5) children have problems with reading (Loen Stei, 2003; quoted by Majidi. M. & Ghanbari., J, 2010). These children have more problems with math and reading.
Their marks are less than their classmates. First and second grades of elementary school are too much difficult for them, but after learning necessary concepts they have fewer problems in third and fourth grades.

Some researches carried out on slow-learner students are as follows:

Advanced researches have been done on the family training in developed countries among which the researches by Thomas Dishon, Valdo Peterson (1992), Freeman, Patrick, Dilly & Daniel (1993), Bevier (1991), Scoyd (1995), William Doberty (1999) & Elizabeth Sendel (1995) show that parents attend the family training courses with enough motivation and their parenting styles would become more efficient after these trainings and family training have been effective in improving the parenting styles and behaving with children (Nabavi, 2009). Several researches have also been carried out in Iran among which Mehrinejad (2003), Tabrizi (2003), Fathabadi & Amooei (2002) concluded that family training have affected highly the enrichment of student educational skills, increase in their desired behaviors, establishment of favorite behaviors, promotion of mental health and increase their life skills.

Having a look at results of domestic and international studies, it can be found out that necessity of family training is inevitable in increasing the knowledge, information and awareness of parents and enhancing the parents’ educational skills.

Research Methodology

Based on the objective, this study is applied one, since its main aim is to investigate the effectiveness and usefulness of family training on students’ academic achievement.

Statistical Population

In the present study, statistical population includes all boy students of elementary school in Karoon City in schooling year of 2015-16. Sample consists of 30 boy students of elementary school who were selected by simple random sampling method from among the statistical population.

Research Method

In present study which is experimental research, the people under study were divided randomly into experiment and control groups. In fact, two classes were selected as the experiment group and two classes as the control group for each of them 15 persons were assigned separately. It is necessary to mention that in regards to the scores of intelligence and age, the economic statuses of families were matched in such a way that the intelligence of studied students was measured by Wechsler and Goodenough intelligence tests and their intelligence ranged 70% to 80%. Jobs of most subjects’ fathers and mothers were farming and housekeeping, respectively and they were close to each other in terms of economy. In this study, family training and academic achievement are independent and dependent variables, respectively. In this method, before applying the independent variable (family training), dependent variable (academic achievement) is measured (pretest). After implementing the pretest, independent variable (family training) is implemented and dependent variable (academic achievement) is measured (posttest). In this method, family training is carried out in a class and in another class no training is given. After three months,
performances of both classes are measured by researcher-made test and their scores were compared. In this study, family training was carried out in 10 sessions and each of them was 60 minutes. At first, about 20-30 minutes, the instructor taught the concepts and principles of students’ development and also how to behave them by using speech and workshop methods, then for 20-30 minutes, the proper trainings were given on how to communicate with slow-learner students as well as how to exchange the concepts and expectation level of parents from students. During the training course, after every two or three sessions a session was devoted to QA (Question & Answer) and reviewing the trainings.

**Measurement Tools**

The measurement tools in this research was a researcher-made test in which there were totally 14 pretest and posttest questions with total score of 20 and it was distributed among the students.

**Validity of researcher-made test**

To ensure the researcher-made test, 3 experienced elementary school teachers were asked to give the viewpoints on the content of test with their elementary books. Through applying some small changes, it was attempted to improve the test.

**Reliability of researcher-made test**

In order to increase the reliability of researcher-made test, retest method was used. In this method, two experienced teachers and head elementary teaching group were asked to implement independently the test in two times (2-week interval) with a unit group (20 persons). Then, they were asked to correct the test sheets independently. The coefficient of concordance between marks of two correctors was obtained 0.83 which is an acceptable reliability coefficient.

**Data Analysis**

In the present study, at first, the descriptive analysis was made and then after collecting data, we use the indices of descriptive statistics such as frequency, mode, mean, variance, minimum score, maximum score, standard deviation and classification are used. Since this study includes both control and experiment groups, t-test for independent groups was used to test the hypothesis. Also, the necessary information were analyzed by SPSS software.

**Research Findings**

Descriptive statistics related to the research variables: this section includes describing the properties related to the research variables. Information related to this section is given in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 shows frequency, mean, SD, minimum and maximum scores of pretest on academic performance among the students in both control and experiment groups.
As observed in table 1, mean of total pretest scores of academic performance among the students in both control and experiment groups is 10.3 and standard deviation is 2.19. Also, the mean of pretest scores of academic performance among the students in experimental and control groups are 10.65 and 10.05, respectively. These results show that the mean of pretest scores of academic performance among the students in experimental group is close to mean of pretest scores in control group and they do not have great difference with each other.

Table 2 shows frequency, mean, SD, minimum and maximum scores of posttest on academic performance among the students in both control and experiment groups.

As observed in table 2, mean of total posttest scores of academic performance among the students in both control and experiment groups is 13.33. Also, the mean of posttest scores of academic performance among the students in experimental and control groups are 16.06 and 10.60, respectively. These results show that the mean of posttest scores of academic performance among the students in experimental group is more than the mean of posttest scores in control group.

**Research Hypothesis:** There is a significant relationship between family training and academic achievement of slow-learner boy students in elementary school.

Table 3 shows the difference between mean of academic performance of all students in both experimental and control groups by t-test done on independent groups.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>mean</th>
<th>standard deviation</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2.21</td>
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<td>1/36</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2.28</td>
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<td>2/84</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Research hypothesis: \( H_a : \mu_1 \neq \mu_2 \)

As seen in table 3, the difference between mean of pretest of academic performance among all students in both experimental and control groups is \( t = 1.36 \) and \( P < 0.17 \) which is not significant in \( P < 0.05 \). These results indicate that there is no statistical significant difference between mean of pretest scores of academic performance among all students in both experimental and control groups. These results also show that there is no significant difference between academic performance of all students in both experimental and control groups before using the experimental variable. But the difference between mean of posttest of academic performance of all students in both experimental and control group is \( t = 6.10 \) and \( P < 0.001 \) which is significant in \( P < 0.05 \). Based on these results, there is a statistical significant difference between mean of posttest scores of academic performance among all students in both experimental and control groups; i.e. family training has affected the academic performance among all students in both experimental group. Therefore, null hypothesis (\( H_0 \)) is rejected and research hypothesis (\( H_a \)) is approved.

**Conclusion**

Undoubtedly, family is the most important and basic nursery and school for each person and is considered one of the main educational institutes in society and can play an important role in establishing connection with school in order to nurture the slow-learner students. In this case, it seems that the first and most important step in education process is to make parents familiar with the principles and methods of establishing human relationship and to invest in the field of family training. This study aims at investigating the role of family training in academic achievement of slow-learner students in Karoon City during which in 10 sessions of family training, offered concepts and trainings improved the academic performance of slow-learner students and results showed that there is relationship between family training and academic achievement of slow-learner students. Therefore, the hypothesis was approved in a high level. Results of present study are consistent and aligned with the results of research by Thomas Dishon, Valdo Peterson (1992), Freeman, Patrick, Dilly & Daniel (1993), Bevier (1991), Scoyd (1995), William Doberty (1999) & Elizabeth Sendel (1995), Mehrinejad (2003), Tabrizi (2003) and Fathabadi & Amooei (2002) and they have joint results. With regards to what said above, it seems that in family
training, education plays an important role on promoting the knowledge skills level of slow-learner students and also prevents social and psychological problems among the students.
References