



## Sociology of Education

### Comparison the Effectiveness of Teaching Choice Theory and Inquiry Philosophy on Social Competence and Goal Orientation of Labor Children

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**Receive:** 2022/11/29  
**Accept:** 2023/06/13  
**Published:** 2023/07/23

#### Keywords:

Teaching Choice Theory, Teaching Inquiry Philosophy, Social Competence, Goal Orientation, Labor Children.

#### Article Cite:

Jamali Kh, Kafi M, Aboulghasemi A, Akbari B (2023). Comparison the Effectiveness of Teaching Choice Theory and Inquiry Philosophy on Social Competence and Goal Orientation of Labor Children, *Sociology of Education*. 9(2): 37-48.

**Purpose:** The forced labor for children has negative cognitive, social and emotional consequences. Therefore, the present study was conducted with the aim of comparing the effectiveness of teaching choice theory and inquiry philosophy on social competence and goal orientation of labor children.

**Methodology:** The current research was a semi-experimental with a pre-test and post-test design with a control group. The research population was the labor children of Rasht city in 2021 year. A number of 45 labor children were selected as a sample with using the available sampling method and were assigned in three equal groups by a simple random method with lottery, including the groups of teaching choice theory, teaching inquiry philosophy and control. The first experimental group received 8 sessions of teaching choice theory and the second experimental group received 10 sessions of teaching inquiry philosophy, and the control group did not receive any teaching. The research tools were included questionnaires of social competence (Felner, 2002) and goal orientation (Midgley et al., 1998) and its resulting data were analyzed by methods of univariate and multivariate covariance analysis and Bonferroni post hoc test in SPSS software.

**Findings:** The findings showed that teaching in both experimental groups in compared the control group led to increase social competence and goal orientation of tendency-mastery, avoidance-mastery, and tendency- performance in labor children ( $P < 0.05$ ), but there was no significance difference between them in the goal orientation of avoidance-performance ( $P > 0.05$ ). Also, there was no significant difference between the experimental groups of teaching choice theory and inquiry philosophy in terms of any of the variables of social competence and goal orientation ( $P > 0.05$ ).

**Conclusion:** According to the results, to improve the social competence and goal orientation of labor children, it is possible to use the teaching methods of choice theory and inquiry philosophy.



<https://doi.org/10.22034/ijes.2023.553973.1363>



<https://dorl.net/dor/20.1001.1.23221445.1402.9.2.9.6>



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## Detailed Abstract

**Purpose:** Childhood is one of the most important periods in a person's life, and sometimes children due to the difficult life conditions are exposed to physical, sexual, psychological and social injuries or adverse consequences caused by work. The labor children are children under the age of 18 who participate in market and non-market economic activities and receive wages. The phenomenon of labor children is an important social issue that brings many negative cognitive, social and emotional effects and consequences, and these children are among the most disadvantaged children who are deprived of many of their rights. One of the problems of labor children is the loss of social competence, which refers to the ability to effectively implement social interactions with using cognitive capabilities, emotional processes, behavioral skills, social awareness, and personal and cultural values. The social competence as one of the constructs of mental health includes a set of skills that are based on the ability to understand others and communicate effectively with them, social responsibility and maintaining personal independence. This structure means having communication skills, cooperation, interaction and self-control at home, school and society, which is formed during childhood and develops during adolescence. Another problem of labor children is the loss of goal orientation, which is a coherent pattern of attributions, emotions and beliefs of a person, and causes the different ways of dealing, engaging and responding to different situations. The goal orientation reflects the goals that students pursue when learning, seen as a relatively consistent motivational tendency to approach task competence or task avoidance. The goal orientation has two dimensions of definition (mastery and performance competence criteria) and gravity (tendency or avoidance of competence) and accordingly there are four types of goal orientation including tendency-mastery, avoidance-mastery, tendency- performance and avoidance-performance. There are various methods to improve children's psychological characteristics, including teaching choice theory and teaching inquiry philosophy. The choice theory foundation was laid by Glasser (1998) based on five basic needs including the need for love and belonging, freedom, power, fun and survival. Another important part of this theory is knowing the needs and how to satisfy them effectively, which if people do not learn the right way to satisfy their needs, they will suffer a lot in life. All human thoughts, feelings, beliefs and behaviors are aimed at satisfying one of the five basic needs, and each person uses different methods to satisfy them. Appropriate satisfaction of needs led to increase the feeling of control and self-management, and lack of ability in this field causes the feeling of being a victim and performing unreasonable and abnormal behaviors. Also, the teaching inquiry philosophy is necessary to have responsible people and with social, logical, scientific and moral skills. Because the inquiry philosophy helps people to find their goals and learn the ways to reach them. The inquiry philosophy designed by Peirc (1975) to improve the ability to reason, develop creativity, critical thinking, moral understanding and artistic values, find meaning from life experiences and individual and interpersonal development and teaching philosophy to children designed by Lipman (1970) for preschool and elementary school children so that they have an opportunity to philosophize and inquiry with their classmates. This method emphasizes on the collaborative and social role of people in the production of science and brings people into the realm of finding meaning and creating meaning, and strengthens the basis of developing thinking in them. The forced labor for children has negative cognitive, social and emotional consequences. Therefore, the present study was conducted with the aim of comparing the effectiveness of teaching choice theory and inquiry philosophy on social competence and goal orientation of labor children.

**Methodology:** The current research was a semi-experimental with a pre-test and post-test design with a control group. The research population was the labor children of Rasht city in 2021 year. A number of 45 labor children were selected as a sample with using the available sampling method and were assigned in three equal groups by a simple random method with lottery, including the groups of teaching choice theory, teaching inquiry philosophy and control. The first experimental group received 8 sessions of teaching choice theory and the second experimental group received 10 sessions of teaching inquiry philosophy, and the control group did not receive any teaching. The research tools were included questionnaires of social competence (Felner, 2002) and goal orientation (Midgley et al., 1998). In this study, the reliability of the social competence questionnaire was calculated with using Cronbach's alpha method 0.82. Also, in this study, the reliability of the components of the goal orientation questionnaire was calculated with using Cronbach's alpha method in the range of 0.79 to 0.92. The data obtained from the implementation the questionnaires of social competence and goal orientation were analyzed by univariate and multivariate analysis of covariance and Bonferroni's post hoc test in SPSS software.

**Findings:** There were 5 dropouts in each of the teaching choice theory and inquiry philosophy groups, and this dropout is not unreasonable due to the spread of Covid-19 at the time of the research. Therefore, 5 people from the control group were removed from the research and analyzes were performed for three groups of 10 people. The findings showed that teaching in both experimental groups in compared the control group led to increase social competence and goal orientation of tendency-

mastery, avoidance-mastery, and tendency- performance in labor children ( $P < 0.05$ ), but there was no significance difference between them in the goal orientation of avoidance-performance ( $P > 0.05$ ). Also, there was no significant difference between the experimental groups of teaching choice theory and inquiry philosophy in terms of any of the variables of social competence and goal orientation ( $P > 0.05$ ).

**Conclusion:** According to the results, to improve the social competence and goal orientation of labor children, it is possible to use the teaching methods of choice theory and inquiry philosophy. Due to the effectiveness of teaching choice theory and inquiry philosophy for labor children, it is suggested to managers and officials of support organizations and institutions that include programs with the title of choice theory and inquiry philosophy in their educational programs. Another suggestion is to hold such programs for parents or those who deal with these children, such as teachers and trainers of Welfare Organizations and Centers.