

Closed-Circuit Television

A New Delivery Method in School Counseling: Closed-circuit Television

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Abstract

In this era of results based education, professional school counselors must discover the most efficient methods for reaching all children in their school, yet still allow time for individual student care. This quantitative research study describes the utilization of a school's closed-circuit television to present a classroom guidance unit on family diversity. A pre/post survey revealed statistically significant findings that could offer professional school counselors a new way of delivery.

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A new era of professional school counseling has begun. Gone are the days when professional school counselors' (PSCs) major responsibilities within the school were to provide specialized resources to a few needy children. The new model of school counseling requires PSCs to prove their importance for every student in the school (American School Counseling Association [ASCA], 2003). With the drastic changes in American education, there has been a major push for accountability and educational reform within all aspects of the school. The school environment has become a learning focused environment, where student outcomes have replaced teacher activities as the accepted measure of educational excellence (Paisley & Hayes, 2003). This same approach holds true for counseling programs, thus PSCs can no longer expect what they do to speak for itself; they must be able to report student change as a result of their efforts.

Within this new model of school counseling, a change

has occurred in the roles that professional school counselors play. Historically, school counselors have been known as "highly paid clerical staff, quasi administrators, and/or inadequately trained therapeutic mental health providers with unmanageable client loads" (Martin, 2002, p. 150). According to Paisley & McMahon (2001), school counselors are asked to fulfill 13 different responsibilities, including but not limited to "provid[ing] individual and small group counseling sessions, building partnerships and teams within and outside of the school, and prevent[ing] suicides, pregnancies, dropouts, drug use, and general moral decay," (p. 107). Paisley & McMahon further explained that even in the best of circumstances, PSCs must prioritize in order to have time for the most important aspects of their program as well as demonstrate the cost effectiveness of remaining in their counselor roles as opposed to assigned administrative roles.

Successful Delivery Systems for PSCs

Professional school counselor duties are varied and flexible. However, the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2003) does outline four areas of the delivery system and common practices used to implement a school counseling program. Included in the delivery system are guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, and system support. While responsive services such as meeting students' direct needs through counseling, conferences, referral, and follow up may be the former focus of school counselors, it is now only a piece of the bigger picture (ASCA, 2003). Nevertheless, it is still a part, and depending on the individual school's need, this segment still has the potential to demand a large amount of time.

Closed-Circuit Television

Guidance Curriculum Delivery

Another unit of delivery system, guidance curriculum, is defined as structured developmental lessons designed to assist students in achieving desired competencies and to provide all students with the knowledge and skills appropriate for their developmental level. The guidance curriculum is infused throughout the school's overall curriculum and is presented systematically through K-12 classroom and group activities (ASCA, 2003).

Erford (2007) suggests that the classroom guidance segment is effective for delivering the comprehensive school counseling program, and at the elementary school level, the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2003) suggests that PSCs spend 35-40% of their time in classroom guidance. In an ideal situation, this would be feasible; however, many PSCs struggle with providing these school-wide services when there are intense immediate needs for at-risk children at their school (Paisley, 2001). In such cases it may be more efficient to approach classroom guidance curriculum from a new perspective. The purpose of this study was to discover a more efficient way for school counselors to deliver classroom guidance curriculum on various topics.

The Use of Closed-Circuit Television

Televised instruction is not a new phenomenon in education. In past decades, many researchers (Ryan & Whitman, 1969; Toronto Board of Education, 1972; Wilmington Public Schools, 1968) examined the effects of closed-circuit television instruction on students. The Wilmington Public Schools of Delaware reported their findings on the use of closed-circuit television for large scale curriculum instruction including vocational, career, and college guidance lessons. According to the Public Schools of Delaware (Wilmington Public Schools, 1968), educational television contributed to the school counselor's duties in testing and informing large groups of students, thus lending more opportunities to focus on individual and small group counseling. Ryan & Whitman (1969) suggest the potential uses of closed-circuit television and recorded videotapes in the schools. Additionally, Ryan & Whitman assert that these forms of visual media have the ability to save counselors precious time.

Researchers in Canada explored the effects of school telecasts on students (Toronto Board of Education, 1972). These researchers reviewed 13 telecasts on three topics: guidance, art, and science. They then evaluated the effects of these telecasts in multiple areas, including student learning. The researchers found that the telecasts

significantly influenced learning and retention as well as stimulated interest among students. They also found that telecasts work best when presented more than once.

More recently, many researchers (Petracchi & Patchner, 2000; Chernish, DeFranco, Lindner, & Dooley, 2005; Bacon & Jakovich, 2001) examined the effects of televised instruction on students. Petracchi & Patchner (2000) found no significant difference in student perception of their learning environment between traditional classroom instruction and televised instruction. Additionally, Chernish et al. (2005) found no significant differences in achievement for college students taking a human resources management course through the traditional classroom environment or through televised instruction.

Although there appears to be an adequate amount of research on college students and televised instruction, there appears to be a gap in the current literature in regards to using closed-circuit television to deliver non-academic instruction for young children. At the time of this research study, the principal investigator was assigned to the school as a school counseling intern (SCI). After observing the site supervisor working with closed-circuit television, the SCI became interested in being supervised on the use of the closed circuit television. The goal of this study was to discover if closed-circuit television was an efficient and practical method for the delivery of traditional classroom guidance material. The SCI chose to deliver a series of guidance lessons to the students on family diversity, as there were no immediate plans within the school counseling program for guidance on this topic. Through an informal needs assessment using individual interactions with students and their families, the SCI felt that a unit focusing on family diversity would benefit this particular student population.

Method

This quantitative study used experimental design to determine whether closed-circuit television can be an effective tool in the delivery of a classroom guidance curriculum. This study focused specifically on second grade students in a rural primary school in the southeastern United States. This study was completed as part of a school counseling internship requirement in order to gain knowledge and skills pertaining to data collection and analysis.

Participant Selection

Out of approximately 140 second grade students, 25 were randomly selected through systemic sampling from

Closed-Circuit Television

an alphabetical list to receive pretest and posttest measures. Of the selected participants, 18 students returned parental permission forms and minor consent forms. The 18 participants were drawn from all seven 2nd grade classrooms in the selected primary school and included 7 girls and 11 boys.

Design and Procedures

The intervention included eight 20-minute sessions on the school's closed-circuit television that focused on family diversity. All students in the school viewed the lessons during morning broadcasts in their respective classrooms. The sessions were spaced over 4 weeks with two sessions per week. Sessions began immediately after students returned from winter break and concluded before classrooms began major preparation for annual high stakes testing. The unit focused on family diversity. The lessons were designed and performed by the SCI to meet the needs of the student population. Following is a summary of each lesson, based on fictional characters created for this specific unit.

Introduction.

The main character, Hattie the Hippo is introduced by the SCI. Hattie is a puppet and is large enough to be seen on the small television screens. The students are introduced to the idea that Hattie will be teaching them about how all families are different. Some examples of family differences are discussed and include families living in separate homes and families that look different from each other.

Adoption.

The SCI explained that Hattie's mother died when she was a baby. Mama Bear, Hattie's adoptive mother, is introduced. Students are taught about adoption and how it is similar to adopting a pet.

Families can live in different houses.

The SCI shared two pictures that Hattie drew of her families. The first picture is of Mama Bear's house and includes Mama Bear, Hattie and her brother. The second picture included Daddy Bear's house and shows Daddy and two sisters. The SCI explained that siblings can live in different houses and continue to love each other as they are still a family. The SCI asks all students to respond to the question, "Can you be family if you live in different houses?"

Families can look different.

The SCI explained that families can still be families even

if they look different. She brings in Hattie and her three siblings. They are bears with different color fur. They all look different and are still a family. The SCI also showed a family portrait belonging to a teacher at the school. The teacher had multiple children of different ethnicities in the picture. The SCI points out that they are all a family and love each other even though they have different color skin, different color hair, and some wear glasses.

All vs. some.

The SCI reviewed true and false questions about families. These questions were worded in statements using the terms "all" and "some". The SCI explained the importance of noticing the difference in these words (i.e., some families live in the same house, but not all families live in the same house). Some examples included: all kids are girls, families always live in the same house, all kids live with one mom and one dad. The SCI reviewed with the students how to change these statements into more inclusive sentences using the words "some" and "sometimes".

Parents, jobs, and careers.

Using a laptop computer, the SCI showed different pictures of adults working in a variety of settings. The SCI labeled each adult as a child's parent. For example, when showing a picture of a woman in an office, the SCI stated, "This is Johnny's mom. She goes to work in an office." The pictures also included a stay-at-home dad, a grandfather who cooks, a mom working at a store, and a dad who teaches school. The SCI strove to depict adults from a variety of ethnicities outside of stereotypical roles.

Living with grandparents.

Another character from a previous guidance lesson appeared as a friend of Hattie. The SCI explained how this friend's family is special, as she lives with her grandparents. The students were asked to write about how their families are special during their daily writing workshop within their classrooms. This suggestion offered teachers a chance to incorporate the researchers' lessons into academic instruction.

Review.

All of the former points are covered briefly. Students were asked to respond to statements with thumbs up if the statement was true or thumbs down if the statement was false. Teachers were asked to verify the students' responses in their classrooms.

Data Collection and Analysis

The SCI collected data via a one group pretest-posttest

Closed-Circuit Television

design. Students were pulled from their regular classroom on two separate days to complete the pre and posttests in a small group setting. In each small group the SCI reviewed the purpose of the inventory and thanked the participants for their cooperation. The SCI asked each student to follow along and choose the best answer for each question as the SCI read the statements. Students were allowed to take their time as needed. Students were also asked to keep their answers private so as not to sway their peers' answers.

The SCI developed the pre and posttest inventories in order to assess knowledge gained from the closed-circuit classroom guidance unit on family diversity. The questions focused on family differences that occur in the target student population. The inventory consisted of 10 true/false questions (See Appendix A). Two other educators in the school voluntarily reviewed the inventory items in order to assist with age appropriateness.

To analyze the data, the SCI completed a paired samples t-test on pre and posttest scores. This analysis allowed a comparison of means to test for significance in the improvement of scores. The highest possible score on the pretest and the posttest was 10. Scores are reported in a table as shown in Table 1.

Results

The average posttest score ($M = 9.167$) significantly exceeded the average pretest score ($M = 7.056$), $t(17) = -4.945$, $p \leq .05$. For the pretest, the range of scores was from 2 to 10. For the posttest, the range of scores was from 1 to 10. The pretest score of 2 and the posttest score of 1 belonged to participant number 9. It is important to address these particular scores. This student had known academic difficulties and it is the SCI's opinion that the student had trouble understanding the inventory items and format. Despite the inclusion of the outlier, results indicate that the use of a closed-circuit television classroom unit on family diversity contributed to an overall significant improvement in students' understanding of family diversity.

Discussion

The present research study suggests a renewed area for counselor delivery. In order to allow time for other areas in the counseling program, PSCs may consider implementing classroom guidance in a more efficient and practical way than visiting each classroom for extended

periods of time. This study reveals that closed-circuit television can promote highly desired efficiency as well as increase student knowledge and awareness in regards to family diversity. These findings suggest many PSCs might want to review the current breakdown of their time and priorities. If a school has the resource of a closed-circuit television, it may be helpful to implement new and comprehensive classroom guidance units such as this study's family diversity unit.

As mentioned earlier, the ASCA National Model (2003) calls for elementary PSCs to spend 35-40% of their time in classroom guidance. If PSCs can cover the same classroom guidance lessons in a more efficient manner, through the use of closed circuit televisions, then the 35-40% may be reduced to a much smaller percentage. This reduction in classroom guidance time would open up the possibility for PSCs to focus more of their program on other tasks as determined by their school's unique needs. Through this shift in focus, PSCs will easily be able to demonstrate successful results and feel assured that they are not neglecting the significant preventative methods of classroom guidance.

The use of closed-circuit television promotes visibility and also contributes to administrators' and teachers' knowledge as to the role of a PSC. Instead of sitting behind closed office doors, the school staff regularly witness the multiple roles of the PSC. Additionally, Hatch & Chen-Hayes (2008) discovered that PSCs are often fearful when it comes to collecting and using data in their comprehensive school counseling program. The use of closed-circuit television is easily documented; therefore this method will satisfy this educational era's demands for results based interventions in a straightforward way that may appeal to PSCs.

Future Research Recommendations

The present study creates a starting point for future research using closed-circuit television for the delivery of a classroom guidance unit that meets the school's needs such as family diversity. The current study only focused on family diversity. Future researchers may want to investigate which topics are best taught through traditional classroom guidance methods and which may be more efficient through the use of closed-circuit television. Topics such as "good touch, bad touch" may be considered inappropriate for closed-circuit television lessons, but researchers may want to determine which topics are appropriate for school-wide instruction.

Researchers can consider the various methods of in-

Closed-Circuit Television

struction through closed-circuit television. In the current study, the PI used multiple methods, including but not limited to power point slides, puppets, verbal instruction, and written practice. Researchers can determine which, if any, of these methods leads to the greatest learning. Additionally, researchers can examine how best to use homeroom teachers as guides in the students' learning of topics covered by closed-circuit television and consider how closed-circuit television airing could aid in the execution of homeroom advisory programs.

Future researchers may also be interested in determining which age groups respond positively to closed-circuit television instruction. For instance, the present study involved students in a primary school. It may be helpful to understand if PSCs could tailor closed-circuit television instruction to meet the needs of middle and high school students possibly in the areas of career development and college readiness counseling. Finally, researchers can investigate the corollary benefits of closed-circuit guidance on teacher and school cooperation with the PSC's guidance goals.

Limitations

One aspect of concern is the originality of the pre and posttest inventory. This inventory was created by the SCI and was not normed on any population nor tested for validity and reliability. A final limitation includes outdated data thus the literature review is insufficient and not as full as one might expect. Despite these limitations, the SCI feels confident that the significant results of this study warrant further research into the possibility of using closed-circuit television in delivery of classroom guidance.

Conclusion

This study examined a renewed delivery method for PSCs. This delivery method included the use of closed-circuit television in order to present classroom guidance curriculum in an efficient and effective manner. A pre/post survey revealed statistically significant findings that suggest that closed-circuit television is a practical addition to the school counseling delivery system.

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Closed-Circuit Television

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Table 1

Student	Pretest	Posttest	Difference
1	9	10	1
2	7	10	3
3	6	10	4
4	8	9	1
5	5	9	4
6	9	10	1
7	10	10	0
8	7	9	2
9	2	1	-1
10	4	10	6
11	8	10	2
12	9	10	1
13	8	10	2
14	9	10	1
15	7	10	3
16	10	10	0
17	6	10	4
18	3	7	4

Closed-Circuit Television

Appendix A

Pre and post test

Family Diversity

Directions:

- Circle the T if the sentence is true.
- Circle the F if the sentence is false (not true).

1. All families are like my family. T F
2. Some kids live with their grandparents. T F
3. All dads go to work. T F
4. All brothers and sisters live in the same house. T F
5. All families are different. T F
6. To be a family, people have to live in the same house. T F
7. People in the same family always have the same color skin. T F
8. Some kids live with only one grown-up. T F
9. All kids live with one mom and one dad. T F
10. All moms cook dinner. T F