NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

EGC 801

Principles of Guidance and Counselling

Module 4

EGC 801 Principles of Guidance and Counselling Module 4

Course Developers/Writers
Dr. Augustine Chinweuba Ukwueze & Dr. Aminu Kazeem Ibrahim, National Open University of Nigeria
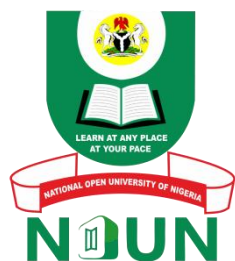
Course Editor
Prof. Soji Aremu, University of Ibadan, Ibadan

Programme Leader
Prof. U.S.A Osuji, National Open University of Nigeria

Credits of cover-photo: Henry Ude, National Open University of Nigeria

National Open University of Nigeria - University Village, 91 Cadastral Zone, Nnamdi Azikiwe Express Way, Jabi Abuja, Nigeria

Module 4

Unit 1 Group Guidance and Counselling

1.0 Introduction

Groups are so much a part of everyday living that people tend to take them for granted. All the things we learn about how to behave as human beings can be experienced and tested in group interaction. The individual's psycho-social development can be attributed at least to a series of group interactions and group memberships.

Groups are natural phenomena which occur wherever people are brought together regularly. An individual chooses voluntarily to become a member of certain groups while he is born into others. The individual would normally choose a group if he agrees with the values such group support and the purpose the group I trying to achieve.

Several problems, whether vocational, educational or psycho-social can be talked through effective use of group counselling. Problems that can be handled in groups include:

- Problems relating to fear, anxiety, phobia
- Poor study habits, poor academic performances
- Inferiority/superiority complex
- Juvenile delinquencies, pilfering truancy
- Drug addiction/abuse, alcoholism, smoking
- Frustrations, depression, helplessness
- Choice of school subjects
- Vocational choice
- Peer group pressure
- Family problems, separation, misunderstanding and divorce
- Shyness, timidity, poor self-concept
- School rules and regulations.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
- define group counselling.
- mention 3 characteristics of group counselling
- explain 2 desirable qualities of group members
- mention 4 avenues for group guidance and counselling
- discuss 2 advantages of group counseling and 2 disadvantages of group counselling.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Group Guidance

Group guidance refers to any part of a guidance programme that is conducted with more than one client. Provision of information is basically the focus of group guidance activities.

This term is frequently used to refer to any part of guidance programme that is organised with groups of students as distinct from that between an individual student and the counsellor. The approach of group guidance is preventive and is mostly directly concerned with acquiring information, gaining an orientation to new problems, planning and implementing student activities, collecting data for occupational and educational decisions.

Mahler (1977) defines group guidance as: a class or educational experience, mainly involved with giving out information. In schools, it is usually oriented towards encouraging students to know what the adults think the participants should know. Although the same topics discussed in group guidance may also be discussed in group counselling, the major responsibility in guidance remains with the teacher. In group counselling the focus is upon each member, not the topic being discussed. Topics treated under group guidance include effective study habits, preparing for and taking examinations, and obtaining and using vocational information. The number of members here range between 20 to 30 persons and the setting is usually the classroom.

Group guidance activities are an integral part of an effective school programme. Within a well-articulated guidance programme, group guidance activities contribute directly to the goals of students and the school implementing and supplementing the counselling and consulting roles of the school counselor. The school guidance programme that contributes to each pupil's positive use of the school facilities. The programme is also directed towards helping teachers and pupils to create a fertile environment in which children may feel and employ their development of those skills, knowledge and attitudes that are the pivot of well-adjusted personality. Within the context of the school guidance programme, group counselling captures the main essence of the guidance and portends an active in future in primary school education. Its success depends on the humility and caution with which the counselor adapts it to the needs of school children.

3.2 Group Counselling

Group counselling is a process by which one counsellor is engaged in a relationship with a number of counsellees. Most authorities cite six as the optimum number, with a range from foul to twelve. Group counselling is usually concerned with developmental problems and situational concerns of members. The focus is on attitudes and emotions, the choices and values involved in interpersonal relationships. Members, by interacting with each other, establish helping relationships that enables them to develop understanding, insight and the awareness of self as a first step to effective functioning. According to Sherterz and Stone (1981), the vehicle for achieving this goal in a group is that members discuss their personal emotional concerns and other members provide feedback about their perceptions of these experiences. Group counselling can be conducted for remedial, developmental and preventive purposes.

Group counseling simply defined, is an interpersonal interaction among individual with similar concerns in the presence of a facilitator who provides a suitable atmosphere for these individuals to explore with each other their feelings and attitudes about themselves or situations. In group counseling normal children talk about the problems that bother them and try to help each other learn to behave increasingly more effectively (Ohlsen, 1964). The inter-personal interaction that goes on in the group enables the clients to learn to help others as well as obtain help for themselves.

Gazda (1978) defines group counselling as a dynamic and interpersonal process focusing on conscious though and behaviour and involving the therapy functions of permissiveness,
6 - downloaded for free as an Open Educational Resource at www.nouonline.net

orientation to reality, catharsis and mutual trust, caring, understanding and support. The therapy functions are created and nurtured in a small group through the sharing of personal concerns with both one's peers and the counsellor(s). Group counsellees are basically normal individual with various concerns which are not debilitating to the extent that requires extensive personality change. The group counselee may utilise the group interaction to increase understanding and acceptance of values and goals and to learn and/or unlearn certain attitudes and behaviours. He emphasised that group counseling is problem-centred and feeling-oriented. Reflection and clarification of feelings and modification of attitudes are its cardinal points. Here major effort is centred on helping members deal with their problems and experiences, and the emphasis is on growth and adjustment rather than on cure of deficit behaviour.

3.3 Characteristics of Group Counsellor

He goes to enumerate the characteristics of group counselling as follows:-

- All members focus on a common problem they wish to discuss.
- All members identify with this common element.
- A counsellor functions as a leader and must function from within the group.
- A permissive, safe atmosphere is provided that favours free expression.
- Interaction and natural helping among members are essential.
- Effective counselling stimulates participant by group standard to accomplish the generally accepted goal of individual counselling.
- Members find the group to be rewarding.

Some other characteristics of groups generally include:

a. **Individuals affect groups:** Since groups are made up of individuals, the personalities of such individuals would obviously affect the outlook of the group. A small committee that has an aggressive member may not be the same as it would have been without him. Also, some other individuals may bring into their group unique talents, abilities and interests which could affect the functioning of the group positively. People join groups for the satisfaction of some of their needs.

b. **Groups develop structure:** Groups develop their notions about how their activities should be conducted; who should be responsible for what. In momentary groups, members tend to enjoy the status they have brought with them from outside while in continuing groups members become differentiated by the amount of power and influence they exert upon the group. Such influence however is flexible rather than rigid as the members, over a period of time, become aware of these differences and could then estimate who has high prestige in the group. Because each individual brings varied talents into the group, the tendency to fulfill those specialised roles and functions they can perform most efficiently. The group gains in efficiency because of division of labour. When a task is performed by a member it does not have to be repeated by another and when one member says approximately what another intended to say the other member need not repeat it, hence, the group also gains from a process of role sharing.

c. **Groups develop standard:** The development of standard norms or codes of acceptable behaviour forms part of the characteristics of groups and all members tend not to violate the norms in group situations. Also group pressures enforce conformity upon members. Members may choose not to deviate from the norms because it gives them solidarity with the group.

According to Sherif (1952) "Every group, small or large, with the same degree of group and 'out-group' delineation has an organisation defining the roles of individual members and requires certain conformity in action and aspiration from the individual who belongs".

d. **Groups vary in cohesiveness and other qualities:** Groups are different in the extent to which they exhibit certain vital qualities at a particular time. Among the most important qualities is cohesiveness which is a function of group sticks together that will determine the extent to which members would resist giving up membership. For example, a primary group such as the family would likely be more cohesive than others. Also a conformity group would be more cohesive than a momentary group.

e. Attractiveness of a group would depend upon such properties of the group as its goals, programme, size of organisation and position in the community and upon the degree of the individual member's needs for affiliation, recognition, security and other things that can be discussed in the group.

f. **Groups establish their own goals:** Groups are formed as instrument of satisfying members' need and each group always has goals. The group would probably remain healthy to the extent that individual members feel they can embrace the group's goals in relation to their individual needs.

The group strives towards a group outcome of high quality arrived at efficiently. In public discussion for example, the outcome could mean a recommended decision for consideration by the audience to consider the recommendation.

The group also seeks to win the individual's commitment to the outcome and the individual's satisfaction with the understanding achieved. In problem-solving discussion, commitment means individual's willingness to defend and to carry out decisions in continuing group, the group may seek to maintain itself as a group by promoting harmonies, interrelationship that would be lasting and to prevent the dissolution of the group.

3.4 Desirable Qualities of Group Members

Objectivity. Each member of the counselling group should be objective and open-minded toward the problem for discussion and should be ready to display objectivity and good will towards others in the group. Ideas should be considered solely based on their merit and not the emotional involvements and attitudes of the members toward the person(s) who advance them.

Enthusiasm. The members should be enthusiastic in their collective search for understanding and for acceptable decision. Lively interaction stimulates the kind of creative thinking essential to high quality productivity. Where members appear dull, bored and indifferent, progress may be stifled.

Sensitivity to Interpersonal Relations. Each member should view others as fellow human beings whose opinion should be respected. Each member has to be tactful because there may be good reasons for disagreement but others should not be put on the defensive unnecessarily. This would involve the evaluation of a member's idea without attacking him as a person for having expressed it. It involves courtesy. Rude interruption should be avoided while others are talking and roles allotted to others should not be usurped. Each member should also show sensitivity to threat.

3.5 Some Avenues for Group Guidance and Counselling

- Morning Assembly: since all students are expected to be involved during morning assembly, the counsellor with the principal's permission may use a few minutes once a week for group guidance. Topics like the school rules and regulations, the problem of Aids, Drug abuse, cleanliness e.t.c could be discussed.

- Career Week or Day: could be organised for the students.

- Conferences could also be organised in such a way that the participants would benefit from the topic of discussion.

- Excursion Programme: whereby student group can visit industries higher institutions, technical workshops etc to see what is happening in the world of work.

- Regular Academic Classroom Environment can be used by the school counsellor to discuss certain topics of interest with the students.

- School houses or hall of residence can be used for group   counselling whose Audio Visual materials like film could be show to the group members.

3.6 Advantage of Group Guidance and Counselling

There are so many advantages which can be derived from the counsellor's use of groups in guidance and counselling, some of these are:

1. Group counselling saves time and money. It is far more economical than individual counseling.

2. It provides the client the opportunity to understand himself and also understand others.

3. The clients are given room to develop position natural relationship with one another.

4. Group counselling offers the participants the opportunity of testing reality and gaining insight into their feelings and feedback from others.

5. Group counselling creates the avenue for the members to re-valuate their thoughts and behaviour patterns.

6. Group members receive comfort from other member who have similar problems as their own.

7. In the process of group counselling, the clients not only receive help from others but they themselves are a source of help as they show an understanding of their problems and accept one another in spite of these problems.

8. Group counselling can also arouse the client's interest in guidance and counseling and motivate him to seek for individual counseling.

3.7 Disadvantages of Group Guidance and Counselling

- Some members who are extroverts may dominate the whole discussion while the introverts keep quiet and withdraw more into their shells.

- Disagreement may arise within the group; thus disrupting the whole group process.

- Some members of the group may find it difficult to open up their secrets among many people.

- Intense problems of the individuals may not be well addressed in the group.

- The counselor may not be able to attend to all the group members effectively.

Adequate number of professional counselors are trained and posted to schools.

The myopic conceptualisation and gross misunderstanding of guidance and counseling are cleared.

The impact of inefficient guidance services will be on the quality of our school products and implicitly on the entire nation.

3.8 Nature of Relationship

There is no agreement about the nature of group counselling relationship. In developing the relationship, the counsellor is responsible for getting the group organised. He starts by discussing the role of the counsellor and explains how the group should function if maximum benefits are to be achieved. He states that each member as well as striving to solve their own individual problems. Members are encouraged to share freely and try out new ideas.

The time of, place of meeting and the issue of confidentiality are usually addressed. Counsellors often have members draw up mutually devised rules and guidelines. This participation has been observed to be helpful in establishing a working climate. By words or action, the counsellor must help group members accept responsibility by developing and maintaining a therapeutic climate. Members should develop skills in deep listening, the helping another talk, discussing problem and concerns, expressing feelings, confronting (i.e pointing out when what is said doesn't seem right) and planning (i.e proposing to do something).

3.9 Getting Discussion Started

Usually, the counsellor gives the lead. He can employ the technique of going round the ground and encouraging members to say why they are in it, what they hope to accomplish in the session or how they react to a particular matter. The counselor tries to help members learn to interact with one another.

3.10 Maintaining the Relationship

The group members determine the topics and the pace at which discussions progress. Group members usually venture into personal problems and return to a central theme. Sharing of personal concerns often builds up. Gradually, members learn to be themselves, to discuss their concerns, and to identify their real feelings. By trusting, accepting and trying to understand each other they provide the mutual encouragement needed to struggle with problems and to try to change. As this becomes evident, members become more ego-involved and participate more meaningfully increasingly group members learn to play the

counsellor's role and if encouraged developed interpersonal skills and create feelings of mutual respect.

3.11 The Counsellor's Responsibility

The counsellor's skill and confidence are the keys to successful group counseling. Experience from individual counselling often provides a foundation for working with group. Here also, counselors convey feelings of acceptance, warmth, and understanding. They can be aware of their own needs and limitations and try not to allow them interfere with the counselling situations. As the group proceeds, they give full attention to the members and their interaction, allowing them to express themselves. Counsellors seek to communicate confidence in each member's ability to solve his or her problems. As counsellors, they define the working relationship, display consistency, and an example in accepting and helping others. Unique to group counselling are the cross-currents that develop among members. The counsellor must handle them objectively, being sensitive to their purpose and usefulness. The way counselors demonstrate their skills has considerable effect on how the group functions.

As in individual counselling, the counsellor can capture and reflect the feelings of clients, help them tell their story, and set the stage for desirable learning experiences. Their task is more complicated because they must be aware of group interaction and convey feelings of acceptance and understanding to members. It has been suggested that counselors can build relationships in group counseling when their clients come to feel that counsellors care about them, seem to understand them, believe they can be helped, and are experts in helping people help themselves.

3.12 Responsibility of Group Members

By choosing to be in a group, members agree to share the challenge of helping to build a relationship. Through interaction each member helps to create and maintain a psychological climate that is conductive to sharing experiences and solving problems. This is difficult to develop but it can be done if the counsellor's actions and attitudes set a good example. Each member has the responsibility to listen and help others express themselves. They also encourage others to define their thoughts and goals and to think coherently. It is important to develop member to interact and depend less on counsellors. Commitment to change is enhanced by helping members discover affiliation with others who work to make similar changes. Members of any group enact different roles at different times during group sessions.

3.13 Factors that Determine Success in Group Counselling

In presenting children's group counselling as an efficacious therapeutic strategy, it is essential to review the factors that influence success in counselling groups. Two significant influences determine the life of a group. These are identified as "disruptive forces form without and disorganising forces from within". Of these two, disorganising forces from within constitutes the most significant threat in a school guidance programme in general and group counselling in particular since it is contingent upon the counselor's organisational leadership abilities. In recognition of such potential dangers, Counselling psychologists have identified vital constitutional factors that must be considered before group counselling is introduced to the school setting. These factors include: Mutuality of problems, compatibility of group members, group size, age range, sex composition, length and qualification of the group leader. (Yunker, 1970).

3.13.1 Similarity of Problems

There is presently no argument among scholars on the nature of a group as regards the homogeneity or heterogeneity of problems. Some scholars recommend that counselling groups be composed of individuals who are confronting mutual problems. The argument lies in the fact that one wrongly placed member in a group can lead to the failure of the counselling objectives of that group. Is unnecessary for members to share the same diagnosis even though they may share common problems. The trend among scholars in recent times is for a group to share mixture of wisely balanced members. For instance groups should be mixed in a way that some of the group members may have a motivating behaviour of some group members being copied by others. Specifically an optimal group arrangement calls for several quiet children and not more than two who are aggressive.

3.13.2 Compatibility of Members

This issue centres on whether counselling groups should include well adjusted" participants among the participants that are experiencing adjustment problems in the school. Scholars have often in inclusion of one or two participants that are "normal". The argument is that well-adjusted children are similar to those of the unadjusted children. Students that are considered "near happy" benefit from group counselling by helping themselves as well as helping others. Yunker (1970) suggests that more adjusted members in a counselling group tend to supply order to the group environment and usually provide the mode reinforcement desperately needed by participants lacking social competence.

A thorough review of literature by this write reveals that counselling psychologists involved in selecting members for group counseling should exercise restraint and hold an intake interview for desiring members of a group and supplement the information got with interview with teachers, parents and the clients cumulative records prior to making his final selection of group participants.

3.13.3 Group Size

Inappropriate size of a counselling group may ruin the outcome of group counseling. Too few or too many mar the venture before it actually takes off. Number of participants in group counselling varies according to members age, maturity levels and designated group tasks. Groups of about 5 to 10 may be adequately managed among secondary school groups, while 4 to 6 may be considered ideal for the primary school children. Berelson and Steiner reported that "the larger the group becomes... the more impersonal it tends to become, the more formalised, the less intimate, the less satisfying to the members". On the other hand small "groups of two tends to be characterised by tension; small groups often get there by power struggle". The counsellors should appreciate the significance of group size in the outcome of group counselling.

Self-Assessment Exercise
What are the characteristics of group counselling?

4.0 Conclusion

The success of a group guidance activity depends largely on the counsellor's competence in selecting and placing clients to appropriate groups where therapeutic effect can be maximised. A common need of group counseling is acceptance. The client, particularly the

underachievers need help in accepting their ability before they actually improve their performance. For group counseling to be effective with certain classes of clients, it demands that a therapeutic climate be established in the homes as well as the school.

5.0 Summary

Group counseling builds on fundamental ways by which people respond to one another and modify another's behaviour group counselling appears to develop members' insight into their problems and feelings and helps them to arrive at some understanding of the causes of their concerns. As members talk about themselves and the things that disturb them, they learn what they can do to improve themselves. Members learn to express themselves in action, feelings and attitudes. They learn that they can interact and discuss with one another and that the group will help each person draw out his or her feelings. Alternative ways of behaving and experimenting with different responses better in a group of peers than in individual counselling relationships. Through group counselling, adolescent need for conformity and acceptance by their peer group are met. Also, they have the opportunity to share reactions and ideas, define meaningful life situation and have the feeling of independence. Their trust on their peer group facilitates interactions and yields better results than in individual counselling.

Participation in group counselling facilitates the development of mutual interaction in realistic life-style situation. Members are able to learn new more flexible, satisfying ways of relating to one another.

Members of a counselling group may accept ideas and suggestions proposed by their peers that they might reject if proposed by others. Reinforcement provided by members often makes decision more to be viewed as commitment rather than acquiescence to an authority figure.

Group counselling also saves time and money.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

Discuss characteristics of group counselors

7.0 References/Further Reading

Achebe, C. C. (1988). "Person-centred Theory of Carl Rogers". In Achebe (ed). *Theories of Individual Counselling: Relevance to the Nigerian Situation.* Five College Block Studies Press, Amberst Massachusetts.

Denga, D. I. (1982). *Educational and Vocational Guidance in Nigeria*

Secondary School. Jos: Savanna Press Ltd.

Denga, D.I. (1983). *The Counsellor in a Developing Nation: Problems and Prospects*. Trinity Press and Publishing Co. Calabar, Nigeria.

Ipaye, T. (1983). *Guidance and Counselling Practices*. Ile-ife, Nigeria: University of Ife Press.

Zimpfer, D. G. (1987). *Group Work in the Helping Professions: A Bibliography Muncie in Accelerated Development.*

Shaffer, J & Galinsky M. D. (1989). *Models of Group Therapy*. Englewood Cliffs N. J.: Prentice-Hall.

Unit 2 Other Types of Group

1.0 Introduction

Essentially, man is a social animal. Almost all human experience involves interaction with other persons. Group processes are being utilised in many forms in diverse settings by many individuals and there is no age barrier regarding the valuable influence group work has on the character development of individuals. Much of an individual's character is developed through social interaction, peer relations as well as the family influence. Within the group counselling context, the individual learns to appreciate and understand his behaviours by observing and comparing with others as well as identifying with them. The group process also, provides the individual with alternative behaviours. In contemporary human society, group relationship seems to be an indispensable attribute particularly in the area of transmitting social heritage and its ability to leave substantial imprints upon an individual as well as shaping his personality. Today, counselling are expected to be competent in both individual counselling as well as group work. It is against this background that this chapter addresses the introductory elements in group counselling.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
* define group
* describe group process
* define t-group
* describe closed or continuous group
* describe growth groups.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Group

The word group has been defined in many ways. However there are three types of relations frequently denoted by the term "group". The first and the least important dentition of groups to the counsellor is the aggregation or collection of objects (or persons) in close proximity but without any interplay among them. A second definition also refers to aggregate only that they are homogenous in some respect that would enable them to constitute classes. For example, those who earn say about N80,000 per annum may be said to constitute an economic class. In this case also, there is no interaction among members.

A third definition of group is that in which members have psychological relationship with one another. It is in this sense that the word is to be used throughout this chapter. A collection of individuals therefore becomes a group when:

1) There is a dynamic interaction between and among members
2) Members share common goals,
3) Members belong on their own consent or volition.

4) Members possess capacity for self-direction. In counseling, a group consists of two or more persons who on their own volition have contact, proximity, and interaction that is intended to produce change in each member.

3.2 Group Dynamics

This is another word in group work whose meaning is imprecise. It is a term which refers to the interacting forces within groups as they organise and operate to achieve their objectives. Often it includes group process and group roles. It refers to a sort of political ideology concerning the ways a group should be organised and managed. A number of techniques have been developed that facilitate group control and group problem solving. One of such techniques is the utilisation of an observer whose role is to keep a running account of the group meeting, in an effort to discover why things go well or otherwise. Other techniques include role-playing, buzz sessions feed-back of group process and group decision. The term is also used to refer to a field of inquiry dedicated to achieving knowledge about the nature of groups, the laws of their development, and their interrelation with individuals, other groups, and larger institutions.

3.3 Group Process

The term "process" is described by such words as "movement", "change", "action", "development", and "behaviour" depending upon the point of view of an individual. Process is continuous, dynamic and directional. These descriptive terms may be brought together in a sentence to define a process as: A continuous, dynamic, directional life movement of an individual within his phenomenal field. This movement includes everything that takes place inside the individual, as well as his relationship with the external environment. It is what he thinks and the conscious data that registers in his viscera. It is what outsiders hear him saying or observe him doing together with all that they construe within such action. It is everything that he does, thinks, or feels. It is everything that others see him do, believe he feels, or infer he thinks.

Group process is when two or more people work together on anything for any purpose, by any method of study, inquiry, or human relations. This might sound too general. In counselling, group process is the way people work together to release an emergent quality called psychological climate, group morale, "esprit de corps", or cooperative unity, through which each discovers and develops his inner capacities, realises better the nature of its self, releases more of his past experience, and learns how to crate emergent quality in all life situations (Mahler 1971, Kirby 1977).

In group process, individuals release into the environment potential creative ability previously unknown to them. A higher level of thinking emerges than was possessed by any individual prior to the qualitative interaction, thereby giving each the opportunity to become a better self.

3.4 Therapy Groups

Therapy groups are excellent examples of groups in which the focus of attention is the psyche group process. In the immediate face to face relationships in the therapy group, the psyche group process becomes the central concern because here, support and stimulation do not further a visualised task, but rather serves to create the freedom of expression which, in turn, fosters spontaneity of interaction and reminiscence. These become the date

of analysis and interpretation with which the therapist works. It is interesting to note that the content of discussion is most likely to be concerned with past or contemporary psyche group associations, family relation, sibling rivalry, authority struggles in the therapy group for which their daily life has not been able to deal with, without occasioning incapacitating anxiety. The therapist is the person in whom these processes do not occasion the same degree of anxiety and who in his understanding of his own anxieties can help the counsellee understand his.

These therapy groups never have goals in the socio-group sense. Group therapy is usually defined as the application of therapeutic principles to two or more individuals simultaneously to clarify their psychological conflicts so that they may live normally. It is usually reserved for the more seriously disturbed individuals.

According to Coney and Coney, (1977) many people participate in group therapy to try to alleviate specific symptoms or problems such as depression, sexual problem, anxiety and psychosomatic disorders. Group therapy is also given to young married couples, delinquents, executives, and troubled families. Some of the techniques used include: play-back to help members see what, how and why certain behaviours occurred in the interaction, saturation services, physical movement, etc.

3.5 Classification of Groups

Groups have been classified in numerous ways, size, nature of interaction, goals or purposes, and organisations have been used as variables in categorizing them. A common basis of differentiation has been the main function served by the group: educational, religious, recreational, political, etc. the degree of permanence is another basis for categorising groups. Groups range from the very temporary to the highly stable. Some of the classifications that are of consequence to the counsellor include:

1) Primary versus Secondary Groups

- Primary Groups are those in which members meet face to face for companionship, mutual aid, and the resolution of issues that confront them. Groups are: the family, the play group, the partnership and the study group. Groups such as these are called primary because they are first in time and importance.
- The characteristics of primary groups are (a) small size (b) similarity of member's background (c) limited self-interest and (d) intensity of shared interest.
- Secondary groups are those in which the members are not as intimate as that of the primary group. Here also, contact is more or less casual. Examples include: committees and lecture groups.

2) In-group versus Out-group

- To the individual, the group to which he/she identifies by virtue of his/her awareness or consciousness of kind is his/her in-group. Examples are ones family, club, set, occupation and religion, Shertzer and Stone (1981) suggest that an individual's expression of subjective attitudes frequently reveal his/her in-group membership.
- Out-group is defined by the individual with relation to the in-group usually by the expression of contrast between "we" and "they" or "others". Out-group attitudes are characterised by expressions of difference and sometimes by varied degrees of antagonism, prejudice, hatred or apathy.

3) Socio versus Psyche Groups

The establishment of goals is the essential characteristics of the socio-group. Members in this group are often voluntary, but there may be those for whom membership is not by personal inclination but derives from serving as representative of some organisations. The purpose of socio group is to reach some defined goals expressed by the group. Membership in this group is more heterogeneous in respect to age, status and vocation. Examples are action groups, government groups and industrial groups.

In the psyche group there is no visualised goal. The structure is informal; there are few rules and regulations. Membership here is voluntary. The group's purpose is to satisfy the emotional needs of its members and this hardly made explicit. This group has a high degree of homogeneity. Examples of this group are informal play groups, gangs and therapy group cliques.

It has to be pointed out that the socio and psyche groups do not present a true dichotomy, but rather separate ends of a continuum of group process. They rarely exist in pure forms, for most groups, are a mixture of these two forms. To be on the safe side therefore, we think of the socio-group process and the psyche group process. However, we bear in mind that the psyche group is typified by the boy's gang or the pre-adolescent girls' clique. It is at these groups that important issues of child development with respect to peer-group status, social skills and personal security are worked out.

And the socio group on the other hand may be illustrated by the committee which seeks to deal with the problems of juvenile delinquency in a community.

But in many situations, in the family, recreational groups, or under informal conditions, w see the psyche process at work. In the same way socio group elements are not limited to adult activities. Teenagers may also exhibits skills in community work or objectives.

4. The T-Group

In this group, which is often unstructured, members learn from their behaviours. The stress is on interpersonal relations and behaviour patterns. Group members learn to recognise the effect they have on others and how others see them. They probe the strength and weaknesses of each other's personalities in an unstructured atmosphere.

Frequently-groups are task oriented, resolving organization problems. Their objective is to learn by use of group process rather than facilitating personal growth. According to Colembiewski and Blumbeig, (1977), the T-group as a learning laboratory, focuses on learning how to learn, and places emphasis on immediate ideas, feelings and reactions. It is usually composed often to twelve members.

5. Personal Growth Groups

This is the group in which personal growth is facilitated. Many other names such as encounter group, sensitivity group, human awareness group, human potential group have been used to identify this group. Membership here is usually between eight and twelve. The focus is on members' interaction within the group with attention to its implication for behaviour outside the group. The goals of such groups include facilitating personal growth, increased sensitivity to the feelings of the individual and others. Personal growth groups are

usually led by facilitators who are sometimes trained psychotherapist and others are led by individuals who lack professional counselling or clinical preparations.

6. Family Group Consultation

Under this group, three or four families made up of about twenty individuals meet together weekly with three or four counsellors. The typical procedure employed is that, during the first hour, all family members are together with all counsellor in one large group. During the second hour adult family members and children meet with one or more counsellors assigned to each of the two groups.

Some of the principles on which the family group consultation is based according to Fullmer (1978) include:

1) That the individual's personality is formed within the family's social system
2) Behaviour or knowledge (as well as gaps or void in behaviour) are perpetuated on a generation basis because of the family social system
3) Each family develop unique characteristics, including beliefs, personal meanings and restricted codes, and
4) The character of a child is formed in the family group by the reinforcement schedules created and maintained by parents, siblings and significant others. He stated that counsellors assess the involvement of each individual in the family group, learn the patterns of interpersonal loyalties, alliances, and contrasts used in the family, joint up inconsistencies and discrepancies, so that clarification by each family member is possible and teach person how to assess their input, the input of others and to analyse accurately the relative meaning for each person involved.

7. Conjoint Family Therapy

This was formulated and practiced by Satir, (1967). The theory and techniques are based on the assumption that successful intervention with individuals is contingent on understanding their role and position within the family. The individual who seeks help is referred to as "identified patient" because according to Satir, he or she is the one most affected by the troubled family unit individual behaviour occurs within a family context consisting of interacting roles, rules and values. In this approach the focus is on developing family members' ability to send and receive clear, functional communications.

8. Marathon Groups

This is the group that meets in continuous session longer than the usual one or two hours. During such saturation sessions often lasting fifteen to twenty hours or more, members explore thoroughly their view about themselves and others, their relationship with others, their aspirations and goals, and other ways of reacting to threat, disagreement and prejudiced. By confronting and challenging social pretentions, yet accepting each other, members strive to open, authentic, self-responsible behaviour.

9. Closed or Continuous Group

The group may operate as closed or continuous groups. The closed group is made up of only those who were present when the group started. No one else joins. This is the most common. The continuous group allows others to join at almost any stage. This open policy often creates problems of communication, acceptance etc among group members.

10. Task Group

These are groups which can also be referred to as task force, planning committee, etc. the membership could be voluntary or selected according to the expertise needed for the task to be performed. They are usually given a time limit to complete their assignment. The size of the group varies from between 5 to 16. Attention of the members is concentrated on their common task rather than on their individual personal problems.

11. Training Groups

They are also called T-group and they are basically formed to improve the quality of the individual relationship and skill of interaction to achieve the right behavioral adjustment. The members are self-directed to learn in the group skill and their attention is usually focused on self-disclosure and feedback. Membership may be between 8 and 12.

12. Psyche Groups

These groups are usually set up to satisfy the emotional needs of their members. They tend to have informal structure with just few rules and regulations. Membership is usually voluntary and homogenous (members of the same group) and their purpose is rarely made explicit (Oladele, 1991).

13. Case centred Groups

These are groups which have similar case list and they are formed to find solution to their common problems. The counsellor is usually the group leader and the membership ranges from 5 to 12.

14. Psychodrama Groups

These groups make use of play modeling and imitation in shaping their behavioural pattern. Membership could be voluntary and some selected.

The number of members depends on the problem at hand.

3.6 Determining the Size of the Group

From the review of literature, it is obvious that the number of members expected to be in a group is not fixed. The number ranges from 4 to 10. Yalom (1975) puts the number to be between 5 and 10. Hansen, Warner and Smith (1980) state that the ideal number for children should be between 4 and 6, Corey (1985) states that the ideal number should be between 3 and 4 for children and 3 and 8 for adult groups. This writer feels that these numbers are too small in our school system for obvious reasons.

The Federal Government has stated that the ratio of counsellors to students should be 2:500 (Onanuga, 1990). As of now, most state schools do not have guidance counselors and in some schools where the population of the students is about two thousand, there is only one guidance counsellor. It is therefore, obvious that while we are working towards this goal of ratio of 2 counselors 500 students, the number in a group counselling must be more than 10 (if guidance services are to be provided for all students). The number for group counselling can range from 15 to 20 in the secondary schools while it can range from 8to 12 in the primary schools. The number for guidance group can range from 20 to 50 in secondary schools and from 12 to 30 in primary schools. Lots of research works are needed
20 - downloaded for free as an Open Educational Resource at <u>www.nouonline.net</u>

to confirm the appropriateness of these numbers. Another reason why the number should be large may be the high rate of attrition in such groups. If this occurs in a group, the group might not exist to achieve its goals.

The research works reviewed on group counselling with the mentally retarded revealed that the number in a group counselling ranges between 5 and 10. This writer feels that 7 to 9 members in a group should be ideal as this will prevent the development of sub-groups and afford the group enough member to share experiences and make meaningful suggestions.

Self-Assessment Exercise
Describe T-Group, closed group and growth groups.

4.0 Conclusion

Grouping clients for the purpose of counselling can be effective only when certain classes of clients are put into consideration. It demands that a therapeutic climate be established in the homes as well as the schools. Ohlsen and Gazda (1965) concluded that for group counselling to yield the best result both pupil counsellor and members of the group must understand what will be expected in the group and accept the conditions.

5.0 Summary

The grouping technique is use to provide members an opportunity to talk about their problems. It enables group members to gain a better perspective of themselves and others. Principles governing other human behaviour should be observed. The counsellor should explain how it works before it is use. Group should be terminated when the majority decide to stop or when the situation and concerns that the group wishes to examine are exhausted.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

Define and describe 3 other groups in guidance and counselling.

7.0 References/Further Reading

Akinboye, J.O. (1987). *Guidance and Counselling Strategies*. Ibadan: University Press Ltd.

Ubah, A. (1990). *Counselling Hints.* Ibadan: Claverianum Press.

Ayoka, M.O. & Ubangha, M.B. (1996). *Introduction to Guidance and Counselling.* Ibadan: KSP & Depet Publishers.

Unit 3 Group Leadership & Cross Cultural Counselling

1.0 Introduction

Leaders bring to every group their personal qualities, values and life experiences. In order to promote growth in the members live, leaders need to live growth themselves. In order to foster honest self-investigation in others, leaders need to have the courage to engage in self-appraisal of themselves.

You may wonder whether you have what it takes to be an effective leader; my advice is to be patient with yourself and not to demand that you immediately become the "perfect group leader". Before you lead your first group, you will no doubt be anxious about getting the group stated and about keeping it moving. In other words you will probably be asking yourself questions like these with a certain degree of trepidation.

Question like do I know enough to lead a group yet? Will I be able to get the group started? Will the group members want to come back? e.t.c. In supervising and training beginning leaders, I encourage them to recognise that these doubts and concerns are perfectly normal and that moderate anxiety can be beneficial, because it can lead to honest self-appraisal.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
* discuss 3 qualities of a group leader
* explain the group leader's functions
* describe leadership styles
* discuss cross-cultural counseling.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Some Qualities of a Group Leader

These are attribute and abilities in performing his function:

a. **Knowledge of group process**. The leader should know about the intrigues involved in interaction, the influence of communication, strutting power relationship, objective about the size, discussion attitudes:

i.   discussion pattern and how to use them.
ii. possible group objectives.
iii. his own roles and functions with the group.

b. **Knowledge of the problem.** The leader should have a thorough understanding of the problem being discussed by the group. He should know more than the participants. Without adequate knowledge of the problem and insight into its implication, the leader cannot guide discussion on it because he would not be able to recognise when a point has been fully covered, when the group has contributed the sufficient information on which to base a decision or when it is appropriate to move from one stage to another.

c. **Ability to think fast.** The leader must be mentally alert when participants are discussing a point. He should be able to engage in two processes at the same time. That is, to follow closely what is being said and to think ahead of the group anticipating what question he should ask next to keep the discussions going. He should be able to clarify confusing contributions or tangled involvements. To restate what others have said or to summaries requires quick thinking ability.

d. **Respect of others.** A good leader should have respect for other people as human beings and for their ideas. Even though not all ideas put forward by members of the group are equally meritorious, all should be given due respect. To respect others means more than to like them or to tolerate them but to respect them and their feelings. He should be curious about the reasons behind what others say when he is disagreement with such views.

e. **Sensitivity.** The ability to respond sensitivity to others is one of the major leadership qualities. He has to be sensitive to the way things are going within the group and the feelings of the members. For example, he should recognise when some members are not happy about a particular view or when the members have reached a consensus. He must study the members constantly to read the signs on their faces and posture and promptly react to their expressed and unexpressed feelings and attitudes.

f. **Language and speech skills**. The group leader should be able to use language accurately and effectively. He should also recognise when words used by others need to be clarified and clearly define terms that may otherwise be misleading. The pitch of his voice should that enable him to be heard and understood easily, to express complete ideas clearly, objectively and swiftly.

g. **Ability to listen. A good leader should be a listener.** This goes beyond mere hearing or giving of undivided attention to the speaker. It connotes being actively absorbed in what others say and gaining clear insight into what it means and may be why it was expressed in one way rather than in another. A leader that is a good listener encourages further comments because of the way the received and accepted earlier ones and is able to incorporate such ideas into later questions and summaries.

h. **Ability to be fair to all.** The group leader should be impartial to all the members of the group. For example, if a sharp conflict occurs within the group, the leader should work towards restoring harmony immediately and he must not take sides even by subtle overtones in his voice or a facial grimace, which could suggest where his sympathy lies. This requires conscious efforts because it is easy to betray inner feelings by reflect signs which the person may not even be aware of.

i. **Self-control.** It is important for the group to have self-control since his patience and forbearance are often tried. He should not lose his temper even in the face of provocation.

J. **He should be persistent and firm.** A group leader should not give up easily. He should encourage the group to work hard to achieve their set goals.

At the same time he should possess a good sense of humour because this can bring about the required calm and ease after going through a storm of conflict.

3.2 Group Leader's Functions

Many duties are expected to be performed by the group leader and these include:-

1. **Planning.** There may be any meaningful enduring group success without planning. The group leader should make sure that adequate planning is done before the group takes off. For example, the agenda should be well mapped out, taking into consideration the topic for discussion, the complexity of the problem and the time available.

2. **Selection of participants.** Group members could be chosen because of their interest in the problem to be discussed. At times members are made to indicate their willingness to participate in the group activities. Depending on the type of group, there may be need to choose participants form the same group to prevent intra-group differences from rendering the group ineffective.

3. **Drawing up a pattern outline.** An outline of what and what is to be expected should be drawn to guide the group discussion. Copies of such outline could be distributed to all participants in advance. The outline could ne amended where and when necessary as to prevent dogmatism.

4. **Making the resources materials available.** The leader should make sure that members are well informed and exposed to current information regarding the problem at hand. Even experts who work constantly on the general subject read to prepare for maximum contribution to a particular discussion.

5. **Making physical arrangements.** The leader should see to the arrangement of the venue of the group meetings. He should take into consideration the time of the meetings, making sure that there is adequate light and ventilation. Comfortable straight-backed chair with paddle seat would be preferable to the overstuffed, soft loving chair that could induce dizziness. The sitting arrangement should be such that members can look directly at one another without turning their chairs this may explain the popularity of the round table notion. Member's seat can also be arranged in a semi-circular form.

6. **Introduction.** The leader should arrange for the introduction of members and the problem to be discussed. It would be useful for the member to wear name tags or place their name plates before them until names are mastered. When presenting speakers for a symposium or debate, the leader should give each participant a more detailed introduction. While introducing the problem for discussion, enough background information should be given on the topic to make what is to be discussed clear.

7. **Guiding.** This is the most important duty of the group leader. He should guide the group as it moves from the problem stage to the solution and outcome stage. He has to keep the discussion on the track and maintain steadied progress but he must do this in a direct way by encouraging not forcing, by asking for cooperation not manipulation. He should not threaten nor dictate to the group.

8. **Recognizing irrelevancies and rebound.** The leader should quickly recognise when a contribution is leading to an unproductive direction. A fascinating tangent may be difficult to check as the members may get carried away and may not perceive immediately that this tangential material is leading them away from the solution to the bounce back to the right track without injuring sensitivity of the member that made the wrong contribution. He can achieve the desired result without necessarily arousing

resentment or feeling of failure and rejection in the member who has wandered out of bounds.

9. **Clarifying and restating.** The leader should make what is being discussed clear to the members so that there would not be any confusion about where they are and where they are going. An unclear statement should be cleared or restated by the speaker.

1. **Asking the right questions.** Part of the function of the leader is to ask the right question at the right time. To get a clear answer, the question should be clear and straight forward. He should avoid asking questions that are too broad.
2. **Regulating the group procedures.** The leader should exercise, at least, minimum level of control over the group to preserve orderliness and prevent chaos. He has to regulate the flow and distribution of communication and the inter-relationship of the participants. Ideally, every member should contribute to the group's decision making process and it is the leader who should strike for balance communicative interaction. He has to be tactful, moderate the over anxious/lower zealous contributors and draw out the reluctant ones. Everyone should feel to participate; when some members become dogmatic and express extreme opinion the leader may find it desirable to make a general statement about the shared goals and objectivity but he should do this cautiously.
3. **Summarising.** The leader should offer transitional summarises and then at the end of each session, he should summarise what has been discussed and the points that have been agreed upon. Such summarisation should be fair and must represent the members' decision without bias. It should be clearly stated to avoid misinterpretation later.
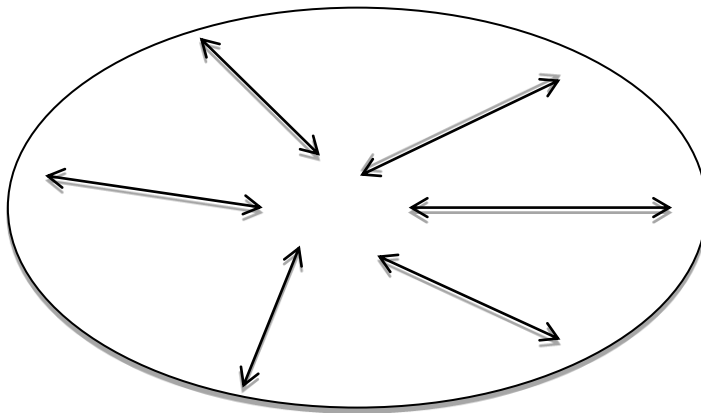
3.3 Leadership Styles

The leader is the most crucial factor for group effectiveness. Kurt (1944), as reported by Yalom (1975), identified three types of leadership styles- Authoritarian, Democratic and Laissez Faire.

i) Authoritarian
- The counselor who adopts this style of leadership believes that the members know next to nothing. They do not possess the capacities to direct their thinking and actions and hence they have problems. He therefore, believes that if he directs them, gives them expert advice they will be able to develop appropriate ways of dealing with their problems and consequently change their behaviour. The teacher/counselors may also adopt this style since he's more likely to equate group counseling session to a teaching situation than to a counseling session.
- The communication pattern of this leadership style is illustrated below. There is no interaction among members rather it is between the leader and each member. Although serious work is done by members, no in depth explorations of members' problems are undertaken.

Fig. 1: *Authoritarian Style*

ii) *Democratic*

Unlike the authoritarian leadership style which is a psycho-analytic model, the democratic leadership style is a humanistic or phenomenological model. The principle underlying this leadership style is that the group members have the abilities to think out solutions to their problems. He provides the facilitative atmosphere by involving all of them in exploration. They are given the opportunity to ask question for clarification, support one another, give feedback to one another. The communication pattern is illustrated below Fig. 2. This type of communication pattern [provides opportunity for members to develop strong interpersonal band with other members of the group. This leadership style recognises the dignity of the individual. Once any individual is made aware that he is capable of performing any task well, he works hard to ensure that he actually achieve things for himself.
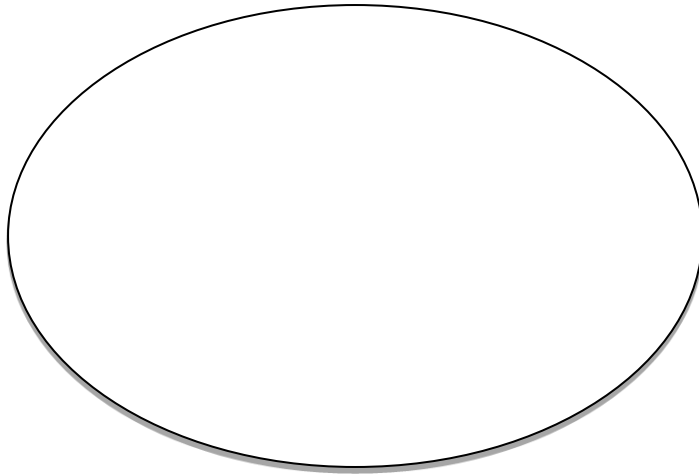
Fig. 2: *Democratic Style*
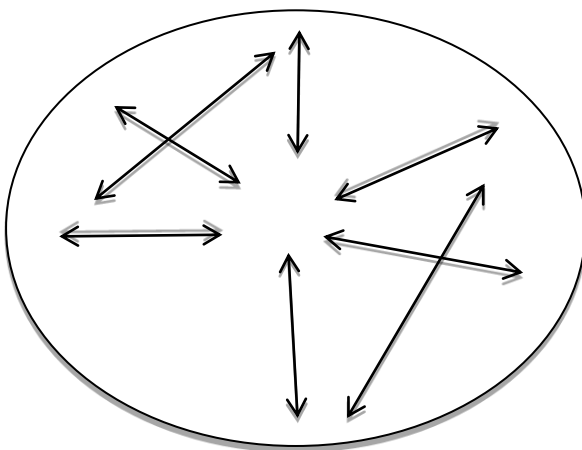
Laissez-Faire
Fig. 3: *Laissez-Faire Style*

The leader of this group sees himself as one of the group members and so does not feel he has any obligation in directing the group. The members do not deal with any real problem since they are not guided. The communication pattern is illustrated below.

The members of this group may not see the need to work hard to achieve anything since they do not have any stated objectives they are working towards.

3.4 Cross-Cultural Counselling

Nigeria is a developing nation faced with many challenges which have led to many cultural and social changes. There is a conspicuous value change among Nigerian citizens of all tribes. This has led further to high aspiration, ambition and subsequently competition among individuals and communities in all aspects of life.

In practice, the Nigerian Guidance Counsellors are beset with cultural, economic, educational, administrative and social problems, some of which are peculiar to developing nations. Inter-cultural counselling is considered to be an outstanding issue because a diversity of tribes that make up the nation is a major problem facing the current practice of guidance and counselling in Nigeria. Intercultural counselling involves a counsellor who is from a different cultural set-up being posted to work in a different cultural environment e.g an Igbo counsellor posted to work at Sokoto or Maiduguri which is dominated mainly by the Fulani and Kanuri. Both tribes, though in Nigeria have different cultural backgrounds. This means that their values, needs, abilities, interests e.t.c differ to some degree.

For effective counselling relationship, the knowledge of people's cultures, that is, their values, principles of life and how they view problem solving, together with the knowledge of their language are all necessary. To practise inter-cultural counselling in Nigeria will be faced with many problems such as communication barrier between a counselor and a client. This means that counselling will require an interpreter leading to loss of confidentiality and privacy. Again, differences lead to lack of understanding and appreciation of the other tribe's cultural values a possible hindrance to inter-cultural counseling.

Since some tribes are backward academically. It will equally affect counsellor's production in such tribes, and this leaves the chances of counsellors from other tribes being posted to or employed in such tribes for effective implementation of the new policy on education.

The demand for social unity will be enhanced through cross-cultural counselling and the academically backward tribe will have the opportunity to explore, discover and learn; also their hopes, dreams and aspirations will be recognised and encouraged.

Cultural Counselling

There are so many tribes in Nigeria. This calls for caution for counsellors if a counsellor must do his/her work successfully. For example, it is a taboo in some culture to disclose what one is passing through to outsiders especially if one is a married woman, the woman must keep it to herself. In a situation like this, the counsellor finds it difficult to penetrate, because the client needs to speak out his/her mind, so that the counsellor can assist.

Some other groups of people have been jilted by a close friend or relative and find it difficult to divulge the secret with anybody. Such people will not cooperate with the counsellor easily because they find it difficult to trust the counsellor.

Young people also find it difficult to conform with their relatives and parents when it comes to issues of marriage; the cultural practice of bringing some items for the engagement may be frowned at. For example list of engagement asking the husband to bring cow, goat, expensive materials, assorted drinks etc can cause a problem especially to a man that has changed his religion. New religion of the would be couple with different in the parent's religion can also cause problem during marriage. Traditions allow elders of the family to be in charge in ceremonies like marriage, funeral, house warming etc, and the ceremonial procedures can cause problem between them and the youth.

All these challenges of self-disclosure, keeping secret, leaking personal information, seeking approval from significant elders in the family concerning matters relating to marriage, religion, choice of profession should be discussed with parents, family members and as well as counsellors in the required field. These situations are of great concern to the young ones. This situation therefore calls for every counsellor to equip himself/herself very well with the custom, culture, tradition of the people so as to be able to function successfully while giving cultural counselling.

The counsellor should be versatile in the use and administration of test; know the norms and interpretation of the tests. The language and method of communication also differs from one culture to the other. What can be regarded as an insult to a Yoruba man like not kneeling down while greeting in the morning, may not really matter to an Ibo man whose children can greet them while standing up. Language and communication varies with each culture in the Nigerian society.

There are many hazards and barriers to effective cross-cultural counselling, but those variables that have been discovered as barriers if well isolated can be overcome. Achebe (1988) suggests that counsellor education programmes in Nigeria should make a conscious effort to include courses on world views of the various groups in Nigeria. She argued that this will prepare a counsellor to work more effectively with a variety of ethnic groups. This will make all Nigerians irrespective of tribe to benefit from the programme and help them cope with pressing socio-personal, vocational and educational concerns.

Self-Assessment Exercise
Explain the functions of a group leader.

4.0 Conclusion

The most effective group direction is found in the kind of life the group members see the leader demonstrating and not in the words they hear the leader saying. I am not implying that group leaders must be self-actualised beings who have successfully worked through all if

their problems. The issue is not whether leaders have personal problems but whether they are willing to make serious attempts to live the way they encourage members to live. More important than being a finished product is the willingness to continually look at oneself to see whether one's life reflects life-giving values. The key to success as a group leader is the commitment to the never-ending struggle to become more effective as a human being.

5.0 Summary

The following personal characteristics are vitally related to effective group leadership since their presence or absence can facilitate or inhibit the group process. Keep these descriptions in and as you evaluate your own characteristic terms of effective group leadership.

i. Having personal power which involves self-confidence and awareness of one's influence on others.
ii. Effective group leaders are aware that they need to exhibit courage in their interactions with group members and that they cannot hide behind their special role as counsellor.
iii. One of the leader's central tasks is to promote self-investigation in their clients.
iv. Leaders must have a sincere interest in the well-being and growth of others.
v. If group leaders are to help others discover who they are, they need to have a clear sense of their own identity.
vi. The leader's deep belief in the value of group process is essential to the success of the group and
vii. The capacity to be spontaneously creative and to approach a group with fresh ideas says a lot about the potential effectiveness of a leader.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What are the qualities of a group leader?
2. What is cross-cultural counselling?

7.0 References/Further Reading

Gerald, C.G. (1990).*Theory and Practice of Group Counselling.* U.S.A: Congress-in-Publication Data.

Kennedy, E. & Charles S. (2001). *On becoming A Counsellor.* India:

Crossroad Publishing Company New York.

Olusakin, A.Y & Ubangha, M.B. (1996*). Introduction to Guidance and*

Counselling. Ibadan: KSP & Depet Publishers.

Pedersen, P. (Ed). (1985). Handbook *of Cross-cultural Counselling and Therapy*. Westport: CT Greenwood Press.

Priddy, J. M. (1987). "Outcome Research on Self-help Groups: A Humanistic Perspective". *Journal for Specialists* in Group Work, 12(1) pp2-9.

Unit 4 Ethical Issues in Counselling

1.0 Introduction

Every well-established profession must have a code of ethics to guide the conduct of its members. What is meant by ethics? According to Schmidt (1965) ethics simply refer to standards of right and wrong; "that part of science and philosophy dealing with moral conduct, duty and judgment"

In dealing with ethical standards in Guidance and Counselling in Nigeria, we shall concern ourselves with those code of ethic meant to guide the moral conduct, duty and judgment of the counsellor in practicing his profession. The standard code of ethics for counsellors in Nigeria was drawn from the ethics of the American Personnel and Guidance Association as was found in Shertser and Stone (1976) and writings of Wrenn 1951 those formulated by Denga (1986) to enlighten us on the ethics required for our practice. The code of ethics in Guidance is in six categories.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
- define ethics
- mention the six categories of guidance ethics
- discuss the general ethical responsibility of a counsellor
- explain the ethics on consulting and private practice.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Ethical Responsibilities in General

- The Counsellor owes ethical responsibilities to his client, the institution in which he works and ultimately to the society. When a counsellor accepts to work in an institution it is implied that in principle he is in agreement with the general policies, where a counsellor discovers that his professional beliefs, principles and ethics are at loggerheads with the policies and goals of the institution, he would need to consider leaving the institution.

- Counsellors are expected to behave ethically in their professional duties (activities) towards themselves, their clients and the public. A counsellor who behaves unethically is expected to correct the misdemeanor immediately so as to retain his status as a counselor. He can use any acceptable, legitimate means to correct the error.

- A counsellor is expected to use legitimate accepted ways to improve himself professionally. He must not seek self-improvement at the expense of his colleagues through damaging their personality or worth.

- Counsellor must be law-abiding to their country and their professions. They should participate fully in the activities of their profession and fulfill their obligations like paying their dues up to date.

- Counsellors must not claim to posses qualifications which are beyond what they have. Any such false claims must be corrected by the claimant.

3.2 Counsellor's Ethical Responsibilities to Clients

The ethical responsibilities under this section have to do with the counsellor-client responsibilities either in individual, or group counselling situation. They are based on the assumption that the counsellor recognises and respects the worth and dignity of his clients and therefore in every aspect of his dealings with them, seeks their welfare and not manipulate or exploit them for his own interest.

1) The counsellor is expected to respect the integrity and promote the welfare of his clients at all times.
2) The counselor is therefore expected to accept every client for counseling.   He should not accept clients for counselling on the bases of race, colour, religion or ethnic origin.
3) Counselling employed in the school system or in institutions employed to render their counselling services for clients have no right to claim remunerations from their clients.
4) Any information given by the client in a counselling session is to be kept in confidence. It does not matter the means by which the information was obtained.

The only time when confidential information can be disclosed is when it is abundantly clear that the client's life is in danger, the client is seriously violating a societal law, or the life of some person or society is in danger. The counsellor should note that such situations occur in rare occasions. When they happen, however, he should use his discretion to save the situation.

5) Information or counselling relationship which include test data, interview notes, tape recordings etc, are to be considered purely for counselling use. They are not to be included in the official records of the institution employing the counsellor. Such information can be revealed to others   only when the client gives his consent.
6) Any information from counselling which is to be used for research or training purpose must as much as possible sufficiently disguise the identity of the client so as to give him adequate protection.
7) Whenever a counsellor is confronted with a case beyond his expertise he must immediately refer the case to an expert who can handle it adequately. The counsellor should admit his limitations and do the referral.
8) In situation where the counsellor realises that he will not be effective in handling the case of a client because of the nature of his relationship to the client, he is obliged to refer the client to another professional. Relationships which apply in this situations tend to be when the client is one's spouse one's child, sibling or one's close friend etc.

3.3 Counsellor's Ethical Responsibilities to the Public

i.   The counselor should not cheat the public by charging high consultancy fees. When voluntary services are rendered to the public, the counsellor should not charge any fees.
ii. The counsellor should not propagate false information to the public. Any information given while speaking to the public on the radio, television or elsewhere or while writing to the public in the news media should be valid accounts. The counsellor has the responsibility of checking on the validity of his facts before using them in his speech or writing to the public.

iii. A counsellor should not accept from his employer, assignments or tasks that are beyond his level, competence or qualification. He should not offer services outside his area of training and experience.

iv. Counsellors have the responsibility to protect the public against the activities of quacks by enlightening the public on the negative consequences of their activities and exposing the false claims of those known to have doubtful credibility.

3.4 Ethics on Testing and Appraising

The aim of appraising is to collect personal data of clients for appropriate use in counselling. The ethics considered under appraising and testing of clients therefore examine the validity of the tests used in collecting the data, the confidentiality in keeping test and appraisal information, the appropriate use of the data collected to benefit the client.

(1) The counsellor must ensure that tests and approval materials he uses to gather client data are valid, reliable and appropriate. In addition, the administration, scoring and interpretation of such test or non-test instruments should be highly objective to ensure validity and reliability of the scores obtained.

(2) Before administering a test to a client, the client must be briefed on the purpose of his taking the test to assure him that it is for his good or that it would not in any way harm his person when the testing is meant for research purpose.

(3) Test data should always be interpreted by a person competent in the area of testing. The result should always be kept in confidence. Whenever a counsellor trained in testing is employed by an institution to render services in testing he should see to the administration, scoring and interpretation of the results. In cases where the institution has qualified staff, they can score and interprete the test.

(4) Test results are not absolute and should be interpreted in absolute terms. They should be interpreted in probabilistic terms to account for error and other factors which contribute to the results.

(5) Counsellors have the obligation not to reproduce, modify or appropriate published tests or some portions of them without seeking appropriate permission from the authors or publishers.

(6) Test data are not to be released to anybody without the consent of the client (testee). Parents in some case may seek to know the test results of their children.

(7) In interpretation tests results the counsellor should present them in such a way as to make meaning to the client (testee). Technical terms which the client does not understand should be avoided or explained. Emphasis should be in high-lighting the strong points of the client than weak points. The interpretation should be done in such an indirect way where it is evident that direct interpretation of the results could have damaging psychological effect on the client.

(8) As much as possible the counsellor is expected to avoid the use of terms like I.Q. (Your I.Q. is ....) Abnormal Behavioral (Test shows your behaviour is abnormal .....) which can have serious negative psychological effects on the client.

3.5 Ethics on Research and Publication

1) Counsellors must be sensitive to all ethical principles concerning their dealing with human subjects in their research and publication. Every aspect of their research and publication should ensure that adequate measures are taken to respect the integrity and worth of their subjects who are human-beings so as to avoid any psychological damage.

2) While the principal researcher is responsible for ensuring ethical research practice, others involved in research activities are responsible for the art they play.

3) The findings of the research must be genuine. All factors and conditions which the researcher is convinced must have contributed to the findings must be reported.

4) Where giving prior information to the research subjects on the purpose of the study will in no way affect the results, the researcher is obliged to give such information.

5) Authors whose works have been used by the researcher should be recognised and properly acknowledged. Persons and bodies who contributed immensely to the success of the research should be acknowledged. Sponsoring bodies that made grants available for the study should also be acknowledged.

6) In the matters of publication and research it is unethical for a counsellor to plagiarise the works of a colleague. Plagiarism of all types should be avoided.

3.6 Ethics on Consulting and Private Practice

Consulting refers to a service rendered voluntarily by a counsellor to the public. Consultancy as used by Denga, (1986) meant the type of service rendered by a counsellor to the public for which he charges or demands a fee. A counsellor in private practice is self-employed by any public institution like schools, prisons, social welfare centre, hospitals etc. He works in a private clinic owed by himself or a group of counsellors.

1) Counsellors employed to serve in a consultancy capacity must ensure that they possess the skills, expertise required for the job to be executed. Otherwise they should not take up the offer.

2) Counsellors in private practice must possess approved training, qualification, certification and licensing for private practice.

3) The role of a consultant counsellor is not to make decisions for his clients (e.g. institutions) but to create facilitative conditions to enable his clients make appropriate decisions.

4) Counsellors in private practice should not sacrifice their professional ethics for commercial benefits. Their situation requires more vigilance in ensuring that professional ethics are adhered to firmly.

5) A consultant and his client should come to agreement as to what task is to be performed, what goals to be achieved and what functions are to be taken by the consultant.

6) It is unethical for a counsellor to use the facilities of his employers for his private practice or to use the privilege of his affiliation to his institutions of employment to recruit clients for private practice.

(7) Confidentiality should be strictly adhered to in both private practice and consultancy services.

These are some of the major ethics the author believes counsellors should be aware and employ in their professional practice. The code presented in this chapter is by no means exhaustive.

4.0 Conclusion

Guidance as practised in Nigeria has a major objective of providing altruistic service to the Nigerian Community. This is explicitly stated in the constitution of the Counseling Association of Nigeria (1975), Section 3 of Article 11 Talks of the promotion of sound Guidance and Counselling in the interest of the society and the individual. Thus it is expected that members practise the occupation with the prior aim of seeking to promote the practise of standard Guidance and Counselling in Nigeria.

5.0 Summary

Counsellors are expected to behave ethically in their professional duties towards themselves their client and the public. They must be law-abiding to their country and their professions. These are some of the general ethical responsibilities of Guidance. Other areas of ethical standards in Guidance includes counsellor's ethical responsibilities to clients, counsellor's ethical responsibilities to the public, ethics, on Testing and Appraising ethics on Research and Publication and lastly ethics on consulting and private practice

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

Discuss Ethics on Testing and Appraising.

7.0 References/Further Reading

Alao, A.A. (1980). "A comparative Perceptive of Counsellor Characteristics by   Practicum Students in a University setting". *The Counsellor*, Vol. 3, Nos. 1 & 2, 16-26.

Counselling Association of Nigeria, (1988). *Policy Guidelines on Certification and Licensing Board (CALB).Report of the sub-committee on Certification and Licensure.*

Denga, D.I. (1986). "Guidance and Counselling in School and Non-School Settings".Calabar: Centeur Press Ltd.

Meijers, F. (1995). "Ethics in Career Guidance". In Bartholomew Y, Brongers, E & Kristensen, S. (Eds). *The Quest for Quality. Towards Joint European Quality Norms. National Careers Guidance Information Centre.*

Moore, W.E. (1970). *The Professions; Roles and Rules.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Schmidt, L.D. (1965). "Some Ethical, Professional and Legal Consideration for School Counsellor". *Personnel and Guidance Journal.* Vol. 376-382.

Shertser, B. & Stone, S. (1976). *Fundamentals of Guidance.* Boston, Houghton: Misslin Company, 121-130.

Wrenn, C.E. (1952). "The Ethics of Counselling". *Educational Psychological Measurement*, 12, 161-177.