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EGC 804



Techniques of Counselling Module 3

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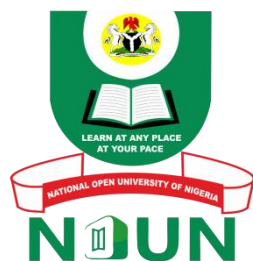
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Module 3

Unit I Types of Counseling Techniques III

1.0 Introduction

As a counsellor, you have been trained to use a variety of methods to evaluate and provide assistance to students. There are varieties of techniques and methods that can be used to provide assistance to students and clients. These techniques include: Value classification technique, case studies technique, simulation, and behaviour modification. These techniques are discussed in this unit.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss value clarification technique
- explain case studies technique
- describe simulation and behaviour modification.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Values Clarification Technique

Values clarification technique in counseling centres on the counsellor assisting the client to understand their values. Counseling process under this technique sees client's values as ideas about what the client considered to be most important in life. They are considered as the silent forces that determine client's action, beliefs and to a large extent determine the client accepting or rejecting counsellor's provided assistance.

In tracing the development of values, social psychologists discover that clients' values rapidly progress from random selections to belief construction and learning to 'know' and to 'value' as they organise inputs from the raw data of experience which include, the ideals, norms, and established knowledge of the surrounding culture. In counseling process, values are seen as learned criteria that predispose clients to act as they do. They emerge from the inextricably intertwined affective and cognitive belief systems. Attitudes appear at the surface, or more specific, manifestations of these underlying values.

Values clarification technique assists the client to have a degree of change in their surroundings, and their value systems must reflect that change to a desired direction so as to release tensions arising from failure to adjust to environmental challenges and alterations in knowledge. When a disruption in circumstances and beliefs has rendered an individual's values obsolete, extreme tensions may develop due to value conflict and resulting behavioural inconsistencies. In such instances client may seek counseling assistance and the counsellor, using value clarification technique allows the client to have a re-appraisal of his entire value system and set of role expectations.

3.2 Case Studies Technique

Case studies are in-depth investigations of a single client, group, client involved events. In case studies the counsellor collects data from a variety of sources and by using several different methods such as observations and interviews. For example, Sigmund Freud conducted very detailed investigations into the private lives of his patients in an attempt to both understand and help them overcome their illnesses. Freud's most famous case studies include, Little Hans (1909a) and The Rat Man (1909b).

Recent case histories are one of the main techniques of investigation in abnormal psychology and psychiatry. For students in abnormal psychology and psychiatry discipline can give a vivid insight into what those who suffer from mental illness often have to endure. In counseling psychology, case studies often confined to the study of a particular individual. The information is mainly biographical and relates to events in the individual's past (i.e. retrospective), as well as to significant events which are currently occurring in his or her everyday life. Case studies requires a detailed and comprehensive profile of the person, counseling psychologist may use various types of assessment data, such as medical records, employer's reports, school reports or psychological test results. The interview is also an extremely effective procedure for obtaining information about an individual, and it may be used to collect comments from the person's friends, parents, employer, workmates and others who have a good knowledge of the person, as well as to obtain facts from the person himself/herself. Case studies are widely used in psychology, psychotherapy and counseling. Although, current practice of counseling requires a lot of ethical considerations before the use of case studies.

Merits of case studies

Case studies as a technique of counseling have several benefits.

1. It provides detailed valid information about a person, group or events.
2. It provides insight for unrevealed information and further investigation.
3. Case studies provide opportunity for counsellors to investigate cases, which could not possibly be engineered in research laboratories.
4. Case studies assist counsellors to generate new ideas that might be tested by other methods.

Demerits of case studies

Case studies have some defaults. Some of the demerits as given are as discussed below.

1. Information provided by case studies cannot be generalise on wider population.
2. Counsellors' subjective feeling may influence the case study.
3. Results of case studies are difficult to replicate.
4. Activities involved in case studies are time consuming.

3.3 Simulation

Simulation in counseling process occurs when an individual's behaviour changes under certain situations or as a result of different events or stimuli. Simulation is the imitation of some real thing, state of affairs, or process. The act of simulating something generally entails representing certain key. For example, the change behaviour may be said to be under the control of such stimuli.

Stimulus control is a process whereby behaviours increase as a function of antecedent events. It occurs in many of our social lives.

According to Akinboye (1992) cited in Akinade (2012), there are four classes of antecedents: facilitative stimuli, discriminative stimuli, signals stimuli and cues such as verbal instructions which when complied with in the past earned the client reinforcement and motivational operations which help enhance the effect of the reinforcement. There is a relationship between stimulation and modelling.

3.4 Behaviour Modification

Human behaviour is described as anything an individual does or any activity that can be observed, recorded and measured. It includes all human characteristics/features. In behaviour modification, any human behaviour that varies from the expected practices and that are scientifically proved to be a problem to the individual manifesting the behaviour, implies the need for modification. For example, an individual with weak behaviour needs to be increased with appropriate behaviour modification strategies; similarly, deficit behaviour such as a toddler needs to be given adequate toilet training because possibly the individual lacks the behaviour. Likewise, an individual with excess behaviour also needs behaviour modification and so on. Behaviour Modification is the changing of weak, deficit or excess behaviour using learning theories especially operant and classical conditioning of clients (Akinade, 2012). Counseling generally entails speaking with students, children, adults or the subject who has behavioral issues to determine why they are acting as they do. In carrying out this, recommendations must take into account negative reinforcement - where the behaviour the counsellor is trying to change is actually rewarded. A student who wants attention and acceptance from peers may act out in class. If the counsellor brings the student in front of the class and lectures about how wrong the behaviour was, he is reinforcing what was done and will very likely have increased acting out from this and other students. Unfortunately, one of the ways to avoid negative reinforcement is through an accurate analysis of the underlying reasons the person is acting out.

Four steps of behaviour modification

Effective behaviour modification counseling entails three steps: Designing, reinforcing and preventing. First, the behaviour must be defined. If a student is getting out of her seat to get supplies to share, it must be clarified that the getting out of the seat without permission is the problem, not that the student wants to share or is doing a favour for others.

1. **Design:** An appropriate method must be designed to reward good behavior and punish or repress bad behavior. Students of different ages, cultures and backgrounds will respond differently to various techniques. Sometimes group punishment is effective, other times it only makes the majority of well-behaved students frustrated.
2. **Reinforce:** A reinforcer must be identified. Subjects may respond well to threats, praise, or a point system where good behaviour is rewarded and negative behaviour has points taken away. Points must be given real value by allowing some sort of exchange or reward for a certain number of points. Some counsellors do report success with younger students by just using points without rewards, based simply on the human need to do well. This reinforcer must be applied consistently and clearly to shape behaviour. If punishments are not handed out equally and in a timely manner, subjects may see prejudice and unfairness, resulting in anger, frustration and reduced trust in the counsellor.

3. **Prevention:** One of the most effective counseling techniques in behaviour modification is prevention. This is where counsellors, teachers, parents and all interested parties share information in an open and honest way, looking to design and apply programmes that will stop negative behaviour from starting. Details such as classroom seating plans, clear rules, modeling of pro-social behaviour, interpersonal skills training and anger management skills go a long way in preventing issues from arising. In environments with older subjects, an identified grievance procedure allows an outlet rather than acting out.

Methods of strengthening appropriate behaviour are: Vicarious conditioning, modelling, counter conditioning, sensitisation, covert sensitisation, operant conditioning, prompting, shaping, fading, caining, and negative reinforcement.

4.0 Conclusion

This unit further discussed values clarification, case studies, simulation and behaviour modification counseling techniques. Steps involved in their uses were also explained. Merits and demerits were also outlined.

5.0 Summary

Counsellors select and apply different counseling techniques based on the nature of client's problems. Before a technique can be effectively used the counsellor must clarify the objective to be achieved based on the nature of client problem.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

I. Write short notes on the following counseling techniques:

- i. Value clarification technique
- ii. Case studies technique
- iii. Simulation
- iv. Behaviour modification

7.0 References/Further Reading

Aakinade, E. A. (2012). *Modern Behaviour Modification*. Ibadan: Brightways Publishers

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Unit 2 Application of Counseling Techniques

1.0 Introduction

Application of counseling techniques, methods or strategies are many, some of these techniques have been outlined and discussed in the previous units but the steps in applying these techniques have general directions. The basic directions or steps are listed and discussed in this unit.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- list and explain the steps involved in the application of counseling techniques
- demonstrate the processes involved in applying counseling techniques during counseling sessions.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Application of Counseling Techniques

The application of counseling techniques, methods or strategies requires on - the -job continuous practice and higher qualifications so as to become an accomplished counsellor. However, to become a more effective helper, you need to learn how to apply the basic techniques of counseling. These are as follows:

Get the environment right: Create a space to talk, which is private and quiet and where you know you will be free from interruptions (always seek the advice of a colleague about the safety and appropriateness of this action). Where possible, make sure the seating is comfortable and make sure that there is appropriate heating and ventilation. Get the message across that you have time to attend to the issue that you want to address. Get the message across that the conversation is private and that you will not be passing on what the client says to any third party. You have to also make it clear that if the client gives you information that suggests that they or others are in danger (for example a [disclosure](#) of abuse or threat of [self-harm](#)) you cannot keep this confidential. Make sure that you are fully aware of your professional code of ethics.

Get the listening right: One way of encouraging a client to talk is to make sure that they know you are listening. You can do this by just being attentive and by showing with your body language that you are listening. Sometimes this will be by facing the client and making good eye contact. Sometimes sitting side by side (for example during a journey) will be less threatening. Try not to interrupt when the client is talking. By occasionally nodding or quietly saying "yes" or "aha" the client should be encouraged to open up. Reporting back to the client a short summary of what he/she had just said and asking him/her if you have got it right is another way of doing this. Make sure you look and sound calm, unhurried and caring.

Ask the right questions: Try to ask more open questions than closed questions. An open question is one which cannot be answered with yes or no and which encourages a more detailed answer, for example:

- “What are your feelings about this?”
- “What are the advantages of doing things the way you have suggested?”
- “What are the disadvantages?”

Avoid closed questions such as:

- “Are you sad”?
- “Are you looking forward to the school holidays?”

Another disadvantage of closed questioning is that the desired answer might be implied within the question and you might inadvertently steer the client to give an answer that she/he would not otherwise have given. An example of this would be:

“Are you going to stop speaking to that person who has been upsetting you?”

The implied expected answer here is quite clearly “yes”.

Affirming: To encourage the flow of conversation, it is important that you show respect by putting up an accepting attitude. The message you are trying to get across is “I have respect for your opinions and your view of the world at this present time”. This is not the same as saying that you agree with the child’s opinions or actions and it is okay for you to make it clear that your opinions and moral view are different, as long as this is done in a respectful way.

Limit the advice: Try to limit the direct advice that you give during your conversation. This is more important for older than for younger children who clearly need more guidance. This is especially the case at the beginning of a piece of problem-solving conversation. For example, it is usually better to start with “What do you think is the best thing for you to do next?” than to say, “What you should do next is...”

How to make it work: Ensure that you do not turn your conversation into an interrogation. However good you are at counseling some children/young people will not be ready to talk to you or want to talk to you. This does not mean that you have failed. It might be that they will talk later or that they will talk to a colleague of yours who they know better or a colleague of the opposite sex.

- Make sure that you recognise when you are getting out of your depth. If your conversation with a client uncovers clear evidence of abuse or serious mental distress/ill health, seek immediate advice from your local mental health specialist team.
- After your conversation with a child/young client make sure that you take time out to reflect with a colleague or supervisor about the interaction that you have had.

4.0 Conclusion

The unit outlined and discussed the steps involved in the application of counseling techniques towards developing the skills in the training counsellors.

5.0 Summary

Successful applications of counseling techniques depend on continuous practices, readings and engagements in professional discussions with experts and professional bodies in counseling such as association of counseling and psychotherapy.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

List and explain the steps involved in the application of counseling techniques.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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Unit 3 Ethics of Counseling Techniques

1.0 Introduction

It is an established fact that counsellors through their techniques, methods or strategies have the potential to influence clients profoundly; therefore, counsellors must be mindful of ethical considerations toward the uses of these techniques. Ethical obligations to which counsellors must commit themselves are discussed in this unit.

2.0 Objective

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss some ethics of counseling techniques.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Ethics of Counseling Techniques

Counsellors are expected to behave ethically toward the clients in both actions and in the use of various counseling techniques. They are to be conscious of the special skills required and aware of their professional limitations. In order to maintain the highest standards of professional competence, counsellors are required to adhere to the following ethics:

1. Counsellors are committed to protect the public against unethical, incompetent and dishonourable practices; and should be prepared to challenge these practices. Counsellors are encouraged to affiliate with relevant professional groups, clinics and agencies operating in the field of helping professions.
2. A counsellor will actively seek regular suitable supervision for his or her counseling techniques and will use such supervision to develop his or her counseling skills or techniques.
3. Every counsellor has an obligation to continue self-education and professional growth in all possible ways including active participation in the meeting and activities of the Counseling Association of Nigeria and other recognised bodies toward enhancing effective use of counseling techniques.
4. Counseling techniques should be undertaken and use only with professional intent and not casually and/or in extra-professional relationships.
5. It is unethical to use undue persuasion or to attempt to enforce the acceptance of any counseling techniques, service or procedure by any individual.
6. A counsellor shall not misuse any technique or relationship for personal gratification.
7. Where a person has been assured, or can reasonably expect, that information given by him or her will be treated confidentially, no counsellor may divulge such information without written permission granted by the client(s) involved. Confidentiality may be waived only to prevent immediate physical danger to a person or persons, or to divulge information, which if withheld may put the counsellor at risk when, during or after the use of a technique (s).
8. While using counseling techniques, the counsellor is cautious in prognosis and realistic in the counseling contract he or she makes with the client.

9. The essential obligation of counsellors is to respect the integrity and protect the welfare of persons with whom they are working.
10. A counsellor will not attempt to use counseling technique to diagnose, prescribe for, treat or advise on problems outside the recognised boundaries of that counsellor's competence.
11. A counsellor will not accept or offer payments for referrals, apart from the ordinary counseling fee charged to clients for interview. This may not be common in Nigeria but in places like Europe and America, the practice is common.
12. A counsellor will not use his or her counseling techniques to promote personal, religious, political or business loyalties or interests.
13. A counsellor offers professional service with the use of counseling techniques to anyone regardless of race, religion, sex, political affiliations, social or economic status or choice of life style. When a counsellor cannot offer service for any reason, he or she will endeavour to make a suitable referral.

4.0 Conclusion

The unit discussed the ethics involved in the application of counseling techniques towards developing the skills in the training counsellors.

5.0 Summary

Successful applications of counseling techniques depend on the awareness of the ethical consideration and how these ethics guides the conducts of counsellors in the process of rendering counseling services.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

Discuss five ethics of counseling techniques.

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Unit 4 The Use of Information and Communication Technology as a Counseling Technique

1.0 Introduction

The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in counseling and as a technique of counseling is fast growing in both developed and developing countries (Guanipa, 2001). Nigeria as a developing nation cannot afford to be left out in this regard. ICT can be effectively used to provide counseling services to different categories of clients. This unit outlined forms of ICT counseling techniques, strengths and limitations of the technique.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- list ICT techniques that are used in counseling
- list three strengths of using ICT as a counseling technique
- list three limitations of using ICT as counseling techniques.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 List of ICT Techniques that are used in Counseling

Studies by Becker (2000); Cox (1997); Guanipa (2001) and Otang, Chongwain and Mbangwana (2007) give an outline of history of ICT use in counseling. According to Guanipa (2001), suicide tendencies that were much prevalent among Australian young children aged 4 – 17 years were prevented and reduced to 88% with the use of ICT counseling-related techniques. It was also discovered that ICT counseling-related techniques were used to reach out and help people where the traditional face-to-face counseling techniques cannot be employed. Some ICT techniques are:

1. Use of telephones as online counseling devices: These sometimes involve counsellors or clients using phone contact to provide or seek counseling assistance. Through conversations by the phone, a counsellor can solve his/her clients' problems.
2. E-mailing counseling services: These are used to assist students and parents by providing direct channels of communication through Internet services.
3. Use of Websites and electronic newsletters for counseling in order to provide counseling assistance can also solve clients' problems without face-to-face contact.
4. Teleconferencing, telesurveillance, video recording in counseling: These ICT approaches provide impressive results in the art of counseling especially during group counseling where groups of people with similar problems are involved.

3.2 Benefits of ICT as a Counseling Technique

The use of ICT as a technique in counseling provides many benefits to the counsellors. These benefits are:

1. ICT use in counseling could provide opportunity to reach large clients at the same time providing counseling assistance, thereby, save time.
2. ICT in counseling reduces stigmatisation of client or counsellor.
3. The asynchronous nature of e-mail counseling provide both counsellor and client ample time for reflection.
4. Client anonymity associated with online counseling provides objective and conducive platform for socially and physically awkward clients.

3.3 Limitations of ICT as a Counseling Technique

Many counsellors have a perception that the use of ICT has not made positive contribution towards enhancing the quality of counseling services.

Some of the limitations of ICT in counseling are:

1. ICT in counseling have the shortcoming of subverting traditional power relationships between client and counsellor.
2. ICT in counseling pose the problem of doubt of proper care to client and also confidentiality is compromised as messages could be intercepted.
3. There is also the portrayal of false personality by some clients and counsellors.
4. The manifestation of technophobic of online counseling.
5. Inequality of computer access by all clients and counsellors.
6. Irregular electricity supply.
7. Poor and slow internet connection.
8. Inadequate skills and knowledge of ICT usage.

4.0 Conclusion

The unit introduces ICT techniques that are use in counseling, strengths and limitations of these techniques were also discussed in the unit.

5.0 Summary

Despite the aforementioned limitations faced by ICT used in counseling, the way forward is never without hurdles so optimism could be a remedy to minimise these weaknesses and fully engage the new information and communication technology in counseling.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. List ICT techniques that are used in counseling.
2. Mention three strengths of using ICT as a counseling technique.
3. Mention three limitations of using ICT as counseling techniques.

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Unit 5 Problems and Challenges of Counseling Techniques

1.0 Introduction

Problems and challenges of counseling techniques were traced to many counselling approaches for example; The American Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (ASAMHSA) listed twelve traditional therapies including psychotherapy, cognitive-behavioural therapy and client-centred therapy. Most therapies involve counseling or communication between a therapist and a client, who employs many of the same techniques for effective communication, regardless of what type of therapy they practice. Challenges can arise for the therapist when using some of these counseling techniques. The problems and challenges that may be faced by counsellors are discussed in this unit.

2.0 Objective

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss problems and challenges that counsellor may face in the process of using counseling techniques.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Problems and Challenges of Counseling Techniques

Some of the problems and challenges that are frequently faced by counsellors when using counseling techniques include:

1. Questioning the client is a necessary communication technique. Besides questioning to obtain general personal information, the counsellor will question the client about the presenting problem. Resistance to questioning can arise early in the course of therapy, especially if the client is not willingly seeking help and feels forced to participate. The counsellor may be able to overcome this resistance by asking open-ended questions (questions that require more than a yes/no answer) and listening attentively, respectfully, and empathetically to the client's answers.
2. Active listening techniques include body language, tone of voice, and verbal responses. Body language and tone are much more important than the counsellor's verbal responses. Clients read more from how the counsellor acts than from what the counsellor actually says. One challenge to active listening is the client who rambles on about subjects unrelated to his reason for being in counseling, in an effort to divert the counsellor from obtaining useful information. A counsellor must maintain respect and empathy for the client while at some point re-directing him back to his reason for being there.
3. Reflecting is saying back to the client what the counsellor believes the client has just said. This helps clarify communication for both the client and the counsellor. For example, a client might say, "I'll never take medication. I don't know anyone who takes medication." The counsellor might reflect this statement back to the client as, "So are you saying that you can't imagine ever taking medication for any reason?" The client might challenge the

reflection by giving the closed-ended answer, "No." The counsellor might choose to roll with the resistance and go on to other topics, or rephrase the question.

4. Clients are distressed and may not often be affirmed in their personal lives. Counsellors can build trust by affirming positive client actions and statements. For example, a client may say, "I can't seem to do anything right. I wish my kids had a stable home, but I can't stop drinking." A counsellor could affirm the client's desire to provide a stable home for his children.
5. If a counseling technique is not working, the counsellor need to stop doing it and use a different technique. This is a challenge when using a solution-focused approach that is not producing a solution. For example, after several techniques have been tried with no solution, the counsellor may need to suggest that patient see another counsellor. This is in the code of ethics of the American Counseling Association.
6. Counsellors face the challenge of clients not divulging all of their issues because they may feel uncomfortable sharing things they feel the counsellor might condemn. For instance, if the client is having anti-social behaviour such as sexual orientation, he might be uncomfortable sharing his problems with the counsellor because many religions have negative reactions toward such a lifestyle. If the person has marital problems and has turned to drugs or alcohol to ease the emotional pain, the client might feel uncomfortable sharing this information with the counsellor.
7. Clients might also hold back language they think the counsellor might find offensive. Most counsellors are by nature loving and accepting, but it might be challenging to get clients to understand that and open up completely.

4.0 Conclusion

This unit discussed the problems and challenges involved in the application of counseling techniques towards developing the skills in training counsellors.

5.0 Summary

Successful applications of counseling techniques depend on the awareness of the problems and challenges of counseling techniques so as to guide the conducts of counsellors in the process of rendering counseling services.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

Discuss five problems and challenges of counseling techniques.

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