A PRACTICUM REPORT ON INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP COUNSELLING.

A PRACTICUM REPORT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR AWARD OF A BACHELORS DEGREE IN COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY AT MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY.

APRIL 2022

PRESENTED BY: PURITY MUTHONI NG’ANG’A

DECLARATION

This practicum report is my original work and has not been presented for award of a Bachelor’s Degree in this or any other University.

Sign ……………………………. Date ……………………….

PURITY MUTHONI NG’ANG’A

BCP/2019/88227

**Approval by the Supervisor**

This practicum report has been submitted to the School of Social Sciences, Psychology department at Mount Kenya University with my approval as the course supervisor.

Sign ………………………………… Date ……………………………

Dr.Gilbert Maroko Mokua,

Mount Kenya University

**DEDICATION**

I dedicate this practicum report to my parents, Mr. Simon Ng’ang’a and Ms. Tabitha Karanja with gratitude for their constant moral and financial support throughout my entire study at Mount Kenya University.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

First and foremost, I would thank to express my gratitude to God for his guidance and blessings through my entire attachment period.

I would also like to thank LIL MAGIC FOUNDATION who gave me an opportunity to able to intern at their institution in order to fulfill my practicum requirement.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Mr. Charles Githae, who heartily welcomed me for the attachment and guided me through the practicum.

I would also like to convey my heartiest thanks to Dr. Gilbert Maroko Mokua for his valuable support.

Finally, yet importantly, I would like to express my heartfelt to my beloved parents for emotional and financial support, my lecturers and friends for their assistance during the practicum period.

**Abstract**

This practicum report gives a comprehensive review of the 3 months practicum experience running from January 2022 to April 2022.It explains the nature of the practicum and my roles and duties throughout the period I was attached at the institution. It also gives an overview of the organization and the activities carried out in the institution and the challenges faced during the practicum period and the suggested recommendations.

I undertook my practicum at Lil Magic Foundation in Thika. The Lil Magic Foundation is a non-profit making organization dedicated to the improvement of quality of life for all, alleviation of poverty, provision of healthcare, human rights and promoting a holistic life to the needy. My duties and roles involved offering counselling services to clients.

The main goals of the practicum period is to enable the student to develop competency in the provision of individual psychotherapy, to gain skills and experience in individual and group counselling. The student is also able to expand their repertoire of theoretical counselling approaches and to practice professional ethical standards. The student expands on their self-awareness and have an opportunity to explore and receive feedback.

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**PRACTICUM OBJECTIVES**

The following are practicum objectives:

• To enable the student to experiment a variety of counselling techniques.

• To enable the student to integrate skills learned in class.

• To be able to work with clients from a variety of settings.

• To be able to develop cognitive counselling skills such as case conceptualization and treatment planning.

• To be able to develop self-supervision skills by learning self-critique techniques.

• To be able to articulate the client’s problems and make a workable intervention plan.

• To consult and practice the professional codes of ethics.

**INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING**

**CASE 1**

**Biographical Data**

Date 24th January 2022

Client Code A01

Age 35 years

Gender Female

Marital Status Married

Number of sessions 8

Duration of sessions 1 hour

Total number of hours 8 hours

**Background information**

The client started school at the age of six years. The client has 6 siblings. She was unable to complete school due to financial constraints. The client later on got married at a very young age. The client had a very close relationship with the mother who died 5 years ago. The client was sad and frustrated when her mother passed away. The client has 3 children with her husband and she struggles to provide basic needs for them. The client had been selling cakes and groceries but she had stop due to back problems and lack of finances.

**Presenting Problem**

The client referred herself for counselling. She complained of having disturbing thoughts and being frustrated. The client was experiencing stress due to the fact that her 18 year old daughter who is a form two had been raped and infected with HIV/AIDS. She was also experiencing sleepless nights since the perpetrator had not been taken for real. She feared that her daughter would not get justice. The client immensely despised the man who had infected her daughter with HIV/AIDS.

**Exploration stage**

In the initial session, there was building of rapport and development of an in depth relationship with the client. The client was encouraged to expand and elaborate on her story and also to help her identify her emotions.

**Commitment to action**

**Therapeutic goals.**

* To develop coping strategies for dealing with stress.
* Educating the client on the practice of drug adherence, the client was to ensure that her daughter was taking the drugs consistently. The counsellor emphasized to the client on exercise and diet for the daughter.
* To increase the client’s ability to become more self-reliant.

**Counselling Skills**

**Confidentiality**

The client was assured of confidentiality in the initial session. The terms of breaching confidentiality were comprehensively explained to the client. The client become trustful and was able to share her story at a deeper level.

**Active listening**

The aim of active listening was to acquire information and to understand the client much better.

**Reflecting and paraphrasing**

Reflecting and paraphrasing were used to enable the client to feel listened to and that she was receiving attention.

**Questioning**

Use of open-ended questions during the sessions helped in clarifying certain issues.

**Counselling Techniques**

**Breathing exercises**

Deep breathing exercises were used during the session. This exercise helped the client when she felt overwhelmed. The exercise had calming effects which enabled the client to relax.

**Psychoeducation**

The client was educated on how to take care of her daughter who had been infected with HIV/AIDS. Emphasis was laid on the need to practice drug adherence.

**Mindfulness Meditation**

This method involved sitting comfortably, focusing on breathing and bringing the mind’s attention to the present moment without drifting into concerns about the past or future. The client learnt how the technique worked and was able to use at home to cope with stress.

**Theoretical Approaches**

**Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.**

This approach was used to help the client learn destructive or disturbing thought patterns that had a negative influence on behaviour and emotions. Great emphasis was laid on the present and the future rather than the past. The client accepted that self-blame was actually causing more harm to her and was willing to change that cognitive distortion. The client replaced the negative thoughts with positive thoughts.

The client was to make lifestyle modifications in order to provide a relaxing environment for her daughter. But also to assist her daughter in maintaining her a healthy diet. The client was committed to adopting to the changes. The client was introduced to coping skills such as mindfulness techniques which include meditation, deep breathing and muscle relaxation techniques.

**Person Centred Theory**

This approach requires a client to take an active role in his or her treatment with the therapist being nondirective and supportive. Rodgers believed that people are capable of self-healing and personal growth, which leads to self-actualization.

The client suggested several businesses that she could venture in that would help her provide for the children. She also started saving money so as to raise capital necessary for the business.

**Termination**

After thorough assessment and evaluation the counselling sessions were terminated. In reducing the levels of stress, the client was able to address her essential needs.

The client was positive about the therapy sessions and had reported immense progress in her quality of life. The client was able to adapt to the new changes and had learnt on how to care of the ailing daughter. The client gained a positive attitude towards life.

**INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING**

**CASE 2**

**Biographical Data**

Date 24th January 2022

Client code A02

Age 22 years

Gender Male

Marital status Single

Number of sessions 6

Duration of sessions 1 hour

Total number of hours 6 hours

**Background information**

The client was a 22 year old male. He has 2 siblings. He is a student who does online jobs to sustain himself. The client was referred to counselling by a friend. He was experiencing anxiety and frustrations. The client had lost his father a year ago.

**Presenting Problem**

The client came for counselling because he was feeling depressed. He had been suspended from school due to examination malpractices. The client expressed that he had lost hope of completing school and was struggling financially. The client also expressed that he feared becoming like his brother who had lost direction. The client also complained of having insomnia.

**EXPLORATION STAGE**

In the initial session, there was building of rapport and development of an in depth relationship with the client. The client was assured of confidentiality which enabled him to tell their story without fear and feel safe. Unconditional positive regard was employed and this helped the client to be more open as he felt accepted.

**Therapeutic Goals**

* To enable the client to tackle emotional issues that maybe causing frustrations and anxiety.
* To help the client to change maladaptive behaviours which have negative consequences.
* To identify ways of dealing with unresolved grief that might be affecting him
* Identify grief and loss issues linked with anxiety symptoms.
* To develop ways of express feelings of loss and grief.
* To enable the client to become more self-sufficient.
* To reduce the sense of helplessness around the anxiety experienced.

**COUNSELING SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES**

**Active listening**

This helped me to understand what the client’s experience in regard to his problems. Through active listening was able to know the underlying issue that was causing stress and anxiety to the client.

**Unconditional Positive Regard**

This was achieved by accepting the client unconditionally. Unconditional positive regard enabled the client to share his experiences without the fear of being judged.

**Empathy**

This was achieved by understanding the client’s experience and this helped the client to trust the client more.

**Techniques**

**Progressive muscle relaxation**

This technique involves checking in with sections of the body, one part at a time and focusing on relaxing parts of the body that are tensed. In this technique, the client was helped to release tension that often comes with anxiety. The client was able to practice progressive muscle relaxation at home and the client reported that the technique was helpful.

**Breathing**

Deep breathing exercises were also used for relaxation. This helped the client when he was feeling overwhelmed with anxiety.

**Guided imagery**

Guided imagery allowed the client to imagine that he was in an environment of that cultivated a feeling of calmness. The environment is a place where the client has visited before or one that is made up.

**Theoretical approaches**

**Person Centred Therapy**

This approach helped to draw out the client’s feelings in relation to his father’s death. The client was able to come in terms with his loss. He also became confident of his abilities and was no longer overwhelmed with anxiety.

**Cognitive Behaviour Therapy**

Through this approach the client was able to learn underlying patterns that were contributing to his anxiety. The client believed that he was not good enough and that he would not be able to achieve his goals due to being suspended.

This approach also enabled the client to change his negative thoughts into positive thoughts about the future. He was also able to set realistic goals.

**Gestalt Therapy**

This approach helped the client to understand his unresolved grief. The empty chair technique was used to give the client an opportunity to express his thoughts and feelings. This helped the client to deal with his buried feelings and unresolved grief.

**Termination**

The counselling process was terminated after 6 sessions. The client felt that the counselling sessions had made him better and he was able to focus on his goals with less anxiety.

**INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING**

**CASE 3**

**Biographical Data**

Date 25th January 2022

Client code A03

Age 19 years

Gender Female

Marital status Single

Number of sessions 8 sessions

Duration of sessions 1 hour

Total number of hours 8 hours

**Background information**

The client is a 20 year old, she has a 3 siblings. She is also a student. She experienced sexual assault and defilement at a very tender age. She was defiled by her neighbour and uncle. The client lived with her uncle due to financial constraints at her home and also her mother was very ill at that time. This made the client to become bitter and has been unable to form meaningful relationships. The client had never open up to anyone about the defilement. The client expressed that she resented the uncle a lot.

**PRESENTING PROBLEM**

The client expressed that she was overwhelmed with sadness and bitterness. She was unable to cope with her emotions at times. The client projected her anger towards those around her. The client felt that she was at a risk of harming those around her and that her anger would eventually get out of hand. The client was also experiencing anxiety.

**EXPLORATION STAGE**

A rapport building is done to ensure that the client feels comfortable telling her story. The client is assured of confidentiality and also circumstances under which it can be breached.

**Therapeutic goals**

* To enable the client to develop ways of managing anger and anxiety.
* To help the client to develop ways of communicating her feelings.
* To educate the client on sexual and its impact on her.
* To increase the client’s assertiveness.
* To enable the client to develop self-confidence.

**Counselling Skills**

**Unconditional Positive Regard**

This was employed to make the client feel accepted and unjudged due to her situation. The client was at ease when telling her story and she felt understood.

**Reflection**

This skilled allowed me to communicate with the client that I understood her experience and it helped to gain clarity on certain issues.

**Minimal responses**

The aim was to encourage the client to continue talking and to let the client know that I was listening to her.

**Questions**

This involved the use of open ended questions which helped in obtaining necessary information.

**Silence**

Silence was used when the client got overwhelmed by emotions and started crying. The client was allowed to cry and compose herself. The client was able to release the painful emotions she was carrying due to years of abuse.

**Counselling Techniques**

**Mindfulness technique**

Meditation helped the client to gain relaxation and was used in the long term for anxiety. Meditation was incorporated the client’s daily routine.

**Free association**

This allowed the client to speak up whatever came to mind. It enabled the client to gain awareness of the unconscious materials. It also helped in providing insight to supressed feelings and thoughts.

**Counselling Approaches**

**Person Centred Therapy**

This approach was employed to enable the client to talk about her life experiences. Unconditional positive regard was used to help the client feel safe. Confidentiality was assured at the beginning of the session.

**Psychodynamic Theory**

This approach was used to bring the unconscious feelings of the client to the conscious. The client was able to release the repressed feelings that contributed to anxiety. The client felt betrayed by loved ones since they were not able to protect her from harm.

**Cognitive Behavioural Therapy**

This approach was used deal with the negative distortions in the way client viewed herself and other people. The client was able to understand that harming other people would only cause a severe consequences and would not change what happened in the past. She also came to learn how anger and resentment affected her life. The client stopped blamed herself for being defiled and was able to replace the negative thoughts with positive thoughts.

The client learnt mindfulness and controlled breathing techniques that we helpful in dealing with anxiety and anger.

**Termination**

The counselling sessions were terminated after 8 sessions. The client felt that she had a made progress in healing of the traumatic experiences. She also felt that she was able to control anger issues and had forgiven the perpetrators who caused her pain. Follow ups were done through the telephone to ensure that the client was fairing on well.

**INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING**

**CASE 4**

**Biographical Data**

Date 26th January 2022

Client code A04

Age 23 years

Gender Male

Marital status Single

Number of sessions 8

Duration of sessions 1 hour

Total number of hours 8 hours

**Background information**

The client is 23 years old male. He was orphaned at the age of eight, he was taken in by his aunt. The client had a close relationship with the mother and was overwhelmed with sadness when she passed way. The client was referred to counselling by a friend. The client has been relying on donations which is not always guaranteed.

**Presenting Problem**

The client was referred to counselling by a friend. The client expressed that he was overwhelmed with stress. He had lost hope of completing school due to financial constraints. The client was frustrated and he had given up on his goals. He feared that he would become a failure. The client did not believe that could achieve his dreams.

**EXPLORATION**

At this stage, an in depth relationship is formed and the client is able to tell his story. Information about the client’s past experiences are collected for assessment.

**Therapeutic goals**

* To help the client develop healthy ways of coping with stress.
* To encourage the client to develop a positive mind set.
* To change irrational thinking
* To enable client to develop ways of communicating.
* To increase the client’s self-esteem.

**Counselling Skills**

**Empathy**

By empathizing with the client was able to feel understood and was able to express himself without the fear of being judged.

**Attending skills**

This aims at being physically and mentally present for the client. Attention was laid both on the verbal and nonverbal cues.

**Reflecting and paraphrasing**

The aim of reflecting and paraphrasing was to ensure that the client knows that her story was being listened to.

**Focusing**

This was employed to redirect the client to the main issue when the client had mentioned a broad of issues and problems.

**Counselling Techniques**

**Meditation**

This allowed the client to live in the present moment, letting go of past frustrations and future worries. The client felt relaxed after meditation and he incorporated it in his daily routine.

**Rituals of affirmation**

Positive affirmations are used to counter negative distortions and boost confidence. The client was encouraged to use self-affirmation which would improve his self-image, reduce stress and boost mood. After employing the technique in a few sessions the client expressed that his frustrations had significantly reduced. The client had gained confidence that he would achieve his goals.

**Counselling Approaches**

**Person Centred Theory**

This approach was used to help the client to speak without feeling judged. Empathy, genuineness, confidentiality and unconditional positive regard were employed

**Solution Focused Therapy**

Solution focused approach was used to help the client to focus on what he could do to change the situation rather than dwelling on the negative issues.

The client suggested several ways that he could raise more money to pay for school fees. He was able to get a job and start a small business that would help him pay for other expenses. The client learnt ways of saving money and becoming self-sufficient.

**Termination**

The counselling sessions were terminated after 8 sessions. The client had made progress in his life. He had gained confidence and he believed he could tackle any challenge.

**INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING**

**CASE 5**

**Biographical data**

Date 10th February 2022

Client code A07

Age 36 years

Gender Female

Marital Status Married

Number of sessions 2 sessions

Duration of sessions 1 hour

Total number of hours 2 hours

**Background information**

The client is a 28 year old female. She is the eldest child in the family. The client was emotionally neglected as child and to take of her other siblings as her own. The client has four kids and struggles to provide for their basic needs.

**Presenting Problem**

The client had been having conflicts with her husband. The client’s husband had stopped providing for the family for a year. This led the client to be overwhelmed with stress. The client also felt that she had failed her children and was a disappointment to her parents.

**EXPLORATION**

At this stage, the client was assured of confidentiality and deep empathy was expressed. The client told her story and expressed her frustrations.

**Therapeutic goals**

* To empower client to come up with solutions to her problems.
* To help client develop ways of solving conflict peacefully.
* To enable the client to develop ways of coping with stress.
* To help the client to develop ways of becoming financially stable.

**Counselling skills**

**Active listening**

This involved focusing on the client’s story and giving her undivided attention. This made the client to feel accepted and she was at ease sharing story.

**Open ended questions**

Open ended questions were used to clarify on certain issues and also to acquire more information for the purpose of assessment.

**Progressive muscle relaxation**

In this technique, the client was helped to release tension that often comes with anxiety. The client was able to practice progressive muscle relaxation at home and the client reported that the technique was helpful.

**Meditation**

This method involved sitting comfortably, focusing on breathing and bringing the mind’s attention to the present moment without drifting into concerns about the past or future. The client become more relaxed and employed meditation in her routine.

**Counselling Approach**

**Psychodynamic Theory**

This theory involved bringing the unconscious feelings and thoughts into the conscious. The client resented her parents as they had neglected her as a child. She blamed them for not providing support and guidance through her childhood. The client was able to express the repressed feelings.

**Cognitive Behavioural**

This approach was employed to help the client to counter the negative perceptions in the way she viewed things. The client was assisted to identify how negative distortions impacted her growth in life.

**Termination**

After 2 sessions the counselling process was terminated abruptly, this is because the client was diagnosed with a medical condition that required immediate surgery.

**INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING**

**CASE 6**

**Biographical data**

Date 18th February 2022

Client Code A10

Age 20 years

Gender Female

Marital Status Single

Number of sessions 8 sessions

Duration of sessions 1 hour

Total number of hours

**Background information**

The client is 20 year old female. She has one sibling and has been raised by her mother. The client does not have a close relationship with her mom. The client had a difficult child. She was unable to make friends both at home and school. When she was in high school she had a strained relationship with her mother. The conflicts that cause a strain the client’s relationship with the mother were later on resolved.

**Presenting Problem**

The client expressed that she constantly felt sad and could not understand her own feelings. The client did not have any friends to talk to and this made her feel lonely. She always felt secluded by other people. The client lacked confidence and had a low self-esteem. The client had also been experiencing sleepless nights and anxiety.

**Exploration**

At this a rapport was created with the client. The client was assured of confidentiality and she gained courage to speak up and communicate what she felt.

**Therapeutic goals**

* To help the client to have high self-esteem.
* To enable the client to develop communication.
* To help the client to comprehend her emotions and thoughts.
* To enable the client to develop ways of cope with anxiety.

**Counselling Skills**

**Minimal responses**

The aim was to encourage the client to continue talking and to let the client know that I was listening to her.

**Reflecting and paraphrasing**

Reflecting and paraphrasing were used to enable the client to feel listened to and that she was receiving attention.

**Confidentiality**

The client was assured of confidentiality in the initial session. The terms of breaching confidentiality were comprehensively explained to the client. The client become trustful and was able to share her story at a deeper level.

**Counselling Techniques**

**Rituals of affirmation**

Positive affirmations are used to counter negative distortions and boost confidence. The client was encouraged to use self-affirmation which would help improve her self-image, self-esteem and confidence. After employing the technique in a few sessions the client expressed that she felt much better and her esteem had increased tremendously. The client also started making friends.

**Unconditional Positive Regard**

This was employed to make the client feel accepted and not judged due to her situation. The client was at ease when telling her story and she felt understood.

**Mindfulness Meditation**

This technique was used to help the client to feel at ease and be more relaxed. The client was also encouraged to journal as it would help in identifying her feelings.

**Counselling Approaches**

**Cognitive Behavioural Therapy**

The aim of this approach is to help the client to identify her negative distortions that hindered her from being happy. The approach also enabled the client to understand how negative distortions caused anxiety and ways of dealing with it.

Through this approach the client realised that there was nothing wrong with her and it was normal to feel lonely. The client was encouraged to engage in activities and hobbies that interested her. The client was able to work on her self-esteem, confidence and self-image. Through this the client was able to create her own happiness.

**Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy**

This approach increased self-awareness for the client by enabling her to identify, challenge and replace self-defeating beliefs with healthier ones. After a few sessions, the client finally accepted herself unconditionally and was not scared of being rejected. She had understood her worth and was ready interact with others.

**Termination**

The counselling process was terminated after 8 sessions. The client expressed that the counselling service had beneficial in dealing with loneliness and anxiety.

**INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING**

**CASE 7**

**Biographical Data**

Date 21st February 2022

Client Code A08

Age 17 years

Gender Male

Marital status Minor

Number of sessions 2 sessions

Duration of sessions 1 hour

Total number of hours 2 hours

**Background information**

The client is a 16 year old male. He is a high school student at a boarding school. The client was a middle child in a family of 6.

**Presenting Problem**

The client was referred to counselling by his mother. The client had been suspended from school due to indisciplinary. He was suspended from school with a few of his classmates. They had been caught sneaking out of school and were also found to be in possession of drugs.

**EXPLORATION**

This stage involved rapport building for an in depth relationship. The client was hesitant to tell their story but eventually trusted me.

**Therapeutic Goals**

* To enable the client to develop assertiveness.
* To help the client to change behaviours that lead to negative consequences.
* To help the client to deal with emotional issues.
* To help the client improve on communication skills to be able to communicate his issues.

**Counselling Techniques**

**Attending skills**

A lot of emphasis was put on both the verbal and non-verbal language during the counselling process. This helped me to gain a clear understanding of the internal experiences in regard to his crisis as he sees it. Focus was put on the client’s feelings and thoughts during the entire counselling process.

**Minimal responses**

The aim was to encourage the client to continue talking and to let the client know that I was listening to him.

**Unconditional Positive Regard**

This was achieved by accepting the client unconditionally. Unconditional positive regard enabled the client to share his experiences without the fear of being judged.

**Reflection**

This skilled allowed me to communicate with the client that I understood his experience and the cause of his maladaptive behaviours.

**COUNSELLING APPROACHES**

**Psychoeducation**

The client was educated on the harmful effects of abusing drugs.

**Free association**

Free association helped the client to speak especially when there was some form of disengagement. He was able to talk about things and past traumas that he didn’t think contributed to his current issues and behaviour.

**Music and art therapy**

The client loved listening to music and this was recommended as a therapeutic of dealing stress.

**Counselling Approaches**

**Psychodynamic Theory**

This approach was used to bring the unconscious feelings of the client to the conscious. The client was able to release the repressed feelings that contributed to stress.

**Termination**

The counselling process was terminated by default after 2 sessions as the suspension period had come to an end.

**GROUP COUNSELLING**

**GROUP 1**

Venue JFC MUNENE COLLEGE

Clients Young mothers

Age 19-25 years

Duration I hour

Number of sessions 10 sessions

**Background Information**

The group comprised 12 young mothers. The aim of the group was to discuss problems affecting young mothers and how to come up with solutions to the problems.

**The roles of a group leader**

* To clarify the aims of the group.
* The group leader initiates and promotes interaction among group members.
* During disagreements or conflicts, the leader may offer suggestions of resolving conflicts.
* The group leader helps the group members to become aware of the group dynamics.

**GROUP COUNSELLING GOALS**

* To enable group members to gain insight into their experience and formulate new decisions based on their understanding.
* Through group sessions members learn that other people experience what they are experiencing and that their problem is not unique.
* The group environment provides a safe environment for members to show aspects of themselves that are often hidden in everyday situations.
* Group members are able to acquire socialization skills that are useful in everyday life.
* Group members acquire information as members share experiences and knowledge.
* To create a sense of belongingness and acceptance among group members.
* To help members to give each other support and encouragement.
* To enable members to gain a greater understanding of themselves.

**Roles of the group members**

* To take part in the making and implementing of group norms.
* To take an active role in the group sharing knowledge and experiences.
* To participate in group tasks.

**Group formation**

I announced my intentions of forming a group with the assistance of my supervisor. Screening was done to identify clients who were suitable for group counselling. Screening was used to disqualify clients who would hurt from a group experience or benefit more from individual therapy. The group leader was appointed by the members.

**Stages in Group Counselling**

**Formation**

At this stage, I informed the clients how the group sessions were to be conducted. Clients were informed about the risks involved, their rights, responsibilities and the issue of limited confidentiality. The purpose of the group is made clear to all members. The group members get to interact with each other.

**Storming**

At this stage, clients were hesitant to share their thoughts and experiences as they feared being shared outside the counselling room. Various conflicts arised but the clients were eventually able to resolve their issues.

**Norming Stage**

The group members have resolved their conflicts and have established the purpose of the group. Productive sharing begins to occur and the members develop a sense of cohesiveness. At this stage, group members are cooperative and share their goals and objectives.

**Performing stage**

The group members were ready to work on issues affecting them, they are more trusting of self and others. Members were able to focus on their personal objectives as well as the group objectives

**Termination Stage**

Group members were able to accomplish their tasks and goals. Members discussed the overall outcome of the sessions and achievements.

**Counselling skills and Techniques**

**Structuring.**

Structuring was used to help the group members to understand how group therapy was organised.

**Invitation Skill**

This was used to invite members of the group to share their thoughts and experiences.

**Active listening**

This skill helped me to capture and understand the message the client was communicating.

**Questioning**

This skill aimed at helping the clients to talk about themselves and define their problems more correctly.

**Free association**

Group members were requested to share thoughts and feelings that came up in their minds even when they thought the thoughts were un important. This was done especially in the earlier stages of the group process when group members didn’t know what to say or share.

**Counselling Approaches**

**Person Centred Theory**

This approach provideda safe climate where members could explore the full range of their feelings and their experiences. To help members become increasingly open to new experiences and develop confidence in themselves and their own judgments.

**Solution Focused Therapy**

This approach helped the members to adopt an attitudinal and language shift from talking about problems to talking about solutions. To encourage group members to choose the goals they want to accomplish in the group. To assist members in identifying their strengths that will lead to new possibilities.

**Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy**

This was employed to assist group members in achieving both unconditional self-acceptance and unconditional other-acceptance. To eliminate the group members’ self-defeating outlook on life and replace it with a more tolerant and rational one.

**Summary**

Group counselling helped the members to gain insights on various issues. The group members were able to achieve their goals and had learnt new coping skills. The members expressed that they had greatly benefitted from the group counselling sessions.

**GROUP COUNSELLING**

**GROUP 2**

Venue JFC MUNENE COLLEGE

Clients Male and female students

Age 18-25 years

Duration I hour

Number of sessions 7 sessions

**Background information**

This group comprised of male and female students. The aim of the group was to help clients with issues such as stress, peer pressure, life transitioning difficulties, drug and substance abuse and relationship issues.

**Group Counselling Goals**

* To promote a sense of self-direction, independence and responsibility for oneself.
* To provide a sense of self-awareness in order to develop a sense of one’s own unique identity.
* To increase self-acceptance, confidence and self-worth.
* To be able to make informed decisions.
* To help group members to establish meaningful and intimate relationships.
* To help members to learn peaceful ways of solving conflicts.
* To develop ways of coping with stress.
* To learn how to express one’s emotions in a health way.
* To learn how to become assertive.

**Roles of the group counsellor**

* The group leader initiates and promotes interaction among group members.
* To offer psychological support in order to facilitate the members personal growth.
* During disagreements or conflicts, the leader may offer suggestions of resolving conflicts.
* To be available to respond to various concerns of the group members.
* To assist in developing group norms and values.
* The group leader helps the group members to become aware of the group dynamics.

**Roles of the group members**

**•**To take part in the making and implementing of group norms.

•To take an active role in the group sharing knowledge and experiences.

•To participate in group tasks and give an honest feedback.

**GROUP FORMATION**

This involved announcing of a group with the assistance of my supervisor. Screening was to identify students who would be legible for group counselling. The group consisted of 10 members.

**Forming Stage**

The initial session started with establishing of the group norms which in turn helped us to operate from a common platform. The goals of the group were also established. The group members get to interact with each other.

**Storming stage**

At this stage, group members act out behaviours to define themselves and the group norms. Anxiety was an issue as most members were hesitant to open up due to judgmental issues. At the end of this stage, the interpersonal relations were established.

**Norming stage**

At this stage, members develop a sense of cohesion. They are able to openly share their experiences and knowledge without the fear of being judged.

**Performing stage**

The group members experimented with new ideas or behaviours. In depth exploration occurred and the group was able to accomplish a lot in terms of personal and individual objectives. The group members were also able to come up with solutions to their problems.

**Termination**

Group counselling was terminated after 8 sessions. In the last session, the primary task was to discuss and review actual outcomes and achievements, explore feelings of what worked and any feelings of loss were addressed.

**COUNSELLING SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES USED IN THE GROUP PROCESS**

**Free association**

Group members were requested to share thoughts and feelings that came up in their minds even when they thought the thoughts were unimportant. This was done especially in the earlier stages of the group process when group members were hesitant to share their experiences.

**Psycho education**

This strategy was used to psycho-educate the students on the harmful effects of drug and substance abuse as well as enhancing communication with their caregivers.

**Self-help techniques**

This was done by encouraging members to start journaling, use of meditation and reading of self-help books.

**Active listening**

This skill was employed throughout the group process. By paying attention to what the members were saying, by clarifying, reflecting on what was said, summarizing and giving feedback during sessions.

**Empathy**

By understanding the group members' situation, perceptions and feelings from their point of view and also to be able to communicate that understanding back to the other person. The skill helped in strengthening the interpersonal relations and trust in the group process.

**Counselling Approaches**

**Personal centred Theory**

This was employed by providing a safe climate where members could explore their full range of their feelings and their experiences. To help group members become increasingly open to new experiences and develop confidence in themselves and their own judgments.

**Cognitive Behavioural Therapy**

This was employed to assist group members in achieving both unconditional self-acceptance and unconditional other-acceptance. To eliminate the group members’ self-defeating outlook on life and replace it with a more tolerant and rational one.

**Psychoanalytic Approach**

This approach enabled clientsto uncover repressed feelings associated with past events that carry over into current behaviour. To facilitate insight into the origins of faulty psychological development and stimulate a corrective emotional experience.

**Summary**

The group counselling process helped the group members grow and gain new insights in their lives. The goals laid down were achieved and this helped in members developing self-awareness, developing coping strategies and general self-development. Feedback in regard to the group process was received and the members were glad that the group therapy was becoming a form of their support system.

**COUNSELLOR DEVELOPMENT**

During the counselling practicum period, I was supervised by my immediate supervisor Mr. Charles Githae. The supervisor guided me through my first sessions and offered support.

During the practicum period, I facilitated seminars in various villages. The issues that I facilitated on are as follows:

* Sexual Gender Based Violence.
* Conflict resolution
* Stress and stress management.
* Drug and substance abuse
* HIV/ AIDS

**Challenges faced during the practicum period**

* The counselling room was not always available and the sessions had to be conducted outside, it was challenging to conduct sessions outside due to noise and hot weather conditions.
* Other times the group counselling sessions collided with other activities in the school and the sessions had to be rescheduled.

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