Theoretical Views of Human Nature and Causes of Anxiety from Ethno-cultural Perspective

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Introduction

- Humans are complex beings
  - Dynamic and unpredictable
- To understand and help man:
  - Predictions, hypotheses, suppositions, etc. are important
- Empirical verification
  - Leads to theoretical formulations
- Successful counselling practices are essentially
  - Theory based
- A counsellor <u>must</u> take a theoretical stance
  - For objective decision-making on:
    - predictions on clients' **behaviour,**
    - how to treat them, and
    - how to respond on a moment-by-moment
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Theory as conceptual framework

- Theory in counselling is:
  - a road map
  - provides concepts about -
    - human development processes and
    - the therapeutic process
- All counselling theories have five main components
1. **Views of man**
   - **Notions, suppositions and beliefs on human nature**
2. **Causes of anxiety**
   - **The root cause of concern, problem or difficulty**
3. Counselling process
   - Responsibilities of the counsellor/client
4. Expected outcome(s)
   - Likely behaviour change
5. Evaluation process
   - How to assess progress
   - Possible follow-ups

Theory as Value System

- They involve a value system
  - A code or standard
    - With some persistence
    - And organization of a system of action

- Values are central concepts in theories
  - Influence on the selection from available
    - Modes, means, systems

- Counsellor essentially deals with value problems
  - The closeness of the counsellor/client similarities the better

Multicultural Vs. Cross-cultural Approaches

- **Multicultural Counseling (MCC)** recognizes that
  - theories were empirically validated on **the theorists'** value system
    - Race
    - Ethnicity
    - Social class
    - Gender, etc. and
    - therefore may not work well with people from other diverse groups
- MCC holds that
  - All helping methods (theories) exist within a cultural context.
- MCC presumably recognizes
  - the differences among and within clients.
  - how **cultural factors affect one's** worldview.
- .

Multicultural Vs. Cross-cultural

- Cross-cultural counseling (CCC) recognizes
  - that culture impacts worldview, values, beliefs, behaviors, customs, etc.,
- CCC occurs with differences in cultural heritage of the counselor and the client differ
- Differences must be attended to if counseling is to be effective
- BUT how?

Six Stages

In all counselling MCC, CCC or the so-called Value-free Counselling

Stage One: Relationship building

Stage Two: Assessment and diagnosis

Stage Three: Formulation of counseling goals

Stage Four: Intervention and problem solving

Stage Five: Termination and Follow Up

Stage Six: Research and/or evaluation

Schools of Therapeutic Approaches

- Theoretical approach presents propositions
  - On the practice of counselling and therapy
- A school of counselling is a grouping of different theoretical approaches
  - With similarities to one another in terms of characteristics
- Between schools:
  - There are differences that distinguish them, and
  - are similarities among them

Schools of Therapeutic Approaches

Psychodynamic School: Proponents include:

Psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud

Analytical Therapy of Carl Jung

Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler

- Emphasis on
  - unconscious influences
  - Infantile impulses
- Therapy aims to increase clients' abilities to exercise *greater conscious control* over their lives.
- *Works with/*through
  - Hypnosis
  - Analysis or interpretation of dreams
  - Transference, etc.
- …

Schools of Therapeutic Approaches

The Humanistic School: Proponents include:

Person-centered Therapy of Carl Rogers

Gestalt Therapy of Fritz Perls

- Based on a system of values and beliefs
  - Empathy, mutual respect, non-possessive warmth
- Emphasizes on
  - qualities of humankind and
  - people's abilities to develop their human potential
  - Clients' abilities to experience their feelings
  - Self-actualization

Schools of Therapeutic Approaches

Cognitive Behavior School: Proponents include:

Cognitive therapy of Aaron Beck

Rational Emotive Therapy of Albert Ellis

Reality Therapy of William Glasser

- Behaviour therapy focuses mainly on changing behaviour
- Cognitive behaviour school broadens it to include how
- Cognitive behaviour approach is problem specific
  - assesses clients and then
  - intervenes to help them to change ways that sustain their problems
- Emphasizes on educating clients
- On the realities of their thoughts

Schools of Therapeutic Approaches

Postmodern School: Proponents include:

Solution-focused Behaviour Therapy of Steve de Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg

- The postmodern therapist adopts a *social constructionist* viewpoint
  - that existence is contingent upon how people process and construct information
- People's experience of emotions depends on the names that they give to them
- People's beliefs about their relationships affect how they interpret the reactions of others and how they respond to them
- It does not focus on the past, but instead,
  - focuses on the present and future.
- The therapist/counselor uses respectful curiosity
  - to invite the client to envision their preferred future and
  - then therapist and client start attending to any moves towards it
- SFBT believes that change is constant
  - helps clients to construct vision of a *preferred future*

Views of Human Nature
and Causes of Anxiety

- Who or what is a human being?
- view of human nature of spiritual tradition
- current scientific view is rather pale
- **The twofold view**
  - body and a non-bodily factor (the soul, spirit)
- **The threefold view**
  - Body, soul, spirit
- **The fourfold view**
  - sensation, feeling, thinking and intuition
  - body-mind-soul-spirit

Psychodynamic School

Psychodynamic School		
Theorist	**Views of Human Nature**	**Causes of Anxiety**
Sigmund Freud	✓ Humans are completely controlled by instincts ✓ Man is not a master of his destiny ✓ Man is driven by irrational forces, unconscious motives, biological drives	✓ Failure of the integrating components of personality
Alfred Adler	✓ Human is inferior, helpless, and dependent ✓ Birth order determines personality characteristics	✓ Attempt to overcome physical weakness ✓ Striving for perfection

Humanistic School

Humanistic School		
Theorist	Views of Human Nature	Causes of Anxiety
Carl Rogers	✓ Man is both self-preserving and social ✓ Not basically sinful ✓ Essentially positive	✓ Denial ✓ Incongruence
Fritz Perls	✓ Human being work for wholeness and completeness in life. ✓ Man is composite of interrelated parts ✓	✓ Losing contact with the environment/resource in it ✓ Conflict between the top dog (what one thinks one should do) and the underdog (what one wants to do).

Cognitive Behavioural School

Cognitive Behavioural School		
Theorist	Views of Human Nature	Causes of Anxiety
Albert Ellis	✓ People are both rational and irrational, sensible and crazy ✓ Humans are not controlled by instincts – by reasoning ✓	✓ Irrational thinking and beliefs ✓ Cognitive distortions
Aaron Beck	✓ Man's internal communication is accessible to introspection ✓ Beliefs have highly personal meaning ✓	✓ negative or automatic thoughts ✓ Poor r/ship between thoughts and emotions

Limitations of Counselling Theories

- All counselling theories carry the psychological equivalent of health warnings.

- They can be used for ill as well as for good

- The following are some potential disadvantages of theories
  - **Restriction of focus Vs. Integration**
  - **Therapist rigidity Vs. Client's orientation**
  - **Depowering clients Vs. Human freedom**
  - **Supporting the status quo Vs. Being a change agent**

The Message

- Counsellors have the main challenge of
  - Being conversant with the people and environment
  - Knowledgeable about variety of theoretical orientations
  - Tremendous social skills

- Success is contingent upon:
  - Recognition of dignity and worth of the human person
  - Understanding of clients socio-cultural milieu and belief systems
  - Less rigid more professional flexibility

- Is there any single theory that can provide that?

- How can we be socially and culturally sensitive counsellors?

Eclecticism

- It is a synthesis and combination of so many theoretical stances
- Narrow Meaning:
  - Selection between directive and non-directive approaches
  - represents a middle status between the two extremes
- Wider Meaning:
  - Selecting what is applicable to the client from a wide range of theories, methods and practices.
- Justification is based on the very recent theory
  - There is no proof that any one approach works better than others
- The counsellor must be equally familiar with many theories
- He is able to pick and choose at whim

Creating One's Own Theoretical Approach

- Creating one's own counselling theory is both a
  - subjective process of making sense of the present challenge
  - An objective way of helping
- How can you evolve a personal theory?
- How can you make yourself a better theorist?

Thank you for Listening