GUIDE BOOK

International Conference on Guidance and Counseling

Bandung, 7 - 8 December 2011
COUNSELING TO PROMOTE POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

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Counselling has focused on people with problems. It is necessary to shift our focus more towards normal people and make them more resourceful and able to live up to their full potential. There is a wealth of recent research demonstrating the value of positive emotions in broadening of an individual’s thought-action repertoire and enabling the individual to be more resourceful to solve problems and live a more fulfilled life. Positive psychology can be applied in helping normal people reflect and identify meaningful and productive areas of their lives. The application of positive psychology can promote mental health and acts as a means of prevention of psychological problems rather than treating clients with problems. A client who was bored with his life was helped by the use of positive psychology to assess his strength such as hope, optimism, emotional and cognitive intelligence to encourage the client build a meaningful, productive and happy life. The client was guided to reflect on gratitude, hope of the future, reflect on his character strength and savour the present moment by focusing on what he was doing. The client later remarked that he felt happier and contented.

Key words: Positive psychology, positive emotions, broadening thought-action, character strength

PERCEIVED MULTICULTURAL COUNSELLING COMPETENCE OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLORS IN MALAYSIA: A NATIONAL SURVEY

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A national survey was conducted to investigate the dimension and extent of multicultural counselling competency (MCC) of counsellors who are registered with the Malaysia Board of Counsellors and had practised multicultural counselling in Malaysia. A total of 508 counsellors (response rate of 34%) from various states and work settings completed the surveys using either the pen-and-paper (mailed) or electronic (online) surveys. The survey questionnaire was a 47-item Multicultural Counselling Survey-Malaysian Counsellor Edition (MCS-MCE), which comprised 2 main instruments: Demographic and MCC questionnaire. An exploratory factor analysis revealed more than the three proposed dimensions (awareness, knowledge, and skills) in the literature as constituents of MCC. There was no significant difference in perceived MCCs due to completion of multicultural courses, but significant differences were observed due to ethnicity and participation in recent multicultural training. Direct implications for education, training and development of counsellors and trainees are discussed.

Keywords: Multicultural counselling, multicultural counselling competency, professional counsellors, multicultural training