Counseling: An Art of Healing and Mental Wellness

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ABSTRACT

Counseling is an interpersonal helping process. This service is poorly defined and presently anyone at all with little or no training can offer these services. It was often misunderstood as a profession in India earlier and needs in the Indian context emerge against the background of tremendous social change. Available counselling services are largely based on Western approaches to psychology. There are various model, approaches, methods, and steps technics of this .These approaches have been widely criticised as not being relevant to the Indian cultural context. India's ancient traditions offer a wealth of psychological insights and concepts that hold significant potential for modern application. Despite its potential, counselling psychology remains an underdeveloped field in India, lacking cultural relevance and validity. There is needed to incorporate the traditional Indian values and philosophies e.g., yoga, mindfulness, Ayurveda etc.

Keywords:Counselling, Model. Method, Process, Skills, Dimension, Indenisation.

INTRODUCTION

Counseling is an interpersonal process through which guidance and support is provided to persons with psychological problems. That occurs when a client and counsellor set aside time to explore difficulties which may include the stressful or emotional feelings of the client. British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) emphasized that "Counselling skills are a combination of values, ethics, knowledge and communication skills used to support another person's emotional health and wellbeing." Key Aspects of Counselling as per BACP:[A] **Contracted Meeting**: Counselling involves a contracted meeting between a client and a counsellor at a specified time and place, solely benefiting the client.[B]**Boundaries**: The counselling relationship operates within predefined boundaries outlined in a contract, ensuring a safe and therapeutic environment.[C] **Confidentiality**.[D] **Non-Directive Approach**: Counsellors refrain from offering advice, instead believing that clients have the answers within themselves.[E] **Supervision**: Counsellors receive regular supervision to ensure they provide high-quality support.

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In another words, Counselling is the act of helping the client to see things more clearly, from a different view-point. The goal of this is to empower clients to understand themselves better, set realistic objectives, and become more fulfilled and productive individuals within their community. It can enable the client to focus on feelings, experiences or behaviour, with a goal of facilitating positive change .The client's problems may be personal or interpersonal. Confidentiality is

paramount to successful counselling. They may, however, be required by law to disclose information if they believe that there is a risk to life. It was recognised as an important service in India as early as 1938 when Acharya Narendra Dev committee underlined the importance of counselling and guidance in education.

Counseling is a process: This is a process by which a skills person aids another person's in the total developments of his or her personality. Through the counselling the counsellors helps the persons to develop self-awareness and explore the possibilities to develop his or her latent capacities. It is a learning oriented process, carried out in a simple one to one social environment, in which a counsellor professionally competent in relevant psychologically skills and knowledge.

Dimensions of Counselling: (a) This is based upon **Positive relationship**. This relationship is prerequisite to be effective with clients. (b) This is **therapeutic intervention** and based on the constructive change in the person. (c) This is a **Psychological process**, focus on mind component, alteration how people feel, think and act. These are name of psychologist counselor; Rogers and Ellis, Beck and Berne etc.

Counselling and Psychotherapy: Sometimes both the term used interchangeably, but the term is not same. There are some similarities and differences between them. **Similarities**: [a] Both use the same theoretical models and focussed on stress: [b] need to value the client as a person, [c] to listen sympathetically and [d] foster the capacity for self-help and responsibility. **Difference**: [a]Psychotherapy deals with more severe disturbance and is more medical term than counselling, [b]Psychotherapy focuses on personality change of short form while counselling focus on helping people to use existing resources for coping with life better(Tyler,1961).

The Counsellors Council of India (CCI) is a professional organization that aims to promote and advance the practice of counselling and psychotherapy in India. It works to ensure the highest standards of ethics, competence, and professionalism within the field of counselling. The Council provides a platform for counsellors to connect, engage in professional development, and gain recognition in the industry.

Needs for counseling: counselor helps the individual to overcome difficulties and change unhealthy or maladaptive emotional, behavioral and cognitive aspects. These are the important area where counseling services is needed – Symptoms related stress /inferences:[a] Psychological Functioning: Depression , Anxiety, Fear, Anger or other dysfunctional emotional sates.[B]Cognitive Functioning : attention, concentration.[C]Biological Functioning: sleep, appetite, Sexual functioning[D]Social Functioning: impairment in the ability and interact normally in social situation[E] Personal Functioning: decrease recreational and leisure activities.[F]Occupational Functioning: Decreased work efficienc

Goals of counselling: The ultimate aim of counselling is to enable the client to make their own choices, reach their own decisions and act upon them. These are the goals of counselling- [1] **Healthy Development of Personality**: Everyone has a natural tendency towards self-actualization [Rogers & Maslow]. [2]Providing Support and Guidance likes Crisis intervention and short term support.[3]Emotional Release is another aim of this. Suppression of thoughts, feeling and emotion often lead to physical or mental problem. [4]For Awareness, this is also significant. Self-awareness, self-acceptance and self-direction are most important aspects of personality development (C.Rogers, 1959) . [5]This is essential for value clarification and change also.

Counselling Skills: A counsellor is usually concerned with people's practical issues and providing them with support. Counsellor's become qualified by undertaking a counselling course that teaches them a variety of essential skills necessary to succeed as a counsellor (ASU,2020. Odediran,2014, Olayinka,2012). "By offering these new perspectives, counsellors empower clients to gain clarity and insight into their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. It can enable the client to focus on feelings, experiences or behaviour, with a goal of facilitating positive change. These skills are technical traits that are used by counsellors to listen and better understand their clients. Using these skills, counsellors help their clients to overcome obstacles and do better in their lives. These skills also help to build and maintain rapport, establish trust and ensure that the clients feel heard and understood (Suleiman et al 2019, Usman, 2020). Counselling enables the client to explore the

aspects of their life and feelings, by talking openly and freely. Talking to a counsellor gives clients the opportunity to express difficult feelings such as anger, resentment, guilt and fear in a confidential environment. The counsellor may encourage the client to examine parts of their lives that they may have found difficult or impossible to face before. Good counselling should reduce the client's confusion, allowing them to make effective decisions leading to positive changes in their attitude and/or behaviour. According to Mae, (2019) counselling skills includes: communication, interpersonal, understanding of ethics, patience, compassion, emotional stability, knowledge of laws and regulations, open mindedness, trustworthiness, research skills, problem-solving, observational, reasoning and computer skills, while Indeed (2023) mentioned that few ways can be incorporated counselling skills into in daily practices :[i] Be mindful of (counsellor) body language [ii]Review client notes before and after sessions[iii]Refrain from discussing client information with coworkers and [iv]Do not press clients for personal. These are the important counselling skills:(a) **Active Listening**: It is as the use of eye contact, facial expressions and gestures to imply that counsellor are engaged and focused on the information the other person is saying. It can help a client feel like they've been heard and validated in the information they chose to share. (b) **Empathy**: empathy as the ability to see where the other person is coming from with genuine care and concern without judgment. The client must trust that the counsellor truly cares and is committed to their wellbeing before sharing personal often painful information. It enhances therapeutic alliance and supports personal growth. (c) **Communication (Non-verbal):** Effective communication helps create a safe, supportive environment for clients to explore their thoughts, feelings, and concerns. It involves understanding and responding to nonverbal cues, which provide insights into the client's emotions and experiences. By paying attention to body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice, counsellors can better understand the client's thoughts and feelings. Effective interpretation of nonverbal cues requires sensitivity to individual differences and cultural backgrounds. (d) **Reflection**: This is a key skill in counselling that involves considering and restating the client's words, emotions, or experiences to deepen understanding and encourage self-reflection. Its purpose is to enhance understanding and promote introspection. (e) **Questioning Techniques**: This

technique is essential in counselling as they allow counsellors to gather information, explore clients' perspectives, and facilitate self-reflection. Open-ended questions encourage detailed and meaningful responses, fostering exploration and self-expression. Closed-ended questions elicit specific and concise answers for clarification. (f) **Summarisation**: It plays a crucial role in enhancing comprehension and promoting reflection within the therapeutic process. By summarising client information, counsellors facilitate understanding, help clients see the bigger picture, and identify common themes or patterns. (g) **Feedback**: It plays a crucial role in facilitating personal growth and providing valuable insights. Constructive feedback in counselling is balancing positivity and critique. (h)**Rapport Building:** Rapport building is a vital skill in counselling that involves establishing a trusting and empathetic relationship with clients. It creates a safe environment for clients to explore their thoughts and emotions. Indeed (2023) observed that an important skill for a counselor is to be able to build and maintain trust with their clients. This can affect a client's willingness to share information. (i) **Goal Setting**: Goal setting is a crucial skill in the counselling process, providing direction and motivation for client growth. It plays a significant role in facilitating positive change and achieving desired outcomes. (j) **Trustworthiness**: Clients must feel like they can trust their counselor. By building a sense of trust, the counselor helps the client feel at ease as they share personal and difficult feelings and information. (k) **Ability to interpret information**: counsellor need to be able to interpret vague or nonverbal information, such as body language and facial expressions. (l)**Interpersonal**: Interpersonal skills in counseling are crucial for building a strong therapeutic relationship. These skills help establish trust, rapport, and a supportive environment, facilitating effective counselling. (m)**Understanding of ethics**: The ethical standards (Confidentiality, Competence, boundaries, respect, non-discrimination etc.) prioritize client well-being, trust, and safety. (n)**Patience**: This helps clients feel heard, understood, and empowered to explore their concerns. (o)**Compassion**: Compassion in counselling involves: Empathy, Kindness, Non-judgmental, acceptance and recognizing clients' struggles. (p)**Emotional stability**: This foster appositive therapeutic relationship and effective counselling outcome.

(q)**Knowledge of laws and regulations**: knowledge of law and regulations is crucial in counselling. Counsellors must stay updated on relevant laws, regulations, and ethical standards. This knowledge helps counsellors navigate complex situations and provide effective, ethical care. (r)**Open-mindedness**: Open-mindedness in counselling involves: non-judgmental attitude, Cultural sensitivity, adapting approaches to meet individual client needs and Curiosity like- Exploring clients' perspectives and experiences. (s)**Research skills**: Counselors use research skills to:Inform practice with evidence-based interventions, evaluate treatment effectiveness, stay current with emerging trends and issues and contribute to the advancement of the field. (t)Problem-solving: Problem-solving counseling skills involve: Identifying and defining problems, Exploring and generating solutions, Evaluating and selecting options and Implementing and monitoring plans. (u)**Observational**: Observational skills are essential in counselling, enabling counsellors to notice nonverbal cues (body language, tone, facial expressions),Identify emotional states and patterns and recognize changes in client behaviour. (v)**Self-exploration and understanding**: To facilitate client self-exploration and understanding, enabling them to gain insight into thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, develop self-awareness and Identify strengths and areas for growth. (w) **Others** : Strength-based practice, Cultural competence, Assessment, Client engagement, Recognizing the effects of trauma, Utilizing evidence-based practice etc.

Techniques in counselling: These are the Supportive techniques of counselling: [a] **Ventilation and Catharsis** [b] **Clarification**: good counsellor avoid assuming/misunderstanding. [c]**Education and Awareness**: education about harmful consequences of alcohol dependence, educate to anxious parents about the son's rebellious behaviours. [d] **Guidance and suggestion**: Reassurance and their positive attributes [like client's low self-esteem and low confidence. [e]**Environmental Manipulation.**[f] **Externalization of interest**: Seeks to divert the clients attention from the oppressive thoughts running in his mind. [g]**The deliberate pursuit of pleasure**: not to engage in any illegal, immoral and harmful activities [like Substance Use Disorder] ,visit to theatre. [h] **The utilization of social support**. [i]**Physical exercise and medication**; Exercise stimulates the release of beneficial chemicals especially serotonin.

[j] **Meditation**: Client with minor psychological problems such as anxiety and depression benefited from this. [k] **Relaxation.**

Stages and Steps of Counselling: These are the stages of Counselling: [I] **Preparatory Stage**: very important for counsellor and counselee.it is the point when the person is getting ready to accept the professional help. Accepting one another and working out an agreement. [II] **Exploratory stage**: a] the problem and its effects b] probable factors: that create and maintain these problems, c].may release the problems d] the clients understand the problem and effects to tackle the problem. [III] **Planning Stage**: personalizing the problem and the goal. Example – patients cannot control the his temper , the goal is to control his anger. [IV]**Action Stage**: In this counsellor uses various model and approaches for the betterment of clients like rational emotion therapy, Transaction Analysis, Gestalt Therapy, behavioural therapy , cognitive approach, psychodynamic etc. Purpose of this is resolution of a] emotional crisis b]behaviour problems c] improved: self -confidence, self -esteem, self- control, frustration tolerance, communication, Problem solving skills, judgement, adjustment, emotional stability. [V] **Evaluation and Termination stage** :Readiness for termination, Letting the client know in advance, review the course of action plan, warning against the danger, discussion of follow up secession. **Steps**: Marjorie Nelson [2001] has given nine steps in counselling process: [I]Establish a safe and trusting environment. [II] Clarify: help the person put their concern into words. [III] Active Listening[IV]Transform problem statement into goal statements[V]Explore possible approaches to goals [VI] help person choose one way towards goals, Develop a plan(may involve several steps) [VII]Make a contract to fulfil the plan. [VIII]Summarize what has occurred, clarify and get verification, evaluate process [IX] get feedback and confirmation.

Models of Counselling: Model means a structure of counselling process that shows relationships between the components and tells what is done in counselling and in what consequences. J.M. Fuster (2005) categorised it as a (A) Action Model (B) Exploration and understanding model and (C) Both (A and B). [A] Action[BT]:This kind of model can be Useful in treating some types of mentally ill Patients whom communication is very difficult.

[2]Exploration and understanding: Psycho-analysis, client centred, trait and factor counselling, existential therapy, Transactional Analysis, Gestalt therapy. [3] Exploration , understanding and action: Integrated model [Carkhuff,2009]:A systematic action programme translate insight into the desired behaviour change.

1. **Psychodynamic Model**: This model is introduced by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). Psychoanalysis or psychodynamic theory, also known as the "historical perspective," has its roots with Sigmund Freud, who believed there were unconscious forces that drive behaviour .Psychoanalysis strives to uncover unconscious motivations and meanings to explain and alter thoughts, feelings and behaviours. There is a **five dimension** of this model.[i]**Topographic model**-mind divided into three parts a. Conscious, b. Pre conscious, C] Unconscious..[ii**] Structural model of personality**: [a].Id. [b].Ego. [C]. Super Ego.[iii]**Psychosexual-development** [personality development]:A. Oral stage B. Anal stage C. Thallic stage ; interested in genital D. Latency E. genital stage .[iv] **Deference mechanism** : The repressed area is a barrier under which disturbing material [thought, feeling] has been placed by the deference mechanism. Repression is process in which unacceptable desire, memories and thought are excluded from consciousness by sending the material into the unconscious. [a]**Projection**: Ascribing own thoughts, feeling and impulse to others. [b]**Denial** [c] **Acting Out**: immature expression of emotion. [d]**Passive aggressiveness**: others ways of showing resentment. [e]**Regression**: childishness behaviour [more mature or appropriate behaviour is blocked] [f]**Identification**-Gives one satisfaction by identifying with others. [g] **Displacement**-represent movement away from one object to another that is less threatening. [h]**Rationalization** [v] **Psycho analytical techniques**: [a] Free Association [b] The interpretation of faulty acts [c] The interpretation of dreams. [d] The interpretation of symbol.

3. **Behavioural Approach:** This is based on three major theories of learning:[1] Classical conditioning (Ivan Pavlow): person learn through the association between stimuli, Ex – hight and fear, crowd and anxiety, examination and worry.[2] Instrumental conditioning (B F Skinner): Learn by award and punishment [3] Observational learning (Albert Bundura): In this clients observe the consequences of other behaviour and decide to own behaviour

accordingly. This is based on modelling technics. [4]Insight Learning [W. Kohler]:This learning is the sudden realization of a solution to a prolem. From this theories , assumption can summarized [A] All the behaviour is learnt [B]Environmental variables determine response[C]Behaviour can be predicted and controlled. [D] Behaviour can be changed through reward and punishment.[E] Problem is due to faulty learning.

2. **Cognitive Model / approach (**Aaron T. Beck**):** This model theorizes that an individual's thoughts, feelings and behaviours are all connected and that human behaviour is strongly influenced by how we think. In this, it is thought that by changing a person's thoughts, one can affect that person's feelings and behaviours. Unlike psychodynamic theory, this counselling theory focuses on how people's thinking can change feelings and behaviours. Cognitive therapists focus more on their client's present situation and distorted thinking than on their past. Cognitive and behavioural therapy are often combined as one form of theory practiced by counsellors and therapists. Cognitive behavioural therapy, or CBT, has been to help with a number of mental illnesses including anxiety, personality, eating, and substance abuse disorders.

Techniques are used in behaviour and cognitive model: [a] Behaviour modification[b] Systematic desensitization: used mainly anxiety and phobia. Through systematic desensitization, the individual is gradually and safely exposed to the feared object or situation, reducing anxiety over time. Skills used – relaxation next hierarchy of fearful situations. [c]Exposure Response Prevention [ERP]: It has used in various anxiety disorder , especially in OCD.ERP therapy is a behaviour therapy that gradually exposed people to situation designed to provoke a person's obsession in a safe environment. A hallmark of ERP is that is that is doesn't completely remove distressing situation and thoughts. [d]Flooding: used to treat phobia. Exposing the patient to their painful memories, like person has fear of spiders , look them in the room full of spiders. [e]Shaping: Create a behaviour that is not already occurring. Gradually reinforcement is provided or behaviours that more closely resemble the target behaviour. [f]Chaining: when an entire sequence of be haviour is required.(a) forward chaining (b) backward chaining. [g] covert conditioning :assist people in making improvement

in their behaviour or inner experiences. Based on person capacity to use imagery (mental rehearsal, behavioral analysis) [f]Contingency management h] Shaping[i] Time ou t(Temporarily separating a person from an environment where an unacceptable behaviour has occurred). [j] Assertiveness training: used technics- role play[k] A version therapy: used for reduced or avoid undesirable behaviour pattern by conditioning him or her to associate the electrical or chemical. [l]Biofeedback: to learn the control the function of the automatic nervous system [Heart Rate, Blood Pressure ,Pulse Rate] with the help of various instruments attached to one's body.

(4)**Humanistic Approach/Model**: Instead of energy spent on the past or on negative behaviors, this approach believe in the goodness of all people and emphasize a person's self-growth and self-actualization.Humanistic theories include mainly four theories –

(a)**Client/Person-cantered**: This is developed by Carl Rogers (1940), which focuses on the belief that clients control their own destinies and on self-actualization. He believed that all therapists need to do is show their genuine care and interest. This modality operates on the belief that every individual has the desire and capacity for personal growth. The counsellor acts as an understanding facilitator and clients take a more active lead in sessions to make personal discoveries and find their own solutions. This counselling approach can be particularly useful for teenagers. (Yao & Kabir,2023)

(b) Gestalt - Gestalt therapists' work focuses more on what's going on in the moment versus what is being said in therapy. This approach involves looking at present-day unresolved issues, which might include family or relationship conflicts, and thinking about how they affect the person's well-being. This therapy can be helpful as a format of family therapy especially for those who may be unaware of interpersonal dynamics.

(c)**Existential therapies**- These therapists help clients find meaning in their lives by focusing on free will, self-determination, and responsibility. This therapy recognizes the person's freedom to make choices, as well as that person's responsibility for those choices. It focuses on the psychological experience revolving around universal human truths, or "givens" of existence such as death, freedom, isolation and the search for the meaning of life .(Iacovou et al,2015)

(d) Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT): REBT is introduced in 1955 by Albert Ellis, uses a practical, action-oriented approach to manage emotional, behavioural and cognitive disturbances. This behavioural therapy maintains that one's thinking about certain events causes emotional as well as behavioural upset. REBT provides a variety of methods to help people reformulate their dysfunctional beliefs into more sensible, realistic and helpful ones. Irrational ideas: [1]It is necessary for an individual to be loved and approved by all in all situation. [2]It is horrible when things do not go according to one's plan. [3] Felling are caused by external forces and has no control over them[.4] What's affects one's life adversely once is going to do so for the rest of one's life.[5] It is great tragedy if one cannot achieve one's goals. Logic behind five irrational ideas: [1]It is not possible to be loved and approved by all in every situation.[2]Nothing is horrible[3] Felling are caused by one's thinking and hence controllable [4]The impact of one events cannot be everlasting. The impact of bad events can be transformed by using the situation as learning experiences.[5] It hurts if one does not achieve one's goals, but it is not a tragedy. Feeling of hurt can be changed through thinking. This [RET] involve 4 stages:[1]Presentation of rational[2]overview of Irrational Assumption [3]Analysis of client problem in a rational emotive terms.[4]Teaching of clients to modify internal statement. In brief, in this therapy counsellor demonstrates the relationship between irrational ideas and unhappiness and help to the person to change the way of thinking and to abandon irrational ideas. (Abrams & Ellis, 1994).Humanistic counselling is often used to address depression, trauma, self-esteem and relationship issues, substance use disorder, trouble coping with chronic health problems and feelings of being worthless.

(5) **Holistic Approach/Model**: Holistic and integrative therapy involves integrating various elements of different theories to the practice .In this, a person is guided toward seeing themself as consisting of physical, psychological, mental and spiritual components, joining together as a whole. Social-Psychological theory by Alfred Adler a holistic approach to psychology also emphasized the importance of overcoming feeling of inferiority and gaining a sense of belonging in order to achieve success and happiness. This theory also focus on the importance of social interaction and community

involvement in order to promote individual growth.It can incorporate many different techniques and strategies based on individual needs, including art or music therapy, mindfulness, humanistic therapy, psychodynamic therapy, yoga, breath work, meditation and family systems therapy.

(6) **Others approach**: [a]. **Reality therapy** [William Glasser]: The therapy focus on people is responsible for their own behaviour and Believes that man's basic problem is moral. Responsibility as the ability to fulfil one's own needs and to do so in a way that does not deprive others of the ability to fulfil their needs. The therapy based on the person is need for love and constructive activity. Counsellor by understanding present activities of the client help him/her to plan better choices.[b]**Transactional Analysis** [given by Eric Berne]: This is more effective -within a group setting. Questionnaires, life scripts, role playing, analysis of games are used in this method. The method places a great deal of emphasis on the ego, which consists of three states: Parent, Adult and Child. Each of this states can take change of the individual to the point that his or her observable behaviour indicates "who is in change ".[c] **Problem Solving Model**: This model was created by Helen Harris Perlman, a social worker and author of "Social Casework: A Problem-solving Process." Using the problem-solving model, a social worker helps an individual identify a problem, create an action plan to solve it, and implement the solution. [d]**Ecological Approach** [by John T. Pardeck]: This perspective can be a useful treatment strategy for improving the social functioning of the client system. The social ecological model illustrates the importance of networks of people and structures that surround a child or adolescent, safeguarding their well-being and sense of agency, and supporting their optimal development. The "socio-ecological model" was developed by psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner in the late 1970s, as a way to recognize that individuals affect and are affected by a complex range of social influences and nested environmental interactions. [e]**Systems approach/ theory** [Given by Ludwig von Bertalanffy] :This approach focuses on context rather than a particular issue or individual, which can help to shed light on the interconnectedness of various components within a system. [f] **Adlerian Therapy**- Alfred Adler is the founder of the therapy. It is also called individual psychology and considered the first "common sense" therapy. The basic premise is that human beings are always "becoming," that we're always moving toward the future, and our concerns

are geared toward our subjective goals rather than an objective past. When we have unrealistic or unattainable goals, this can lead to self-defeating behaviours and discouragement which may foster neurosis, psychosis, substance abuse, criminal behaviour, or suicide. The role of the therapist is to help the client identify mistaken goals, and to help the client do away with self-centeredness, egotism, and isolation, and to develop positive, meaningful interpersonal relationships.

SCOPE OF COUNSELLING IN SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION:

[i]Social welfare departments (Family counselling centers, Children's Home) [ii] Family and Child welfare agencies [iii]Schools and colleges – Government and private [iv] Child and adolescent Guidance Centers [v]Hospitals and health services – Government, private and voluntary organizations [vi] Home for the Aged [vii] Agencies for the physically and mentally challenged [viii] Home for the terminally ill – hospice [ix] Agencies working for HIV/AIDS prevention and Rehabilitation [x]Drug de-addiction and rehabilitation centres (achievement of positive mental health, problem resolution, decision-making, improving personal effectiveness, help change and behaviour modification) [xi] Mental health projects and rehabilitation centres [xii] Youth welfare agencies [xiii] Centres for suicide prevention.

Counselling in India: Now days, Indenisation of counselling is required in this country. The Indenisation of counselling refers to adapting counselling practices to suit the cultural, social, and philosophical context of India. This involves:[a] Incorporating traditional Indian values and philosophies (e.g., yoga, mindfulness, Ayurveda). Ashtanga Yoga has shown promise in reducing symptoms of anxiety, depression, stress, and PTSD. Additionally, key psychosocial benefits, including improved emotional regulation, enhanced social functioning, and increased self-esteem, are examined in both clinical and non-clinical populations. The evidence suggests that Ashtanga Yoga serves as an effective complementary intervention for fostering emotional resilience and strengthening interpersonal-relationships. (Bhardwaj & Kumar,2024)

[b]Addressing cultural nuances and sensitivities.[c]Using locally relevant examples and metaphors.[d] Focusing on family and community dynamics.[f]Emphasizing spirituality and holistic

well-being. The goal is to make counselling more accessible, effective, and culturally relevant for Indian clients. Ujjwalarani (1992) mentioned that Counselling, as it developed in the West, was mostly an urban discipline dealing with the middle- or upper-class population and with institutional problems stemming from urbanization and modernization. In India, where the problems are more basic (overpopulation, extreme poverty, and high levels of illiteracy), the westernized concept of counselling has not reached the general public. Counselling in India can only be truly effective if its concepts, models, and research methods are tailored to the country's unique social context. Counsellors are urged to undertake a socially relevant, problem-oriented approach and educate people about the need of counselling for better living.

Issues related to counselling: There are some Common problems faced by counsellors-A. Finding work-life balance B. Client resistance and lack of engagement C. Multicultural competence D. Vicarious trauma and secondary traumatic stress E. Professional development F. Burnout G. Confidentiality and ethical dilemmas H. Limited resources .I Emotional resilience. J Insurance limitations K Place to conduct counselling L. Secession related issue-like [i] Seating arrangement's [ii] Payment of fees . [iii] Duration and frequency related problem K. Transference L. Counter transference M. Dependence N. Resistance. The study showed that the counsellors face several problems, difficulties and challenges like, lack of awareness of counselling among people, inadequate pay, job insecurity, absence of a professional body to regulate counselling, lack of network of counsellors and mental health professionals for seeking supervision and consultation, and so on (Pereira & Rekha,2017).

Current Trends: In India, counselling does not have a governing authority and person do not need a license to practice. A master's degree is more than enough to start working in the field. Pereira & Rekha, 2017 also hold the same view regarding lack of licensing authority assessing the status of counselling. However, it can be seen that there is no individual organization for accreditation of counselling programs yet (Carson, Jain, Ramirez, 2009). Usually, independent organizations and institutes provide counselling courses that rely on international bodies for accreditations (Chang et al, 2013). Organizations Like National Academy of Psychology or Indian Academy of Applied

Psychology haven't been advocating the need for accreditation & Current Status of Counselling in India licensure for counselling psychologists. This is why reliance on government is more towards provision of the same (Agrawal, 2015).

The status of counselling in India is shaped by various factors, including ancient history, educational developments, institutions and service providers such as Betterhelp, Amaha, Counsel India, Manochikitsa, Cognizavest, MindSpa, TalkItOver, Manastha, OpenCounselling, and Better LYF. Counselling has undergone a significant growth over the years but there is still a need for recognition of counselling as a separate field. The training programs have increased over the years, with different fields emerging within counselling. Some services also offer 24 hours availability of support through live chat and voice calls in India. Some even offer free counselling services where they recruit student interns and offer incentives in the form of recognition or certificates. However, challenges such as stigma, accessibility and the need for continued advocacy remain pertinent. Moving forward, efforts in education, regulation, public awareness and implementation of rules is extremely important in advancing the status of counselling in India, ensuring that people have access to quality mental health support and well-being. (Gupta,S 2024).

CONCLUSION: Counselling empowers individual to restore balance and harmony in their life. It often makes clients think more clearly and make better decisions. It can help with improving and maintaining relationships and help to relief from depression, anxiety or other mental health conditions, increased confidence and decision-making skills, ability to manage stress effectively, improved problem-solving and conflict resolution abilities. Counselling is associated with significantly greater clinical effectiveness in short-term mental health outcomes compared to usual care, but provides no additional advantages in the long-term (Bower et al ,2011).Its costs and benefits are broadly comparable to those of antidepressant medication. It is, moreover, a popular choice with many patients. Counselling has an important preventative role, especially in stress related issue as well as common mental illness: counselling has the capacity to reduce demand on psychiatric services by preventing less serious problems from becoming more serious, and by helping people to maintain reasonably good levels of mental health.

The increasing popularity of counselling as a response to emotional distress has sparked both enthusiasm and concern, raising important questions about its role and impact." The communication that takes place within counselling is conducted within a very special kind of relationship. "Trained practitioners utilize specialized techniques and, most importantly, genuine human connection to provide a unique therapeutic relationship. Human beings are social creatures who need at least some connections with others. It has several approach/model. "Despite their differences, various counselling approaches share a common goal: to harness the therapeutic potential of empathetic relationships and promote positive change.

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