

A Relook At The Usefulness Of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (Iks) In Counselling: A Focus On Views Of Zimbabwe Open University Master Of Science In Counselling Students.

Phillipa Mutswanga¹, Tom Tom², Godfrey Tsvuura³

¹Zimbabwe Open University phillipamutswangah@gmail.com

&

²Zimbabwe Open University, Department of Development Studies
grantomt@gmail.com/granchuwedi@yahoo.com

&

³Zimbabwe Open University, Department of Information Science and Records Management.
gtsvuura@gmail.com

Abstract:

Using the qualitative approach, the study determined views of Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) Master of Science in Counselling (MScC) students on the usefulness of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) in counselling. Data was collected from purposively selected participants as follows: ZOU MScC students in training (N=10); ZOU MScC awaiting graduands (N=10) and Counselling lecturers from ZOU regional centres (N=10) and two focused groups of MScC students [each with 10 participants]. Findings from the focused group discussions and document analysis were used to augment the unstructured interview findings. Issues of the paradigm shift towards IKS in development, controversies on intellectual property of IKS and contributions of IKS to knowledge development were the main thrust behind this study. Data was descriptively analysed and coded according to emerging themes and patterns. Narrative accounts of analysed documents supported the findings and where possible critical analyses on raised issues were made. Results revealed that, ZOU's Open Distance Learning (ODL) delivery mode was the best tool to disseminate IKS. The study participants found their learning material better IKS biased than at undergraduate programme. That meant that, there was need to relook at the undergraduate programme to make it IKS conversant. The study recommended that, IKS be ingrained into all study matters for sustainable developments in Zimbabweans' livelihoods and it further suggested that, through IK one tended to understand the self better as an African. That was further proposed to be supported by marked IKS days where people from diversified institutions showcased how their systems embraced IKS.

Keynotes: Usefulness, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Counselling, ZOU Masters.

Introduction: In the current trend, views and values of indigenous knowledge systems have

been seen as little better than superstitions and reminders of the

primitive past (Matowanyika, 1997). Throughout the centuries, societies have developed diverse set of counselling systems to coordinate and regulate the actions of individual members. According to Matowanyika (1997) indigenous systems have long been considered backward and primitive by westerners and colonisers, and western knowledge systems have tended to subdue indigenous knowledge systems by flavouring it with foreign attributes. This study is based on the relevance of indigenous knowledge systems in counselling. Indigenous counselling has been used in counselling domestic conflicts within homes and societies. Counselling is a process of helping clients come to terms with their feelings and thoughts or selves. It is a response to human needs which takes into account that one's heritage builds up the being. Folk knowledge could also be termed indigenous knowledge. Both or either of the two, that is indigenous and modern approaches of counselling may be employed to help clients gain insight into their problems. Literature confirms that debates and questions have been raised on the usefulness of IKS in counselling and indigenous counselling has been labelled inferior to western counselling approaches which are sometimes termed modern. Lalonde (2006), and Maree, Ebersohn and Molepo (2006) fore-warns us that it is a mistake to think of indigenous knowledge systems as old fashioned, backward, static or unchanging. Controversy therefore surrounds this issue especially amongst born free young counsellors who are the current products of (too exposed to modern technology and less to their traditional mannerisms) training institutions. The controversy has in some instances caused confusion to these young counsellors leading to them shunning indigenous approaches. Basing on the collectivistic and communal theory the study qualitatively sought views of Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) Master of Science (MScC) students and their lecturers on the usefulness of IKS in counselling where they also cited examples of indigenous counselling and how Open Distance

Learning (ODL) could be exploited to enhance the use and dissemination of indigenous counselling information. According to collectivistic and communal theory, counsellors are expected to treat clients in accordance to their context as shall be discussed throughout this study.

Traditionally, Africans have the tendency to eat food from one plate. This is not done for the sake of it, but very purposively carried because as they eat from the same plate, male and female elders watch closely displayed behavior and reactions and apply psychological means to enquire status of situations, about relationships, face outlook, body language and why a change in behaviour. After eating, brief enquiring would be done to find outstanding issues and discuss the solutions and make sure that issues are positively handled. Due to close scrutiny and analysis, family members' issues were promptly addressed before they got out of hand. Traditional African elders carried out such exercise to help their members stay at peace with the self and others [inter/intra-personal issues were resolved]. Through the *circular* philosophy and practices, next day's errands were always discussed before family members retired to bed to make sure that all members were ready to partake their role because they were aware that one could not productively contribute to development if his/her soul was not at peace with the self. This brings to our realisation that counselling has always been practiced and that it is very essential for everyone if productive livelihoods are to be achieved. The contributions of a sober mind to knowledge, information and development were an issue of concern throughout generations as shall be summarized by this study.

Background to the study

Lotriet et.al (2009) explain that the world over, people hold varied perspectives towards the use of IKS in counselling. The knowledge was usually

creatively adapted and constantly used to answer to the needs of the citizens. Speculations suggest that IKS counselling is rated inferior to western approaches. Arguments suggest that, even the western approaches are generally considered indigenous knowledge to prevailing approaches in counselling in their context too but they are not cited as inferior as is being done to African approaches. Why? Most probably this study will provide most of the unanswered questions in our minds. Speculations also condemn too the inferiority measures rendered to IKS since western approaches are unable to totally address counselling issues related to African Zimbabwean culture and tradition. Thus, as observed by the researchers, the western counselling approaches may be regarded too as inferior to solving most 'Africanised' issues. Unfortunately the narrow understanding of IKS in general has significantly allowed western ways of counselling problems to overpower indigenous counselling and rate them as superior to counselling issues.

The adopted theories for this study, that is, the collectivistic theory and communal theory remind us that clients do not come from a vacuum but they come from a family unit that in turn has a cultural background which has molded each member to what he/she is. It is speculated that their being no written Africanised documents and theories on indigenous counselling are indicators that IK is unimportant because according to the western thought important things are in print. Hence, the Africans considered their knowledge memory capacity as good enough to respond to counselling issues plus the day-to-day stories and proverbs were taken as enough reminders. In line with collectivistic and communal theories the study acknowledges that every client has his/her own culture which counsellors should always take note of before sessions start. All raised issues led to questioning the solo contribution of western approaches to counselling African clients. Due to

the hidden Africanism involved African clients literature notes with concern that in most instances modern approaches fail to provide relevant answers to their problems as already alluded by Lalonde (2006).

With the hope to promote the usefulness of IKS in counselling the study interrogated the views of ZOU MScC students and their lecturers and document analysed modules to attain their perspectives and wishes on the ZOU MScC programme and curriculum. However, Zimbabwe Open University Master in Counselling programme attempted to expose students to both approaches in the training curriculum by offering modules such as Afrocentric counselling and Multicultural counseling, which this study still claimed to be very inadequate if IKS is to be seriously considered. It is the hope of this study to make people equally respect and consider indigenous counselling as a means of helping clients in their contexts. It is against this background that the study sought to establish the usefulness of indigenous counselling with the hope that the information would help young African counsellors to equally respect and consider the importance and usefulness of indigenous counselling. Thus, this study relooked at the usefulness of IKS in counselling through answering the following questions: What is IKS in counselling? What is the usefulness of IKS in the counselling curriculum? How can research work and ODL mode of delivery be utilised to transform counselling training programmes? What could be done to meet the usefulness of IKS in counselling?

Conceptual Framework

Collectivism is a theory of anthropology/philosophy which views society as superior to its individual members and considerations to issues are given with a view to

communal approval and benefits. Here one's being is determined by the collective good and issues are viewed with a relational lense for example, as briefed in the background the family units still consult each other when a family member is getting married. The married woman according to this theory is collectively owned. Msuya (2007) supports studies that aim to enhance appreciation of indigenous counselling because such knowledge is claimed to be diminishing. Such information should not diminish before it is captured and it is the very reason for carrying out this study to reflect that, even at the highest level of education IKS is equally very essential to academia. Collectivism demands that the group be more important than the individual (Landauer and Rowlands, 2001). The drive of this theory is to make people accept themselves as Africans and their cultural aspects. This study is hoped to make counsellors and the trainers relook at IKS as an essential asset in the counselling field. On the other hand individualistic theory emphasizes on the philosophy of autonomy, where an individual has self concern with individual rights which is opposed to collectivistic theory. Due to these differences Lalonde (2006) and Maree et.al (2006) observed that western approaches failed to address counselling issues of the marginalised groups in a relevant manner. Key concepts to the study were counselling ideologies. A multi-application approach has been recommended by this study.

Literature Review

Definition of IKS

Indigenous counselling (IKS) is a body of knowledge built up by a group of people through a generation of living in close contact with nature (Warren, 1991 and Johnson, 1992). According to Enriquez (1990) and Kim (1990) IKS is a system of psychological thought and practice that is

rooted in a particular cultural tradition. Berry et.al (1996) further suggest that, it can be described as folk counselling whose roots of ethnocentrism lie in the intellectual tradition of cultural sciences (Geisteswissenschaften) and is deeply rooted in the cultural views, theories, conjectures, classifications, assumptions and metaphors, rather than the natural sciences (Naturwissenschaften) which may not even bear cultural views. Cultural traditions give rise to folk counselling which is based on indigenous knowledge systems that includes theories, methods and data, secondly the real stuff of counselling lies in the daily mundane activity of people rather than in continued experimentally induced behavior (Enriquez, 1990 and Kim, 1990). The same authors recognised that, people are people because of their background, thus all their counselling issues should not ignore their background since it will help to interpret presented issues in terms of the local frames of reference. Of course, Western counselling is one such indigenous counselling but because it has taken the role and status of counselling, the term is usually reserved for the Afrocentric perspectives that reflect the traditions, beliefs and ideologies of non-western societies and it includes counter theories that stand in some opposition to Western counselling approaches (Berry et al, 1996). Sinha (1981) claims that this has come about because to a certain extent indigenous counselling have shown a reaction or rejection of the dominance of Western approaches in a culture (Sinha, 1981). This is subject to debate. IKS is a unique non formal and orally transmitted cultural knowledge that is context specific as echoed by the collectivistic and communal theories.

Usefulness of IKS in Counselling

Lalonde (2006) alludes that, not all western approaches can successfully address Zimbabwean Africanised mannerisms. The uniqueness of the

Zimbabwean mannerism is embedded in the values and norms of culture. Warren (1991) and Johnson (1992) suggest that, it is important to learn how people view and interact with the environment in order that their knowledge can be mobilised. It includes the social, political, economic and spiritual aspects and the ways of life of a group. Therefore taking all this into consideration, IKS is knowledge of a cultural group based on the day-to-day behaviour of its members, for which local points of view provide the paradigms that guide the collection and interpretation of counselling information and this is in accordance with the collectivistic and communal theories.

As noted by Sinha (1986), indigenous counselling attempts to develop a behaviour science that matches the socio-cultural realities of one's own society. A counsellor with such a background is likely to come up with informed options to counselling sessions that are within reach to the African client. Msuya (2007) counted IKS as important knowledge which influenced planning as well as decision making in local issues like counselling, which is one of the key requirements in counselling in general. Wilson (2008); Msuya (2007); Nkebukwa (2007) and Scheinman (2002) regard IKS as a solving mechanism to traditional day today issues and they also consider it to be an effective means in helping to access the poor with the information they can control so that when empowered, they continue to use the information to generate solutions to their problems. It therefore makes people realise their potentials and capabilities and at the same time it creates a realisation of resources in their environment that can be exploited for their own good. Another advantages of indigenous counselling is that, there is likely to be a reasonable match between the counselling phenomena to be understood and the description and interpretation of the phenomena. Mismatches are likely to be found where one

attempts to understand an African society using western ideologies (Berry et al 1996). Application of Euro centered theories, for example, the Freudian theory is likely to leave a lot of counselling issues uncovered for an African.

Relevance of IKS in Counselling Curriculum

Msuya (2007) proposes a broad based curriculum to allow wide exploration and sharing of experiences and fundamental knowledge about indigenous counselling. Global experiences, for example, the University of Malta in Valletta's Masters curriculum has an MA in Transcultural Counselling which is indicative of the importance of IKS in countries outside Africa. One of the aims of this course was to provide exchange of cultural view point and experiences surrounding contemporary countries. The university further claims that their curriculum exposes trainees to the appropriate discourse in indigenous counselling and also a lot of opportunities and practice. On the other hand the University of Scranton proposes a curriculum that allows a lot of exchange of information to help create collaborative global curriculum initiatives. According to the researchers Africans are the intellectual property owners of IKS though even to date some of the folk counselling skills remain unknown in print but they are culturally known and respected by the majority of elders. However, this is further disputed and claimed to be diminishing as new generations [the born frees] seem to overlook it and see it as an old fashioned mode of dealing with issues of Africans. Thus, it is the wish of this paper to exploit the remains of the intellectual property of folk counselling through involving the knowledgeable elders before they depart from us so the this intellectual property is taken as a legacy from one generation to other. The aim of this study is not to block modern counselling skills but to use both where

folk counseling is seen fitting well into modern Africanism.

Use of Research in Indigenous Counselling

Research is letting down this area because, as noted by Berry et al (1996), the academic community is not generally concerned with what may be called research for policy but more with research for prestige which is largely theory-oriented and academic. The tendency has therefore been for the counsellors to look to the West and be more concerned about the recognition of their researches by the Western counsellors and psychologists at the expense of their heritage rather than by the fact of their relevance to the crucial needs of the country or particular people or society (Berry, et al 1996 and Msuya, 2007 and Lotriet et.al, 2009).

According to Sinha (1986), research went through four phases starting with pre-independence during which Indian cultural practices remained tied to the apron strings of the West and did not display any sign of maturing. Then came a period of post independence expansion where research was done for prestige and not for the benefit of the concerned society. The third period was one of problem-oriented research during which concerns for breaking dependency were joined with those for more applied research. Finally came the period of indigenisation, in which the imported Western counselling and psychology underwent a process of cultural transformation to become more informed by traditional societies' social and cultural traditions relevant to the country's economic and political needs. This is the period this study is attempting to address. Berry et al (1996) propose the need for a more radical approach than making modifications by a process of indigenisation but to develop indigenous counselling approaches from cultural basics which Diaz-Guerrero (1982) described as a set of

culturally significant statements that are held by local culture and history. According to Sinha (1986) and Diaz-Guerrero (1982), indigenous counselling movement protested against counselling approaches that perpetuated the colonial status of the dominating society, the imposition on a third world country of western approaches and counselling that was used to exploit the masses.

Berry et al (1996) and Msuya (2007) suggest that indigenous knowledge cannot be achieved where the foreign language is used as a tool for the identification and rediscovery of indigenous concepts and as an appropriate medium for the delineation and articulation of traditional realities together with growing trend to achieve counselling that is relevant to local cultural phenomena. Msuya (2007) proposes that researchers should be prepared to examine any other aspects of a culture that may play an important role in shaping the IK in question. There are two basic reasons why it is important for research to consider IK when carrying out research projects. First and foremost incorporating IK into research projects can contribute to local empowerment and development increasing self sufficiency and strengthening self determination (Thrupp, 1919). Utilising IK in research projects and management plans gives legitimacy and credibility in the eyes of both local people and outside societies, increasing cultural pride and the motivation to solve local problems with local ingenuity and resources promotes local capacity.

Msuya (2007) reminds the study of the importance of being gender sensitive, thus encourages researches to include both men and women because in the past little priority was given to women as they were labeled to be of little knowledge. IKS research and information should therefore tap information from all social groups including the disabled and the HIV and AIDS positive (Nkebukwa, 2007).

ODL as a Tool to disseminate IKS Counselling Information

Lotriet et al (2009) observed gaps in use and acquisition of knowledge, access to the technology and information. As is noted, owners of indigenous knowledge are likely to be poor in technological usage of ODL tools of learning like E-learning and many others while on the other hand the so called conversant in technological assets may too be poor in IK information and its usage too. The same authors cautioned us to be aware that western rationality and their technologies may be perceived as threats to indigenous identity and knowledge thus, may be treated by the indigenous people as moves towards their exploitation because of past impacts of colonialism. Means should be created to help every community access technologies acquired in the country. Msuya (2007) portrayed IKS as the best tool of dissemination of information because it is obtained from the indigenous people and when discoveries or findings are brought back acceptance and implementation are likely not to be a problem. There is room to rebrand the information creating room for new learning and can reach out to many within a short period of time and has an added value as students study in their context and practice the learnt skills in their context as they continue with their studies (Sukati and Chandaraiah (2005). Dissemination of information is an important aspect to the study though the ODL mode is not commonly used yet it is very effective in reach output and is cost effective too. Sukati and Chandaraiah (2005) identify many more tools like radio, television, teleconferencing, study circles, audio video, modules and journals.

Way forward

A common criticism of indigenisation is that, there will be a proliferation of counsellors, if every population had its own psychology/counselling. It would be an infinite regress to an individual psychology yet it's possible for a population (Berry et al 1996). A balance therefore should be found. On the other hand, it does not make sense to ignore the achievements of the western counselling and to reinvent the wheel in each culture. However, on the other hand, ethnocentrism of western counselling/psychology makes it necessary to take over viewpoints on human behavior into account. One goal of cross cultural counselling is the eventual development of universal approaches to counselling that incorporates all indigenous (including western) knowledge. How can one know or make sure that all diverse data and cultural points of view have been incorporated into eventual universal counselling unless nets are cast as widely as possible in order to gather all relevant information. The answer may be the development of counselling approaches that are sensitive to cultural variation, thus the emergence of cross-cultural counselling is regarded as an important move in the right direction. On the other hand, the move is taken as a sign of guilty of using the third world as a kind of 'natural laboratory and has been known to exploit its human resources in various other ways (Warwick, 1980). Counselling approaches can be imported as well as exported as is (from Western cultures to developing countries) adapting imported ones by indigenising them resembles the emic strategy or resembles acculturation which is an etic strategy.

Objective (s) of the Study

Although theoretical arguments view indigenous counselling approaches as inferior to western approaches that are described as modern and more appealing to all counseling, this study intends to prove the usefulness of IKS in counselling

through investigating perceptions and attitudes of counselling lecturers and MScC students and also assess the relevance of this knowledge in their careers. It aimed to encourage researchers and knowledge owners to claim rights to contributed indigenous knowledge. It also investigated the usefulness of the ODL mode in dissemination of IKS and sought the way forward on the issue.

Methodology

The qualitative study was premised on using unstructured face to face interviews and telephone interviews with Master of Counselling students to find out whether training included elements of indigenised knowledge that are currently at a peak in academia issues. The study also elicited information from focused group discussions with two different groups of ten each from Harare and Midlands region. This was done to help augment interview findings and document analyse the twelve Master of Science modules to find out how much purposive IKS was included to influence transformation, respect and use either of the approaches appropriately in the different circumstances that they apply, (folk or indigenous) counselling approaches or western approaches or both. The study is revealed whether the training curriculum considered the shift in thinking towards indigenised learning which also took cognisance of indigenous counselling approaches beside the popular modern western theories.

Research Design

A qualitative approach was subjected to the study because the participants were studied purposively

in their context to help elicit information on whether their training programmes took IKS as a useful aspect of counselling and also establish whether it was useful to counselling training programmes.

The Sample and Sampling Procedure

A total of 10 lecturers who had completed the MScC were purposively selected for unstructured telephone interviews to help gather their opinion on how far ZOU's Masters in Science Counselling training programme addressed the paradigm shift towards indigenised academia. Then, 10 practicing counsellors awaiting graduation and 10 students in training were also purposively selected from students who visited the regional centres who were in Masters programme and were interested on the topic. However, although the study came up with a sample size point of saturation was used to determine whether enough data had been collected. Two focused group took part in the study. Twelve modules were studied to check how far they addressed folk or indigenised counselling approaches. The lecturers and students also gave their views about these modules.

Data analysis Procedures

Consent was sought first with each participant before the interviews were carried and also permission to analyse the modules was sought from the Faculty Dean since permission was already sought from the university. Information obtained through telephone interviews plus that from face to face unstructured in-depth interviews

were merged and descriptive data analysis was used to obtain results. The responses were manually coded and put into emerging patterns and themes. To ensure validity, reliability and utility of data the results from in-depth interviews, focus groups, observations and from analysed documents were synthesised and shown how they augmented each other. Here, data spelt out clearly where they supported or argued against each other.

Findings

The relationship of IKS to counselling

The majority of counselling lecturers defined counselling as folk knowledge that helped Africans to cope with situations while the minority took it as cultural knowledge that a counsellor should always take note of about their clients when carrying out counselling sessions. The MScC graduands awaiting training defined it equally as proposed by the minority members of the group. Taking it from the field of counselling both groups were correct. On the other hand, MScC students in training took it as client's cultural background information which took into consideration clients' values, beliefs, language and ways of understanding the self.

Usefulness of IKS in Counselling

MScC graduands highly regarded IKS as useful in counselling because it helped the counsellors or teachers to understand the client's emerging behaviours. The majority of MScC students in counselling equally saw IKS as useful in

counselling because it gave room to favourable action and directed counsellors to give options that were within reach of the clients. However, the minority supported the same differently and pointed out that, IKS skilled counsellors with knowledge on how to tackle different cultures of people in sessions. Furthermore, the majority of MScC lecturers proposed that folk counselling tapped into clients' background information and a few supported the idea by suggesting that, the tapped knowledge was used in favour of clients, such as, language the clients is comfortable with and the reason displaying certain behaviours, such as, not giving or giving eye contact to counsellor and concealing family secrets.

Examples of IKS in Counselling.

The minority of students awaiting graduation who took part in this study gave the belief system, its values and norms as one of the examples of IKS in counselling. On the other hand, the majority of them affirmed "*Padare*" in Shona which was in Ndebele, "*Unkhudleni*" who gave advice to young boys on courtship, men on gender issues, milestones experiences and their solutions as one of the examples of IKS in counselling. Other cited examples included, folktales related to manhood/motherhood experiences and challenges. The study participants who were in training gave personality moulding and every elderly member's roles as other key examples of IKS in counselling. They further suggested other examples which included: intelligence issues where the youths want to know more about a grand-relation whom they are likened-to in similarities in identity and deeds; marriage issues; how to make peace after some disputes; families and issues of disability

and the past. One of the participants who was Ndebele speaking revealed a very interesting Ndebele examples where a mediator feed the two disputing people or groups of people from one clan with ashes as a sign of peace between them. However, if the two settled the issues without a mediator playing the suggested role they both bled to death. In Ndebele this act of peace-building was described as, “*ukukhumisana umlotha.*” Counselling and peace was brought through such acts. The researchers found this a very relevant example which generations may need to be aware of and equally use it for peace-building.

The counselling lecturers were also in support of the above described examples using different expressions. They argued that, although people claimed to be modernised in their mannerisms like marriage, they still consulted the collective group for who could be the best marriage partner, amount of *lobola* and the elders played different roles at marriage ceremonies of family meeting according to their wisdom on the issues under discussions. Other examples included: counselling by aunts and uncles on prohibition of sex before marriage; taboos; challenges and solutions to day-to-day issues; concealment of family or clan issues and involved challenges.

The extent to which MScC curriculum addressed IKS issues in counselling

The majority of MScC students in training pointed out that, their curriculum did not clearly spell out the relevance of IKS in counselling besides the two modules, namely, Multicultural Counselling and Perspectives in Afro-centric Counselling. The MScC students awaiting graduation also described

the curriculum as having very little emphasis on the use of IKS in counselling. Thus, they found the curriculum not IKS friendly to greater extent. In relation to above ideas, both groups suggested that, every module should address IKS application to help learners who are future counsellors understand it so that correct information is disseminated and also understood by modern youths. They further proposed that, if modules are silent about IKS or indigenous counseling, tutors are likely to take it as a taken for granted issue yet to most of us although it is our knowledge that we live with but it is unknown, thus, could be described as hidden curriculum that is unknown by its recipients.

Counselling lecturers who participated in study equally pointed out that, the curriculum was not clear on indigenous knowledge systems, thus there was need to revisit it so that when born free trainees come to terms with the usefulness of IKS in counselling.

How ODL could be utilised to communicate the usefulness of IKS counselling

The study findings revealed that, MScC modules addressed IKS counselling issues to a lesser extent thus, they proposed that, all modules needed a revisit to include the application of IKS. They further suggested that, ODL was the best mode to express the usefulness of IKS in counselling because of its nature and its reach-out input. The minority in training MScC students further proposed that, it was also the best mode of communicating to the elders that they should not give up on IKS even institutions of higher learning, such as, universities backed them. Thus,

this should be instrumental in bringing understanding about the importance of IKS in counselling and Africans' day-to-day living. It was also proposed by the lecturers that, both counselling programmes needed to be rebrand to make sure that every module explains how IKS could be applied. The researchers saw it as a noble idea that influenced the use and exploitation of what people already had in their community and was cost effective and affordable too.

How researchers could contribute to IKS and counselling training programmes

The majority of MScC students awaiting graduation felt that, researchers should go to where IKS information is, show interest in the subject, information sharing and its importance not only to studies but to the nation at large from one generation to the other. Such a move was considered to help the owners of IKS feel important, essential and aware that knowledge does not rot or wither like un-nurtured plants if well disseminated from one generation to the other. They further felt that, through collaborative research-work with the owners of the intellectual property, which is IKS, co-publications could help the situation. On the other hand, MScC students in training proposed that researchers could contribute to the usefulness of IKS in counselling through developing Africanised theories in addition to the modern ones. They further suggested that, through continuous research in the area that could build the importance of IKS. The same study participants also felt that, there was need to train

people on the relevance of IKS from grassroots to the top and also incorporate elements of IKS in pupils' readers and even celebrate and take active participation in IKS Days where the government sectors and all institutions play leading roles. Lecturers who took part in this study felt that a lot of field studies needed to be carried out how different communities applied IKS in counselling so that people learn from each other and understand each other with an informed notion. They further suggested that, people with such backgrounds were likely to be easily convinced on the importance of indigenous counselling.

What could be done to address the usefulness of IKS in training programmes?

The MScC students waiting graduation proposed that, indigenous counselling should be taught in such a way that people develop an appreciation for it and emphasise that, both approaches could be applied interchangeably or improved to come up with modernised folk counselling. They also proposed that, the owners of the intellectual property of folk counselling could be used as models and visiting tutors. MScC students in training felt that, there was need to encourage students to carry out researches on indigenous counselling; carryout awareness campaigns; follow up on the awareness campaigns; form IKS clubs; run club competitions and publicise the work and also write textbooks about indigenous counselling. Lecturers felt that, modules needed to be revisited to include IKS issues and describe the various applications that may apply to each situation.

Table 1: Module Analysis

Module Code	Course Title	Researcher's Module Analysis	Participants' Responses Module Analysis
MScC 501	Multicultural Counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lacks application skills. ▪ Does not dwell much on indigenous knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Was a good starting point of IKS in the curriculum but spoils it all by explanations without a touch base to Zimbabwean Africanised counselling. ▪ There is urgent need to add more practicals in order to interact with students on indigenous counselling.
MScC 502	Advanced Research Methods and Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How research and statistics knowledge could be applied in favour of and also to understand indigenous counselling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Needs to highlight aspects of research that can improve IKS in counselling.
MScC 503	Psychometrics in Counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lacks indigenous psychometrical tools and ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writer should develop indigenous theories which student may compare and contrast their application in counselling field.
MScC 504	Gender Issues in Counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expresses indigenous issues to a lesser extent. Needs more input on indigenous gender counselling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cases about the Chinese and Indians are discussed in depth while gender issues on the Zimbabwean African is scanty and not IKS biased.
MScC 505	Disability Management, Employment and Counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Needs to cite importance of indigenous knowledge and discuss how families treated and managed disability issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Add application issues of indigenous counselling.

		in their life circles.	
MScC 506	Pastoral Counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IKS information needs to be added to the module to make it user friendly with all religious beliefs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is too Christian and psychological too and does not touch base with traditional religious knowledge.
MScC 507	Advanced Principles and Strategies in Counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lacks indigenous counselling principles and strategies. IKS needs to be added so that an appreciation is developed its use and application in counselling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This module should be revisited to incorporate a lot of IKS counselling information that is missing in it.
MScC 508	Philosophy, Morals and Ethics in Counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An explanation on how traditional Zimbabwean Africans used to 'philosophise' is missing in the module yet it is essential to help determine where IKS counselling is coming from and where it is going. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to have our own philosophy written about Africans by Zimbabwean African, this is likely to enhance and attract global interest on IKS counselling.
MScC 509	Internship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage presentation on indigenous counselling so as to cultivate an appreciation and their use in actual counselling sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include outreach and IKS exchange programmes on the course. Encourage research in IKS counselling.
MSCC 510	Dissertation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This should be linked to MSCC502 which should be used as a reference text to dissertations and research and statistics information on indigenous counselling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One will not dare carry out research on indigenous counselling unless good background knowledge about it is given. All modules should integrate indigenous counselling.

MScC 511	Counselling Skills for Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students have nothing to benefit on indigenous counselling for management. There is need to integrate such information into the module. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The module does not skill us with indigenous knowledge in management.
MScC 512	Abnormal Psychology in Counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IKS on abnormal psychology needs to be factored in to allow the application of both modern and indigenous counselling into abnormal psychology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous counselling to abnormal issues is essential to give good background to the subject but it is missing in this module.
MScC 605	Rehabilitation Counselling (Asset Based Counselling Therapy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well detailed on modern psychological application but is too brief on indigenous counselling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A very interactive module with a lot of psychological experiences related to modern approaches to counselling.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MScC 514 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perspectives in Afrocentric Counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempts to address indigenous counselling but leaves a lot to be desired on knowledge application. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlights a lot of Zimbabwean Africanised ways of counselling and addressing issues but does not give details about SADC.

Responses from the Focused Group discussions

The summary of responses from the focused group discussions and unstructured interview findings suggest that there should be an IK day where people display writings, art, drama and observe counselling triads sessions. DVDs were also quoted as a good method of disseminating information on indigenous counselling. Participants further added that nowadays the rural folk are exposed to media through either connected ZESA or solar systems and they use

DVDs where they play music. They commented that through such means through put to rural areas is fast, cheap and accessible. The participants in focused group discussions further suggested that ZOU should establish IKS days where it researches and displays and exchange IKS information with people from all works of life.

Discussions

Research Q1: Define IKS in counselling

Issues about the identity of African IKS are in fact one of the many challenges confronting African philosophers, historians, anthropologists and educators. The study defined IKS as traditional or folk knowledge that people in the past used to advise people, which we now term counselling. Warwick (1980) suggests that counselling approaches can be imported as well as exported as is from Western cultures to Developing countries but they may be adapted by indigenizing them where seen fit. Issues about the identity of African IKS are in fact one of the many challenges confronting African philosophers, historians, anthropologists and educators. IK is embedded in a dynamic system in which spiritually, kinship, local politics and other factors are tied together and influence one another.

Research Q2: State the usefulness of IKS in counselling.

The study revealed that through indigenous counseling, problems are treated within the means of the Zimbabwe African clients. The problems according to the findings are more understood by a counsellor in the similar context resulting in establishing cost effective means. Their use as portrayed by the MScC ZOU students leaves a generational legacy of knowledge of indigenous counselling. To support dissemination of this knowledge, Msuya (2007) suggests that

researchers should carry out a lot of researches about this concept and have it published. Generally study findings call for transformation of all literature that it should always cover aspects of IKS and its application. Application was found by the study to be a missing element in the MScC ZOU curriculum yet it is very essential because it enhances the use of IKS in counselling through appreciation after noting the results of its use. In summary, IKS in counselling influenced planning and decisions about clients. In other words clients were taken and understood in their context and solutions were sought too from their context.

Research Q3: Critically analyse the counselling curriculum in relation to IKS usefulness.

Most counsellors were handicapped by their professional training that has witnessed the western domain seeing the world through western tinted lenses. It is noted that most of the 'born frees' do not appreciate ritual, African religion and practices of *sangoma* [traditional] healing and counselling. MScC appreciate the study and hoped that all who shall read this study shall use this information as a turning point to see the good in indigenous counselling. Philosophies are becoming interconnected with new developments in curriculum and pedagogies as portrayed by the curriculum of the University of Sydney's curriculum which has attracted an attempt to

intertwine IKS into education and all training programmes through traditional native games and exchange programmes, which the ZOU MScC students and lecturers also equally proposed to enhance the spread, the use and importance of indigenous counselling. The study is in agreement with literature and universities which encourage exchange programmes and broadening of the IKS counselling curriculum. A revisit to all modules was called for if trainees are to go out as skilled multicultural counsellors.

Research Q4: How can research work and ODL mode of delivery be utilized to transform counselling training programmes?

Research is letting down this area because the academic community is not generally concerned with what maybe called research for policy but more with research for prestige which is largely theory-oriented and academic. The tendency has therefore been for the counsellors to look to the West and be more concerned about the recognition of their researches by the Western counsellors and psychologists at the expense of their heritage rather than by the fact of their relevance to the crucial needs of the country or particular people or society (Berry et.al 1996). Students and lecturers also equally proposed to enhance the spread, the use and importance of indigenous counselling. ODL was reported by

study findings as the best and cheapest means to disseminate IK counselling information. It was said to have the highest and fastest through put to people.

Research Q5: What could be done to enhance the usefulness of IKS in counselling?

The respondents suggested the following:

- Inclusion of IKS in counselling curriculum/programmes.
- Changing the impression that IKS are inferior to modern knowledge systems.
- Sensitising counsellors on the need to include IKS in their profession.
- Prioritising IKS in all spheres of life.

Summary of Findings

Warwick (1980) suggests that counselling approaches can be imported as well as exported as is from Western cultures to Developing countries but they may be adapted by indigenizing them where seen fit. Both the MScC students and the lecturers suggested that to strike a balance between traditional and modern knowledge of counselling every course should address IKS issues related to the course. As confirmed by the lecturers this is likely to help create curriculum experiences that provide students with

fundamental knowledge in indigenous counselling and in turn provide students extensive folk or indigenous counselling training. Cultural exchange programmes were equally cited as enhancers of indigenous counselling and would further expose trainees to the appropriate discourse and wide exchange of cultural viewpoints and lead to collaborative global curriculum initiatives in indigenous counselling. The concept needs training although Lotriet et al (2009) claim that training in IKS is as old as the human race itself. Yes, but then, it is not static so constant trainings and updating may be called for. As proposed by all respondents and supported by Msuya (2007), who noted that there was a threat of IK extinction due to lack of recording and problems associated with preservation and protection of knowledge from pirates.

The study is in agreement with the notion that indigenous people relay on their memories for indigenous counselling and there are no theories to refer to as per western perspective because folktales are some of their reference points. The study further suggested controversies over intellectual property which, according to findings, could be minimized by explanation. The study revealed the essence of the information to the community and should always acknowledge them as owners of the information. Due to fear of

piracy, indigenous people have taught their communities to conceal indigenous information and the west blame their knowledge for this. In line to this Msuya (2007) reported that lack of written memory on IKS led to its marginalization. On this aspect Scheinman (2002); Nkebukwa (2007) and Msuya (2007) noted that some researchers have made IK discoveries for their benefit without the knowledge of the concerned indigenous people yet for continued use of discovered knowledge the profits should be returned back to the owners of the knowledge. In support Msuya (2007) justifies that when empowered with discovered IK communities may use the knowledge as an added value in their context and even use the information to solve their critical problems. The emphasis here is that research findings should always be ploughed back to the people for whom it is meant, just as what this study is doing now. Such knowledge, support and acknowledgement of owners of IKS is likely to make them want and at the same time see the importance of sharing in folk counselling and remove fear of piracy.

Village clubs, writing competitions and village newsletters and village libraries were some of the suggested means of disseminating IKS counselling information. Use of DVDs was mentioned and supported by both focused group

discussions. They also suggested that institutions of higher education should take a leading role in disseminating IK in general by asking writers to write about it, for example, call for papers competitions in indigenous counselling where acknowledge owners of IKS also take part and display their skilledness. In view of the findings, the researchers felt that village clubs and institutional IKS campaigns should also invite the archival institution to capture such information for future use. The National Archives of Zimbabwe has the mandate to capture and tape IKS for posterity. This way, the knowledge would be easier to retrieve whenever, the generations of *born frees* require to make reference to it or use it. Thus, the knowledge is likely not to get diminished or lost.

Recommendations

The study findings led to the following recommendations:

- Establish policies which incorporate indigenous values, principles, teachings and education into all aspects of andragogy and pedagogy in counselling.
- Intertwine IKS into education and all training programmes through traditional native games and exchange programmes and other activities to enhance the spread, the use and importance of indigenous counselling.
- The curriculum should be composed of various tribal backgrounds and intended for use by other people besides natives. Cultural and historical contexts would also need to be

highlighted to underpin where one is going and is coming from.

- It was also recommended that counselling programmes should strengthen their curriculum by putting many electives on IKS in counselling.
- Need for special training in IKS. That there was need for government and related institutions to take an active role in reviving the diminishing African counselling skills and approaches by equipping its trainees with both indigenous and modern counselling approaches.
- Lecturers were encouraged to carry out as many researches and make publication as much as possible and develop Africanised Zimbabwean IKS in counselling so that other nations learn about us and our indigenous counselling ways.
- There is need to develop appropriate IK policies and practices which take universities to grassroots areas for learning and information sharing.
- Policies should support establishment of rural resource centres, newsletters and libraries with a lot of IK information. That IKS should be taught from pre school education to tertiary to create room for its use and appreciation by our born frees.

Conclusion

It was deduced from the findings that counselling is the key to knowledge frontiers for sustainable growth and sustainable development because it is only a sober mind that can productively contribute to development and peaceful living. When the

soul healing is done within the context it usually benefits the individual and community at large. The study therefore recommends that through ODL IKS can easily be disseminated to all communities at large. The usefulness of IKS in counselling is therefore overemphasized and considered key to soul healing for sustainable livelihood. Textbook authors were encouraged to include IKS to promote understanding of their work by both the ancient and modern generations. Rural counselling was sighted as an area that needed counselling too but needed to be researched on. It was noted with concern that the circular philosophy was diminishing slowly but at a greater rate in urban areas. The study suggested that rural people need not board buses to town to seek counselling but it should be brought to everyone's doorstep by making sure that every village has a skilled counsellor through ODL. Thus the study findings indicated that there was need to carry out more research on IKS counselling in general and more with a focus in the rural areas. As a way forward, the study proposed further researches on merits and application of folk counselling and IKS in different fields of life.

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