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Counseling Theories and their Application in the Context of Schools

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Abstract

Adolescence is a very trying moment in ones' life. Many people fail to understand adolescence and in some states, it is termed as a disease. Most adolescents in the Kenyan society are in high schools. At this stage in life, a lot of changes occur in their bodies, a phenomenon that leaves them with more questions about who they really are. For them to negotiate this stage effectively, they need both parental and professional help. Bearing in mind that they spend most of their time in school, the schools have a duty to provide a comprehensive program aimed at helping the adolescents navigate this stage in the right way. This article, thus, sets out to intensively look at the overwhelming issues in adolescence stages, from a theoretical perspective by using the common counselling theories. In its design and methodology, the researcher will also draw from history to effectively address adolescence concerns; and eventually attempt to put it in the current situation in his own national context, and especially with regard to the Kenyan schools. In so doing, the article will attempt to explore ways that may be used to help them understand themselves better. In turn, this hopefully help the adolescents in dealing with their studies and social issues in a better way. It will also help caregivers in these shores.

Key words: Counselling theories, Context of schools in counselling, Counselling history

Introduction to counseling theories

1. Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalytic therapy was founded and propagated by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). Freud trained initially as a medical doctor, a neurologist. The Freudian approach leans on a philosophical and literary approach and his early work stresses on cause and effect in the mental as well as in the physical field. Psychoanalysis is a psychology of conflicting forces inherent in the dualistic nature of human kind. This manifests itself in three ways:

- The person as a biological and as a social being;
- The conflict between the consciousness versus the unconsciousness; and,
- Factors in the environment that brings about the development of personality, the acquisition of values; and, the tendency to seek pleasure and avoid pain.

The human mind is therefore an exploration of thoughts, feelings and fantasies. In the context of the school, the teacher might need to be conscious of such thoughts, feelings and fantasies in the young adolescents that bring about certain behaviors.

The focus of therapy in psychoanalysis is therefore on the relationship between the conscious and the unconscious personality, the 'talking cure'. According to Freud, life experiences are stored in the unconscious mind. Freud refers to it as the hidden domain. For instance, human behavior is heavily influenced by childhood experiences that are deeply rooted in the unconscious. Teachers must therefore be willing to explore with the student those issues that have a home or social dimension rather than view the student as an independent being. The child who is victim of abuse for instance may be maladjusted in behavior and victims of rape tend to have low self-esteem.

According to Freud, sex and aggression drives for example are dominants of human behavior and the individual is always seeking to undo the repression of sexual impulses or drives. The adolescent is in turmoil as s/he discovers the self and s/he must be assisted to complete this developmental stage. I wonder how parents and teachers would react if teachers were to discuss sexual matters in detail in a society where sex is not explicitly discussed, such as Kenya, and thus teachers and schools would need to be very careful how they handle such matters. Human beings, according to Freud, are also driven by the tendency to seek pleasure and avoid pain.

This tension reducing force is called the pleasure principle. For example, the young adolescent in the school will feel the urge to sneak from school to go and buy a cigarette or a loaf of bread but at the same time fears the danger of being caught and punished for breaking the school rules and regulations. Thus, the teacher would be expected to provide guidance on how to deal with discipline issues in the schools. The best-known Freudian model of personality is the Id, Ego and Superego. The first of these is the Id, the biological component and the source of energy. It is instinctive, illogical, lacks in organization, seeks pleasure and is largely unconscious (no contact with the world). The school must tap that energy in form of co-curricular activities.

As much as possible, basic human needs should be met. The second is the Ego, the psychological component that has contact with the world. The ego is realistic, organized, logical and intelligent and controlled. It is to this part of the human personality that the school guidance and other fundamental principles such as school rules must be directed. The final part is the social component, the Superego. It is judicial, ideal, strives for perfection and the person's moral code. Adolescents typically believe that they are invulnerable to most risks including health risks such as STIs and HIV and AIDS (Boone, Lefkowitz and Romo, 2003) and according to Elkind (1974), this is because adolescents at this stage are egocentric which results in feeling unique and special from others, that is s/he feels they are different or apart from others. One aspect of egocentrism is the wrong belief that negative things cannot happen to the self but to others (Boone et al., 2003). The teacher might therefore make use of such knowledge to deal with the HIV and AIDS menace especially the vulnerability and susceptibility of the youth and appeal to the ego where and when the superego is unrealistic.

2. Psychosocial development

A psychologist by the name Erick Erikson (1950-1963) developed on the Freud's psychoanalysis and came up with psychosocial development theory comprising of eight stages of development. These stages start from infancy to adulthood. In every stage, an individual faces a psychological crisis which could have a positive or a negative effect on personality formation. Whereas Freud seemed to lean so much towards the id, Erikson put a lot of emphasis on the ego. He dwelt so much on the role of culture, society and the conflicts that can take place within the ego itself whereas Freud talked much about the conflict between the id and the superego. Erikson argued that personality develops in a predetermined order and build upon each previous stage. However,

instead of focusing on sexual development like Freud he was interested in how children socialized and how it affects their sense of self.

He suggests that there is a big room for continued growth and development throughout one's life. He lays a lot of emphasis on the adolescence period saying it is a crucial phase of developing a person's identity. According to the theory, successful completion of each stage results in a healthy personality and the acquisition of basic virtues. Failure to adequately negotiate a certain stage may result in a reduced ability to negotiate other stages and therefore an unhealthy personality and sense of self.

Psychosocial stages of development:

| stage | Age | Psychosocial crisis | Basic virtue |
|-------|---------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | 0 - 2 | Trust vs. mistrust | Hope |
| 2 | 2 – 3 | Autonomy vs. Shame | Will |
| 3 | 3 – 5 | Initiative vs. Guilt | Purpose |
| 4 | 5 – 12 | Industry vs. Inferiority | Competence |
| 5 | 12 - 18 | Identity vs. Role Confusion | Fidelity |
| 6 | 18 – 40 | Intimacy vs. Isolation | Love |
| 7 | 40 – 65 | Generatively vs. Stagnation | Care |
| 8 | 65+ | Ego Integrity vs. Despair | Wisdom |

3. Behaviorism

Behavioral therapy is a set of theoretical hypothesis on the emotional – behavioral functioning of humans and how it can be changed. Behavioral - cognitive approach integrates thought and behavior. People like Lazarus Arnold, B.F. Skinner, Pavlov, Albert Ellis, Wolpe and Albert Bandura founded this theory. Behaviorism has its origins in the 1950s –1960s as a radical departure from the predominant psychoanalytic perspective in that they believed that behavior is not influenced by past experiences. According to them, behavior is mechanistic (psychoanalysis - deterministic). Thus, behavior can be learnt, unlearned and/or relearned and thus can be modified. The learnt behavior is the problem and not the symptom of the problem.

They believed that human beings are the products and producers of their environment (Bandura, 1974, 1977, 1986). The implications of this for guidance and counseling are that the teacher has to see those aspects of the home (for example, inept parents), society (violence, drugs and other substances of abuse) and the school (school culture and ethos, rules and regulations) that produce the child/ren in the school. It also has implications for changing behaviors by rewarding acceptable social norms.

At the center of behavioral-cognitive therapy is the concept that events do not force people to have emotional behavioral reactions. Rather, it is their interpretation of thoughts and events that precipitates emotional and behavioral reactions. The basic argument according to Ellis is that people have to be shown how they can live peacefully with themselves if they are to be helped to live happily with each other.

The school would look up to the school rules and regulations that could assist in this aspect. The target for change in therapy is those thoughts, attitudes, beliefs and meanings that create emotional / behavioral disturbance and it would be hoped that the school rules would define a way of conduct that does not conflict with the school norms. Indeed, Ellis theorized that humans have the capacity to interpret reality in a clear, logical and objective fashion. Humans are thus pre-disposed to irrational interpretations and if young people were well orientated to the school for instance, they would easily adapt to the environment. Behavioral change is therefore based on the idea of learning and that behavior can be learnt and unlearned and this can further be understood by considering three major areas of development: classical conditioning; operant conditioning; and, social learning:

The underlying beliefs in *classical conditioning* are that behavior can be controlled and that human beings can be made to do things without being aware of them. For example, Pavlov conditioning a dog to salivate at the sound of a bell. Therefore, the environment can be manipulated to produce desired behavior or response. For example, the teachers' positive and welcoming attitude towards the pupils and students can lead to mutual trust and enhanced learning or in counseling, the client can be conditioned to produce the desired results such as undoing a seemingly negative practice such as fear.

B.F. Skinner propagated *operant conditioning*. According to Skinner, rewards and punishment make people behave in certain ways. There is negative and positive reinforcement. Positive reinforcement aims to increase the frequency of a response by filling it with a favorable event (reward) while negative reinforcement makes use of punishment or withdrawal of reward/s. Another useful technique in operant conditioning is shaping. This involves reinforcement of successful approximations of targeted behavior until the desired behavior is acquired. Behavior could be reinforced continuously, in a scheduled way or intermittently. Therefore, the school should continuously reinforce positive behavior by rewarding it.

Social learning theory was started by Albert Bandura (1974, 1977, 1986). Social learning theory postulates that people are capable of learning vicariously by observing the behavior of others as well as its consequences and by initiating that behavior. Key aspects include observing, retaining, motivation and imitation. Learning is a process and such practices such as peer counseling should be enhanced. The role of cognitions and feelings in influencing behavior especially the faulty thought patterns (low self-concepts, self-defeating statements etc.) is recognized in social learning theory, and how they lead a person to produce maladaptive behavior.

It must be noted that the behavioral approach and traditions of Pavlov, Skinner, Thorndike and Watson and the thinking of Bandura greatly helped to produce effective ways of managing the classroom. This was mainly through behavior modification techniques and the principles of reward and punishment. Behavioral therapy offers various action-oriented methods to help people take steps to change what they are doing and thinking. Many behavior techniques particularly those developed in the last decade emphasize cognitive processes (Nelson-Jones, 2001).

The modern behavioral approach is grounded on a scientific view of human behavior that implies a systematic and structured approach to counseling. Behaviorists help the client by teaching them how to act or behave appropriately in congruence with their world. This is meant to bring about a healthy and stable self mentally and (therefore) physically. Cognitive counselors concentrate on the cognitive mapping of their clients and search for the disabling factor/s that proves to be crippling the client.

4. Person Centered Theory (PCT)

Person centered or client-centered therapy has its basis in Carl Rogers' work (1902-1987). It is one of the most important approaches to counseling and one of the most widely used orientations to counseling and therapy over the years. Indeed, person centered or client-centered therapy has supplied ideas and methods that have been integrated in other approaches (Thorne, 1992). Person-centered therapy (hereafter referred to as PCT) emerged in the 1950s as a reaction or alternative to psychoanalysis and behavioral therapy and came to be known as the 'third force' in contrast to the earlier two approaches. PCT (Rogers, 1951, 1957, 1983) has its roots in the existential humanistic tradition. The humanistic approach works in the "here and now" and examines the client's feelings, thoughts and actions by exploring their fantasies and myths thus enabling them to come to grips with the reality of their lives. PCT is a relationship model. The focus in counseling is on the person and the issue/s they bring to the counseling session. According to PCT, the person of the counselor is the key therapeutic factor (McGuiness, 1998). It is the quality of the relationship that the counselor creates with the counselee that is in itself healing or therapeutic.

Carl Rogers maintained that the individual has within the self vast resources for self-understanding, for altering the self-concept and for self-directed behavior. These resources, Rogers believed, could only be tapped if a definable climate of facilitative psychological attitudes is provided. Principally therefore, the solution to the problem is in the hands of the client. However, teachers dealing with children and young people might not be convinced that it is possible for them to make seemingly correct decisions about their lives or behavior. Four major concepts attest the client-centered therapy. These are:

- a) That clients should be allowed to find solutions to their problems (that is counseling should be non-directed and not prescriptive);
- b) The focus should be on the client/counselee (this changed the focus of attention in counseling from the counselor to the client and hence the approach client-centered therapy);
- c) The role of the counselor is to provide the necessary and sufficient conditions to enable the client reach his/her goal; that is a conducive environment to facilitate healing process. These conditions of therapeutic change are; empathy, congruence and acceptance (unconditional positive regard) and came to be referred to as the core conditions; and,

d) The counselor must be able to communicate this empathetic relationship to the client.

The core of the PCT is that human beings have an inherent self-actualizing tendency and the key to healthy personality development lies in the necessary and sufficient conditions of personality change (core conditions). To the extent that there is more likelihood of improvement if the client owns up both to the problem and the solution, this can be an advantage in the school as elsewhere.

The focus of PCT is not the use of techniques to solve a problem but on helping the client to tap their inner resources and get in touch with their inner valuing process and thus better their concern/s. Thus, the methods could be time consuming especially in the school where the teacher has other duties and several students to attend to and may not be as productive with an unwilling client. In addition, teachers in the school have a responsibility to the school ethos and might not be able to put up with what they would term as unbecoming behavior such as truancy and thus the approach would need to be heavily adapted (McCallion, 1998). For example, teachers might not be as non-directive as the model suggests. However, it would be possible to use the approach and perhaps enlighten the student on the choices they may have to make; possible implications and suggest several options.

History of scientific study of adolescence

Historians have described Stanley Hall (1844-1924) as the father of scientific study of Adolescence. In 1904, Hall published his ideas in a two volume titled Adolescence. Hall was strongly influenced by Charles Darwin, the famous evolutionary theorist. Applying Darwin's view is the study of Adolescent Development. He proposed that all development is controlled by genetically determined physiological factor. He thought that the environment plays a minimal role in development especially during infancy and childhood. Hall did acknowledge that environment accounts for more development change in adolescent than in earlier periods. With regards to adolescence, Hall believed that heredity (genes) interacts with environmental influences to determine an individual development. The "stress –and –storm view is Hall concept that adolescence is a turbulent time hanged with conflicts and swings.

The last period of Piaget's cognitive development theory formal operations appears in early adolescence. The adolescent now begins to operate on operations which mean he can think about

abstract rather than about concrete things (Mary 1971). In the formal operations stage of adolescence, the structure of development becomes the abstract logically problem the adolescent speculates about all possible solutions before trying them out in the real world.

The formal operations stage begins around age 11 and is fully achieved by age 15, bringing with it the capacity for abstractions. This permit the adolescents to reason beyond world of concrete reality to a world of possibilities and to operate logically on symbols and information that do not necessary refer to object and information and events in the real world. There are two major characteristics of formal operational thoughts according to Piaget.

The first is “hypothetical deductive reasoning”. When faced with a problem, adolescents come up with a general theory of all possible factors that might affect the outcome and deduce from it specific hypothesis that might occur. They systematically treat these hypotheses to see which one does in fact occur in the real world, thus adolescence problem solving begins with possibility and proceed to reality.

The second important characteristic of this stage is that it is “propositional” in nature Adolescents can focus on assertions and evaluate their logical validity without making reference to re-world circumstances in contrast, concrete operational children and evaluate the logical of statements by considering them against concrete evidence only. Robert Kegan, another theorist also developed on Piaget theory, he argues that the most central human activity is that of “meaning making” of contracting from the moment a reality that makes sense given the balance one has already struck with the world.

According to Kegan, adolescents are gradually able to think more from subjects to objects, when it becomes a way of knowing they have rather than a way of knowing they are. And similarly they are gradually able to relate more mutually and less instrumentally, when their own needs and point of view become ways of knowing they have rather than ways of knowing they are (Kegan Personal Communication). Anna Freud, the famous theorist Sigmud Freud’s daughter, extended Freud’s theory by focusing on the unique demands that adolescence places on the ego. She contended that the adult sexual drives that emerge with puberty strain the adolescent organization of the

personality and require new and stronger defenses against the incestuous threats that these drives reintroduce. She noted that intellectual development in adolescence makes such defenses possible, namely in the form of intellectualization, or the ability to justify ones' behavior in highly abstract terms. Even with new defenses, however, adolescents must create additional distance between themselves and their parents. In doing so, they establish social relations with age mates, with whom expression of the genital drive becomes appropriate (Freud 1969).

Whereas for Sigmund Freud, the primary motivation for human behavior was sexual, for Erick Erickson it was social, reflecting a desire to affiliate with other people. According to Erickson theory human beings progress through eight stages of development over the course of the life span. In each stage a unique developmental task confronts the individual with a crisis that must be faced. The more successful an individual resolves the crisis, the healthier that person development will be (Hopkins, 2000).

Identity versus role confusion is Erickson's fifth developmental stage, which occurs during the adolescent years. At this time, individuals seek to find out who they are, what they are all about, and where they are going in life. Adolescents are confronted with new roles and status e.g. vocational and romantic. Parents and/or teachers need to allow them to explore many different roles, as well as difficult roles, as well as different paths within a particular role. If the adolescent explores such roles in a healthy way and arrives at a positive path to follow in life, then a positive identity will be achieved. If an identity is pushed on the adolescent by parents, if the adolescent does not adequately explore many roles and if a positive future path is not defined, then role confusion reigns.

Lawrence Kohlberg, building on Piaget's theory, developed the moral development theory. He studied the development of moral reasoning by presenting children, adolescents and adults with a set of hypothetical stories that pose ethical dilemmas⁵. Examining the responses to such dilemmas Kohlberg found three levels of moral reasoning. Preconvention, conventional and post conventional - with two stages at each level. The conventional level of moral reasoning is typical of adolescents and adults. The conventional level consists of the third and fourth states of moral development. Those who reason in a conventional way judge the morality of actions by comparing them to society's view and expectations.

Conventional morality is characterized by an acceptance of society's conventions concerning right and wrong. At this level the adolescent obeys rules and follows society's norms even when there are no consequences for obedience or disobedience. Adherence to rules and conventions is somewhat rigid and rules appropriateness or fairness is seldom questioned. Adolescence appropriately falls in stage three (conventional level) of moral development theory. Adolescents are receptive to approval or disapproval from others as it reflects society's accordance with the perceived role. They try to be "good boys" or "good girls" to live up to these expectations, having learned that there is inherent value in doing so. Stage three reasoning may include the morality of an action by evaluating its consequences in terms of a person's relationship, which now begins to include things like respect, gratitude and the "golden rule". "I want to be liked and thought well of apparently not being naughty makes people like me" Desire to maintain rules and authority exists only to further support these social roles. The intention of actions plays a more significant role in reasoning at this stage. David Elkind was another psychologist who researched on adolescence.

Elkind's research has focused on cognitive, perceptual and social development in children and adolescents, as well as the causes and effects of stress on children, adolescents and families. Throughout all of his work, Elkind has tried to apply theory and research to real life arenas, such as psychotherapy, parenting and education. And he uses real life experiences to shape his theory and research. One of Elkind's well-known contribution to psychology is his work on adolescent egocentrism (difficulty in distinguishing between the mental occupation of the self and those of other people) Elkind looked at how this egocentrism affects adolescent thought, behaviour and emotion. According to Piagetian theory, the abilities to separate oneself from one's own thoughts and analyze them, as well as conceptualizing other's thoughts are developed only at young adolescence.

Elkind describes how adolescents, because they are undergoing major psychological changes, are preoccupied by themselves. The egocentrism of adolescents lies in their belief that others are as preoccupied with their appearance and behavior as they are. As a consequence, the adolescents anticipate other people's response and thoughts about them; and is, in a way constantly creating or reacting to an imaginary audience. According to Elkind, this probably plays a role in the self-

conscious. It is so common in early adolescence, as well as other experiences in this period of life. Elkind also introduced the idea of “personal Fable” in which the adolescent construct a story about themselves, a version of their life stressing uniqueness are also seen in a common conviction that the adolescent will not die. Elkind stressed how he found these concepts useful in understanding and treating troubled adolescents. Elkind believes the egocentrism of adolescence usually lessens by the age of 15 or 16 as cognitive development proceeds.

Discussion on Counseling Theories and Application in a School Situation

In discussing counseling theories, the counseling practitioner in the school has to reckon with several issues that make counseling in schools different (Section 2.2.4 above) from the professional setting. As Nelson – Jones (2001) says, theories provide counselors with concepts that allow them to think systematically about counseling practice. In that case, I argue strongly that even when the counseling practitioner has their style or theory, there are limitations of time, resources, the clients and the ‘practicalities of a school environment’ (Lines, 2002:2) that often call upon the need for such strategies such as brief counseling as advocated by Lines. The counselor would need to set a goal probably in conformity with the school mission and vision. Lines for instance asserts that solution focused models such as the Egan (2002) model of solution focused theory and others based on the person centered approach tend to have a future orientation in schools and are often more focused.

Once again, the focus has to do with the time and the client who are pupils and students and often might come for a single or few sessions (Bor et al., 2002; Lines, 2002). According to McGuiness (1998), Rogers and the PCT model is the starting point of counseling and Lines too in promoting new methods of working briefly recognizes the essential core counseling conditions: empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard. It would be prudent therefore, as I see it, for the counselor in the school environment to be more prepared, taking into consideration the limitations and the uniqueness of the school setting and this view is in line with others such as Bor et al. (2002) Lines (2002) and McGuiness (1998).

The article also acknowledges that the conceptual development in counseling theories has indeed expanded the concept of counseling. Karasu (1986) reported having come across more than 400

distinct models of counselling and psychotherapy. McLeod (1998) attributes this to an explosion of ideas between 1950 and 1970 that have not become integrated into a unified approach. Herink (1980) lists over 250. Dryden (1984) mentions that there are over a dozen different types of eclectics and distinguishes ten of them. Irving and Heath (1989) and Rowland (1993) distinguish the models of counseling into two: directive (or active) that tend to interpret, construct and direct their clients; and, non-directive (or reflective) who tend to elicit and reflect, guide and support their clients. This applies to the teacher counselor in the school as well.

Many traditional approaches can be adapted in the school but these have their inherent limitations. For example, psychoanalysis offers a framework for understanding young people's difficulties, and this can enlighten in the therapy. But it involves in-depth exploration with the client over a considerable period of time and this may largely be impractical in schools. The humanistic approaches notably person centered counseling tend to be very popular in educational settings with the likes of McGuiness (1998) due to the focus on the individual as well as the behavioral cognitive counseling (Geldard and Geldard, 1999). However, teachers and schools might not be all too sympathetic with a person centered approach over delinquent behavior. Cognitive behavioral counseling tends to appeal to the pragmatic mind and this tends to lend an air of respectability when dealing with young people especially when drafting a code of behavior such as rules and regulations. The practical experimentation of observation, measurement and evaluation has a strong emphasis upon action and this makes it popular in education where people are seeking for possible explanation leading to solutions. There is also the solution-focused therapies (Egan, 2002) that have emerged that try to focus on brief counseling (Lines, 2002) where the task is the object of therapy. The appropriateness of some styles in place of others would need to take into account the preference of the client, the situation and the school environment though then this leads again to why the counselor adopts the approach, which leads to need for awareness of these techniques.

There are other considerations as far as the style or technique of counseling is concerned. For example, pupils and students are used to teaching methods and the adult is often giving instructions and guidelines. The PCT approach, empowering as it is, is based on the client knowing best and may not be the normal experience of youngsters. Neither is psychoanalysis especially for students who may not be focused or may be bored and find the session a waste of time. But even then, there

are exceptions since the adolescents are becoming more independent and also, some of the children might be lacking attention in the home. The adolescents also become more assertive and developing friendship and hence the need for peer counselors for example. In terms of behavior, the community might be demanding a more responsive behavior in conformity with social values. Thus, non-directive or directive counseling must be used carefully so as not to confuse the learner. To this, the counselor in the school might need to balance the educational and individual aims. It is along these arguments that Lines (2002) advocates a brief therapeutic approach that is shortened and comprehensive to the needs of the client (note the direction towards PCT).

Others have as well advocated for an integrated approach to counseling and according to Garfield and Kurtz (1977), an increasing number of therapists describe themselves as eclectic. In a study of 154 eclectic therapists, Garfield and Kurtz (1977) found that 145 of them had used 32 different combinations drawn from a wide range of therapeutic schools. Eclecticism or integration is based on the premise that a single theory is not sufficient to explain and cater for the complexity of the human being.

That is to say, they claim to choose from what appears to be the best from diverse therapeutic sources, systems and styles (Dryden, 1984). Bayne et al. (1994) distinguish between eclectic and integration counselors. Eclectic counselors borrow the best technique and ideas from a variety of sources while integrative counselors are those who try to form a coherent harmonious whole from two or more theories or parts of theories. According to Gilmore (1980), the eclectic or integrated approach centers on content (what); purpose (why); and, process (how). The eclectic approach is therefore based on the principle of whether one approach (model or theory) of counseling is sufficient. This is based on the argument that the counselor as a professional has a variety of techniques and should choose those that seem appealing and efficient to help the client. Others like Rogers (1961) see this as an attempt to rationalize various schools of thought in psychotherapy that may not necessarily be meaningful. In presenting a case for the use of counseling theories especially in the school, I am acknowledging these ideas tend to disagree with the excusatory thrust of integration but saying that any theory or theories should be in context.

Overall, it is widely recognized that the three approaches of psychoanalysis, behavioral and humanistic psychology represent the fundamental ways of viewing humans and their emotional behavioral problems (Mahler, 1989; Mcleod, 1998). In my view, I would strongly recommend that the counselor should be adequately trained and well orientated in counseling theories before embarking on any approach especially in using the eclectic or integrated approaches and this is in agreement with others such as Feltham (1996:299) who has looked at the argument advanced for the importance of a core theory as follows:

Although there is no evidence that any one approach is in practice superior to another, it is essential that trainees receive in-depth training in one approach so that they possess a set of practical competencies and coherent grasp of theory that can be applied to their clinical work. I intend to analyses the data from schools to determine the underpinning theories being used, if indeed there are any clear ones evident.

This sub-section therefore thrives on the fact that though theories differ in emphasis, they do offer a fundamental understanding of the human being that is pertinent in the counseling process; for as Horton (1996:282) states: “Counselors offer to intervene in the lives of their clients. It can be argued that if they expect to be taken seriously then they must also expect to be able to explain what they are doing and why they are doing it.”

Like Egan (2002), it is my humble opinion that it is not the theory, approach or model that is supreme but the need to help the client who is the focus in counseling. In addition, there are many people who are not trained as counselors as is the case often in schools with teachers, yet who still are able to assist the client. While I strongly feel that counseling training however basic is crucial and important, I agree with Dryden (1984) to the extent that adopting a particular theoretical approach does not necessarily make anyone a better or more effective counselor. A theory is but a tool. It is but a means to an end in itself. In all cases, the counselor, like Egan says, should be able to help the counselee and that help is priceless. The theoretical approach then is the means by which the client will receive utmost help in that the principles of approach will apply to the situation in which they are working. This is because the essence of counseling is to offer help to the client and in the school, this is the student. Bearing this in mind, this study uses the person

centered approach as its base, with a view to comparing actual practice to PCT, the preferred approach.

The person centered approach was chosen because of the following reasons:

1. The focus on counseling should be the client; that is the student in the school;
2. The purpose of counseling is to offer help or to assist the student in this case;
3. Counseling, according to McCallion (1998) is associated with change that is accompanied by a psychological process of acceptance of the self and others.

Finally, McGuinness et al. (2001:299) in an article on *Globalizing counseling: humanistic counseling in Kenya* on the potential benefits of humanistic counseling in a developing country like Kenya pinpoints a major benefit in terms of the empowerment and self-development of the individual so that s/he is more resourceful and independent:

A slightly different perspective has another respondent making the same point - 'in a world where directives have been the order of the day, it might be a hurdle to instill responsibility and autonomy in persons who have always been ordered around.

This statement would appear to contradict the need for PCT. But on the contrary, it adds to what others like Hughes (1997) have argued that counseling in broader terms represents the continuation of a long-standing attempt to democratize and humanize the school. The draft policy framework (Ministry of Education, 2003) also adopts a Rogerian approach that guidance and counseling should adopt the philosophical premise of the positive view of a human being and that all persons have the potential and capacity to grow. In essence, education is a human right and part of the education process and counseling is empowering of the individual and hence PCT.

Conclusion

The article begun with an introduction to the common counselling theories and it explored the different arguments and perspectives in each theory. It has also tried to look at what was at the back of the minds of the people who developed these theories and what makes them viable. The researcher has also looked at the history of scientific study of adolescents in order to have a basis for the need of psychological help. The article ends by looking at how these counselling theories

can be applied to help the struggling adolescents to be able to navigate this turbulent stage in their development journey.

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