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Post-modernism counseling in treating addictive disorder: From obstacles to optimism

Farhana Sabri

Islamic Science University of Malaysia, Malaysia

Statement of the Problem: Traditional addiction counseling became accustomed with the assessment of clients' past life, where they may have failed, and the focus of counseling interventions tend to be surrounded on investigating "why" the clients have continued to 'relapse' back to a drug-involved lifestyle. The repeated conversation on causes of problems and failures about the clients can often be self-fulfilling. When a counselor reviews a client's history, a mind-set develops about the client. If the mind-set is about client being resistant, reluctant, and defensive, the client action will be regarded in that fashion regardless of their behavior. This mind-set can be a form of sabotaging the client treatment even before it has begun. Post-modernism counseling moves away from this paradigm. With that being said, a post-modernist counselor posits that drug addicts' being reluctant and defensive are something constructed in the session using language between the counselor and the client. That means, solution also can be constructed in the session. Viewing clients from solution-oriented could benefit clients with addictive disorder. The purpose of this study is to describe the use of post-modern ideas in addiction counseling in treating clients with addictive disorder at a residential setting in Malaysia.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: A case study is presented to illustrate the use of post-modern ideas in addressing hope and solutions in a drug addict client. The guidelines of post-modernism counseling is adhered to Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT).

Findings: This study indicated a significant reduction in dysfunctioning behavior and improvement in psychological well-being.

Conclusion & Significance: The positive outcomes from this study calls for support to further investigate the use of post-modern ideas in addiction counseling. The underlying theoretical rationale of SFBT, such as being a brief therapy and a focus on strength, can be part of an effective and cost-efficient strategy to treat clients with addictive disorder.

Biography

Farhana Sabri is a Registered Counselor with the Malaysia Board of Counselor. She earned her Doctoral degree in Counselor Education and Supervision at Kent State University, Ohio, USA. Addiction counseling has always been a field that is close to her heart. In addition to her experience working with individuals with substance abuse issues in the States and in Malaysia, her passion is to advocate for the clients to receive appropriate care and treatment in any possible way. Her interest toward social construction and constructivism started when she was in Doctoral program; investigating the outcomes of solution-focused brief therapy towards dual-diagnosis clients. She believes that drug addiction can be benefited from social-construction thinking, where the other alternatives "story" in the life of drug addicts.

farsabri@gmail.com

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