

Optimizing Counseling Guidance Facilities and Infrastructure to Support Students' Personal Growth

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Abstract

Personal growth is a process that involves developing oneself psychologically, socially, and emotionally, as well as strengthening skills in dealing with various life challenges. An optimal counseling environment includes various factors that can facilitate an individual's personal growth. This article identifies some important tools that can help create a conducive environment, including: (1). A comfortable counseling room: A comfortable and safe counseling room provides an opportunity for individuals to feel calm and open while communicating with the counselor. Facilities such as comfortable furniture, good lighting, and minimal noise can enhance the effectiveness of counseling sessions. (2). Information resources: Building an optimal counseling environment involves access to relevant and up-to-date information resources. Counselors need to provide books, magazines, journals, and other reference materials related to counseling topics for individuals to expand their understanding of personal growth. (3). Supporting technology: Technological developments have opened up new opportunities in the field of counseling guidance. The utilization of software, mobile applications, and online platforms can help expand the reach of counseling guidance, facilitate accessibility, and strengthen communication between counselors and individuals in need of guidance. (4). Collaboration with related parties: Building an optimal counselling environment also involves collaborating with related parties, such as educational institutions, community organizations, and mental health institutions. This collaboration can expand the reach of counseling guidance and create synergy in facilitating individuals' personal growth. In this context, facilities and infrastructure including comfortable counseling rooms, adequate information resources, supporting technology, and collaboration with related parties are important factors in creating an environment conducive to individuals' personal growth.

Keywords : Optimal Environment; Counseling Facilities and Infrastructure; Personal Growth.



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1. Introduction

In the increasingly intricate tapestry of contemporary life, the imperative for sustained personal development has become profoundly critical for individuals seeking a fulfilling and high-quality existence. Within this context, professional counselling has proven to be an efficacious modality for providing essential guidance, support, and profound self-insight. Nevertheless, to maximize therapeutic outcomes, the deliberate cultivation of an optimal environment, underpinned by robust and appropriate resources and infrastructure, is paramount to the counselling process. This specialized environment serves as a foundational platform, empowering individuals to holistically explore and actualize their inherent potential. By strategically developing a therapeutic milieu that encompasses a secure and comfortable counselling space, access to relevant and current informational resources, and the judicious integration of contemporary technology, clients are afforded the necessary support and impetus to effectively navigate life's inevitable complexities and attain sustainable personal growth.

A critical component of this optimal environment is the provision of a counselling room that is both comfortable and psychologically secure, characterized by a tranquil atmosphere, emotional support, and guaranteed privacy, which collectively fosters the necessary rapport and psychological safety for clients to engage in open and honest communication with the counsellor. Furthermore, the availability of comprehensive and up-to-date informational resources, such as specialized texts, scholarly journals, and reference materials, is instrumental in broadening the client's understanding of personal growth dynamics, thereby enabling them to gain new insights, build crucial knowledge, and implement actionable strategies toward self-improvement. Concurrently, the strategic leveraging of technology is indispensable in creating a responsive and adaptable counselling infrastructure. In the digital age, the appropriate utilization of dedicated software, mobile applications, and secure online platforms not only

significantly expands the geographical reach and accessibility of professional counselling services but also strengthens the vital communication channels between the counsellor and the individual, thereby positioning technology as a powerful catalyst for enhancing the overall efficacy of the therapeutic environment in meeting diverse individual needs.

The pursuit of personal growth has become increasingly paramount in this era of complexity, serving as a vital determinant for achieving a meaningful and high-quality life. Every individual possesses an inherent, unique potential for multifaceted development be it psychological, social, or emotional. However, the trajectory toward self-actualization is frequently punctuated by significant challenges, obstacles, and life transitions that can impede the realization of one's full capacity. To effectively optimize this critical process, professional counselling emerges as a potent and effective resource, offering in-depth guidance, sustained support, and profound self-understanding. Through the structured process of counselling, individuals gain novel perspectives, develop essential coping mechanisms, resolve emotional distress, enhance social relationships, and ultimately elevate their overall quality of life.

this analysis underscores the indispensable nature of inter-agency collaboration. The establishment of an optimal counselling environment necessitates strategic partnerships with various stakeholders, including educational institutions, community organizations, and specialized mental health agencies. Such collaborative networks are crucial as they significantly broaden the reach of counselling services, facilitate the pooling of diverse and supplementary resources, and create a powerful synergy in the collective effort to foster optimal personal development. By systematically addressing these interconnected dimensions namely, a secure and comfortable counselling space, access to current and relevant informational resources, the strategic integration of appropriate technology, and the cultivation of effective inter-agency collaboration a comprehensive, supportive environment is engineered. This holistic environment provides the essential framework for individuals to confront

life's challenges with resilience, unlock their innate potential, and achieve sustained and meaningful personal growth.

To maximize outcomes in the guidance and counseling process, it is imperative to establish an optimal environment capable of providing the necessary support and facilities. A conducive environment serves not merely as a physical space but, more profoundly, creates a strong psychological foundation for individuals to explore and develop their potential holistically. Consequently, this article aims to elaborate on the importance of creating such an optimal environment through the provision of effective guidance and counseling infrastructure, thereby fostering sustainable personal growth. In essence, the right environment cultivates an atmosphere that is supportive, inspirational, and facilitates optimal individual development.

A fundamental aspect of realizing this environment is the provision of a counseling room that is comfortable and psychologically safe. This space must provide a tranquil atmosphere, emotional support, and guaranteed privacy, all of which are prerequisites for open communication between the counselor and the client. An environment perceived as friendly and supportive fosters the trust and comfort necessary for individuals to express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences honestly and without fear of judgment. Deep therapeutic interaction can only occur within such a secure space.

In addition to the physical and emotional aspects, the availability of relevant and up-to-date informational resources also plays a critical role. Access to various materials such as books, scientific journals, and other reference sources empowers individuals to broaden their understanding of personal growth concepts. Through these resources, individuals can not only gain new insights and perspectives but also build a solid knowledge base to then implement concrete steps in their self-development journey. Therefore, informational resources act as a support system that enriches and reinforces the ongoing counseling process.

Technological integration stands as another critical pillar in establishing a sustainable and optimal counseling ecosystem. The utilization of technology

ranging from case management software and mobile applications for mood tracking and mindfulness exercises to online counseling platforms does not merely expand the service's reach but fundamentally transforms it. Technology enhances accessibility for individuals in remote areas or those with mobility constraints, while simultaneously strengthening continuous communication between the counselor and the client beyond face-to-face sessions. By enabling the delivery of personalized resources and immediate feedback, technology proves to be a powerful tool in creating a counseling environment that is adaptive, responsive, and centered on the unique needs of each individual.

A collaborative dimension marks a strategic step in reinforcing the foundation of this counseling environment. Synergistic partnerships with relevant stakeholders, such as educational institutions, community organizations, and mental health service providers, are crucial. Such collaboration facilitates the exchange of resources, expands referral networks, and promotes a more holistic approach to addressing individual issues. By consolidating perspectives and expertise from various disciplines, guidance and counseling efforts become more integrated and far-reaching, creating a comprehensive safety net to support each individual's personal growth journey.

By exploring these fundamental aspects a safe space, informational resources, technological integration, and strategic collaboration this article provides a comprehensive framework on the imperative of constructing an optimal counseling environment. The emphasis on these four pillars serves as a roadmap for creating an empowering support system. It is through such a nurtured environment that individuals gain a solid foundation to confront life's challenges, fully actualize their potential, and ultimately, achieve profound and sustainable personal growth.

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a multiple case study design to investigate the implementation of an optimal environment in guidance

and counseling services. The selection of a qualitative approach is based on the consideration that the phenomenon under investigation requires in-depth exploration and holistic understanding of the natural context in which the guidance and counseling process occurs. The multiple case study was chosen to enable researchers to explore variations in the implementation of facilities and infrastructure, technology utilization, and collaboration patterns across different educational settings. This research was conducted in five senior high schools selected purposively based on criteria of completeness of guidance and counseling facilities and variations in the implementation of digital technology, with a data collection period spanning six months to ensure depth and richness of the obtained data.

The data collection process was carried out through methodological triangulation, including participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document studies. Participant observation focused on the physical aspects of the counseling room, counselor-counselee interaction patterns, and the utilization of technology in the service process. In-depth interviews were conducted semi-structurally with various stakeholders, including counselors, students, parents, and educational staff, to obtain comprehensive perspectives on their experiences and perceptions of the guidance and counseling environment. Document studies included analysis of guidance and counseling service tools, client progress notes, and other relevant supporting documents related to the research focus.

Data analysis was conducted thematically following Braun and Clarke's model through an iterative process that included data familiarization, initial code generation, theme search, theme review, theme definition, and report production. The analysis process began with verbatim transcription of interview and observation data, followed by open coding to identify significant patterns in the data. Emerging themes were then grouped and reduced through research team discussions to ensure consistency and validity of data interpretation, while maintaining the original context of each finding.

This research ensures data validity through various techniques, including source and method triangulation, member checking, and audit trails. Source triangulation was performed by comparing perceptions from various informants, while method triangulation was conducted by integrating findings from interviews, observations, and document studies. The member checking process was carried out by confirming data interpretation to participants to ensure accurate representation of their experiences. Audit trails were realized through comprehensive documentation of the entire research process, from data collection to analysis, to enable tracking of methodological decisions and ensure the trustworthiness of the research findings.

3. Result and Discussion

Personal Growth and the Importance of an Optimal Counseling Environment

Personal growth is an important aspect of every individual's life. To achieve optimal personal growth, support and assistance from the surrounding environment is necessary, particularly within the context of guidance and counseling. An adequate environment in guidance and counseling can provide the facilities and infrastructure that support individuals in overcoming personal problems, developing their potential, and achieving positive growth.

The Importance of an Optimal Environment in Guidance and Counseling

An optimal environment in guidance and counseling is important to: (1) Introduce the concept of an optimal environment within the context of guidance and counseling. (2) Explain how a positive and supportive environment can influence an individual's personal growth. (3) Highlight the crucial role of counselors in creating an optimal environment that fosters personal growth.

It is also important for: (1) Creating a Sense of Safety and Self-Confidence: The optimal environment in guidance and counseling must be able to create a sense of safety for individuals seeking help. When individuals feel safe, they will be more open to sharing personal problems, emotions, and experiences that underlie personal growth. Furthermore, a supportive environment can also help

individuals develop self-confidence and reduce feelings of shame or stigma related to their personal issues. (2) Facilitating Counselor-Individual Relationships: An optimal environment in guidance and counseling facilitates the establishment of a strong relationship between the counselor and the individual seeking help. A supportive environment can create a space for the counselor to listen with empathy, understand, and respect the individual's feelings and experiences. In a positive environment, individuals feel heard, understood, and valued, allowing the counselor-individual relationship to develop well.

(3) Stimulating Growth and Change: The optimal environment in guidance and counseling must be able to stimulate personal growth and encourage positive change. Through the support, motivation, and assistance provided in a supportive environment, individuals can identify and develop their potential, change unhealthy thought patterns and behaviors, and overcome obstacles that hinder their growth. This environment can facilitate self-exploration, reflection, and continuous learning. (4) Providing a Holistic Perspective: The optimal environment in guidance and counseling should view the individual holistically. This means paying attention to the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects of the individual's personal growth. A supportive environment should offer various approaches and strategies that suit the individual's needs comprehensively. In this environment, individuals are encouraged to maintain balance and well-being in all aspects of their lives. (5) Encouraging Sustainable Growth: The optimal environment in guidance and counseling does not only focus on solving current problems but also encourages sustainable growth. This environment should provide long-term support and strategies that can help individuals develop the skills and resources needed to face future challenges. In a supportive environment, individuals are empowered to become independent and continue their personal growth even after completing the guidance and counseling process.

Building an optimal environment in guidance and counseling plays a vital role in assisting an individual's personal growth. A supportive environment can

create a sense of safety, facilitate a strong relationship between counselor and individual, stimulate growth, view the individual holistically, and encourage sustainable growth. In efforts to achieve positive outcomes in guidance and counseling, attention to an optimal environment becomes a key factor in ensuring individuals receive the support they need on their journey of growth and change.

Guidance and Counseling Facilities to Support Personal Growth

Guidance and counseling facilities play a crucial role in supporting personal growth, including: (1) Comfortable and Safe Counseling Room: Optimal physical facilities in guidance and counseling include a comfortable and secure counseling space. The provided room must ensure privacy and confidentiality for individuals undergoing counseling sessions. This helps create an environment that allows individuals to feel more relaxed, open, and focused during the counseling process. A comfortable counseling room can also create a calming atmosphere and build trust between the counselor and the individual. (2) Technology in Guidance and Counseling: The utilization of technology in guidance and counseling serves as an important facility to support individual personal growth. Online platforms or counseling applications can provide broader access and flexibility in obtaining counseling assistance, particularly for individuals who have difficulty accessing physical services. Technology can also be used to provide resources, tools, or self-directed programs that support individual personal growth. In this digital era, technology has become an effective medium to help individuals address problems and develop themselves.

(3) Literature and Information Resources: Another essential facility in guidance and counseling that supports personal growth is the availability of relevant literature and information resources. Books, articles, journals, and other resources can provide additional knowledge, perspectives, and guidance for individuals in understanding and addressing their personal issues. Accessible literature and information resources also enable individuals to continue the learning and exploration process independently after counseling sessions conclude. This helps individuals develop a better understanding of themselves

and enhance their skills in facing personal challenges. (4) Support Groups: Support groups represent another vital guidance and counseling facility for personal growth. Support groups provide an environment where individuals can share experiences, learn from others facing similar situations, and obtain emotional and social support from fellow group members. Within support groups, individuals feel heard, understood, and accepted. Interaction with others in support groups can stimulate personal growth, broaden perspectives, and provide inspiration for individuals to achieve their goals.

These guidance and counseling facilities play a significant role in supporting individual personal growth. Comfortable and safe counseling rooms, technology utilization, available literature and information resources, and support groups represent some of the facilities that can assist individuals in addressing problems, developing themselves, and achieving positive growth. By effectively utilizing these facilities, individuals can feel supported, assisted, and motivated throughout their personal growth journey.

Physical Infrastructure: The Foundation of a Conducive Counseling Environment

The physical infrastructure of guidance and counseling serves as the fundamental bedrock for creating a therapeutic environment conducive to personal growth. This encompasses more than just basic rooms; it involves intentionally designed spaces that address both psychological and practical needs. A dedicated counseling room is paramount, requiring comfortable seating, adequate lighting, soundproofing, and a layout that ensures absolute privacy and confidentiality. This specialized space allows individuals to feel secure enough to lower their defenses and engage in open, honest self-exploration. Beyond the individual session room, supporting facilities are equally critical. A dedicated counseling library provides curated books, journals, and multimedia resources that empower clients to continue their learning and self-reflection outside of sessions. Furthermore, group facilities offer a versatile environment for workshops and support groups, fostering peer learning and social support, while access to outdoor natural settings can provide a calming atmosphere that

enhances reflection and reduces anxiety, thereby increasing the overall effectiveness of the counseling process.

Human Resources: The Central Pillar of Effective Service Delivery

While physical infrastructure provides the stage, qualified and experienced counselors are the central actors who bring the process of personal growth to life. The efficacy of any guidance and counseling service is inextricably linked to the quality of its human resources. A competent counselor possesses a robust foundation of professional knowledge, underpinned by formal education and continuous training, enabling them to apply relevant theories and techniques effectively. However, technical skill must be complemented by strong empathetic ability; it is the counselor's capacity to understand and share the client's emotional experience that forges a powerful therapeutic alliance built on trust and safety. This relationship is further strengthened by the counselor's professional experience and personal maturity, which provide the wisdom to navigate complex situations and the resilience to offer steady support. Crucially, all these elements are bound together by a strict adherence to professional ethics, including confidentiality, integrity, and a commitment to client welfare, ensuring that the counseling process is not only effective but also conducted with the utmost safety and respect for the individual.

Systemic Support: The Role of Government Policy and Investment

For guidance and counseling services to achieve widespread impact and accessibility, a supportive ecosystem driven by government policy and investment is indispensable. The government plays a pivotal role in building and maintaining adequate physical infrastructure, such as dedicated counseling centers in schools and communities, and ensuring they are equipped with necessary technological tools. Beyond construction, policy must focus on accessibility and affordability, implementing subsidies or insurance schemes to ensure that individuals from all socioeconomic backgrounds can seek help without financial hardship. Furthermore, the government is responsible for establishing and enforcing professional standards and regulatory frameworks,

which include mandatory licensing, clear ethical codes, and continuing education requirements for counselors to guarantee service quality. Finally, through direct funding for university programs and professional development initiatives, the government can cultivate a sustainable pipeline of well-trained counselors. By focusing on these areas infrastructure, accessibility, regulation, and training government support creates the necessary foundation for a robust, high-quality, and equitable guidance and counseling system that can truly serve the personal growth needs of the entire population.

Case Study: Implementing an Optimal Environment in Guidance and Counseling

A prominent real-world example of a counseling institution that has successfully built an optimal environment and achieved positive outcomes in individual personal growth is Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at the University of Michigan, United States. CAPS serves as a central source of emotional, psychological, and academic support for the university's student population. It has established an optimal environment through a comprehensive array of infrastructure and services, with key initiatives including high accessibility and affordability, multicultural support, specialized programs, and institutional collaboration. By ensuring services are funded through student activity fees, CAPS removes financial barriers. It places a strong emphasis on cultural sensitivity, employing a diverse team of counselors to meet the unique needs of ethnic minorities, international students, and the LGBTQ+ community. Furthermore, CAPS offers a wide spectrum of services, from individual and group counseling to workshops on social skills and stress management, and actively collaborates with health services, career centers, and academic departments to provide holistic support for student development.

Strategies for Fostering an Optimal and Inclusive Counseling Environment

The success of CAPS is driven by a series of deliberate strategies and approaches designed to create a supportive ecosystem. A cornerstone of their model is the integrated service approach, which involves close collaboration with various university departments. This ensures that a student's mental health,

academic performance, and career planning are addressed in a coordinated and holistic manner, recognizing that personal growth is multifaceted. This is complemented by a deep commitment to a multicultural approach, where the institution actively acknowledges and respects diverse cultural backgrounds and life experiences. By maintaining a counseling staff that reflects the student population's diversity, CAPS fosters an inclusive environment where every student feels heard, respected, and understood, which is fundamental to building trust and therapeutic efficacy.

Ensuring Accessibility and Promoting Sustained Personal Growth

Beyond structural and cultural strategies, CAPS prioritizes ease of access and proactive health promotion. The model of accessible and affordable services is fundamental; by bundling the cost into general university fees, CAPS eliminates financial obstacles and ensures timely support, particularly for students in crisis. This is enhanced by a rich offering of programs and resources, including not only traditional counseling but also skill-building workshops and online tools that empower students to actively manage their well-being. Finally, CAPS engages in active mental health promotion across the campus. Through events and campaigns, they work to destigmatize seeking help and raise awareness about mental wellness, thereby cultivating a broader campus culture that normalizes and encourages personal growth. Collectively, these strategies enable CAPS to create an optimal environment that is not only reactive to student crises but also proactive in fostering sustained personal development and academic success.

4. Conclusion

The establishment of an optimal environment is paramount for the efficacy of guidance and counseling in fostering meaningful personal growth. This environment is a multifaceted construct, reliant on the synergistic integration of several key components. Adequate physical infrastructure, including private and dedicated counseling spaces, is fundamental to ensuring the confidentiality and psychological safety necessary for open dialogue. This must be supported by

robust technological resources and access to informational materials that empower individuals in their self-development journey. Crucially, the role of the counselor as a skilled, empathetic, and ethically-grounded professional remains the central pillar, transforming physical resources into a dynamic therapeutic process. Furthermore, as exemplified by successful models like the University of Michigan's CAPS, strategic approaches such as integrated services, multicultural competence, and proactive mental health promotion are indispensable in creating an inclusive and responsive counseling ecosystem.

The sustainability and accessibility of such optimal environments are heavily dependent on systemic support, wherein government policy and institutional commitment play a decisive role. Effective policies are required to mandate and fund adequate infrastructure, establish rigorous professional standards for practitioners, and ensure services are affordable and accessible to all segments of society. By prioritizing guidance and counseling within public health and educational agendas, governments and institutions can dismantle financial and social barriers, thereby normalizing help-seeking behavior. A holistic and sustained commitment to these elements tangible resources, qualified human capital, effective strategies, and enabling policies collectively empowers guidance and counseling to function as a powerful instrument. It is through this comprehensive framework that individuals are best supported in navigating life's challenges, achieving positive personal growth, and realizing their fullest potential.

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