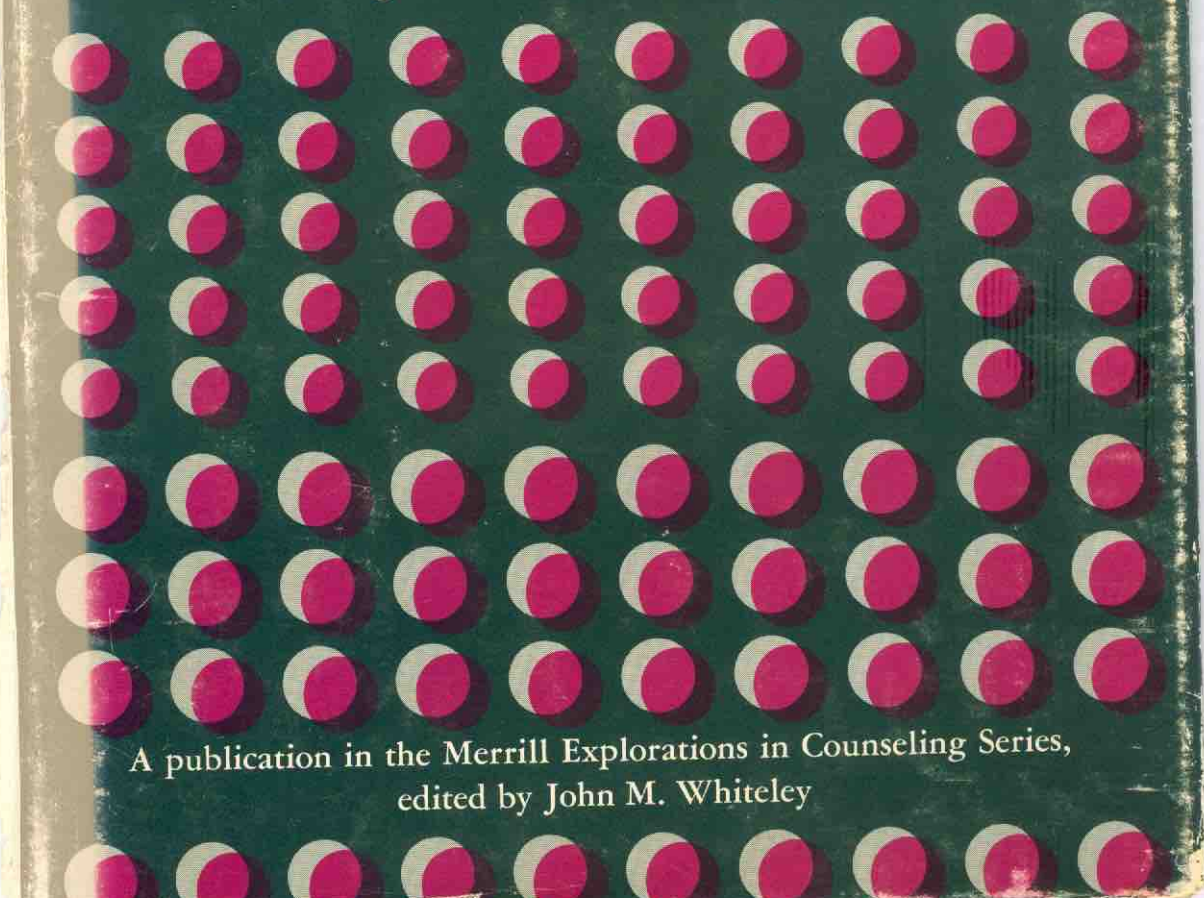




# Research in Counseling

*John M. Whiteley*



A publication in the Merrill Explorations in Counseling Series,  
edited by John M. Whiteley

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EXPLORATIONS IN  
COUNSELING SERIES

John M. Whiteley, Editor, Washington  
University, St. Louis.

# RESEARCH IN COUNSELING:

*Evaluation and Refocus*

*Edited by*

JOHN M. WHITELEY  
WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

*Based on the Bromwoods Invitational Conference on Research Problems in Counseling. Sponsored by the CENTRAL MIDWEST REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY, INC. and WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY.*

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## DEDICATION

*To Shirley and Gregory Taylor*



## *Preface*

Leaders in counseling and education are continually searching for new methods of improving everyday counseling practices. The theoretical and empirical knowledge in counseling is often not pertinent to existing problems and situations, or becomes distorted in translation from research to practice. A greater emphasis must be placed on the types of research which will provide solutions for the kinds of problems counselors and educators must cope with daily. Theoretical and empirical data is valueless to the counselor if he cannot institute significant and meaningful changes in his approaches to counseling.

This book is the result of an awareness of these existing conditions in counseling. It is a concentrated effort by prominent counselors and researchers to alter these conditions. They clearly and concisely evaluate the research literature for the benefit of counselors and counseling students. Their major objective, however, is the delineation of three important areas of counseling: selection of counselors, selection of clients, and assessment of counseling outcomes. They concentrate on defining and improving these areas in an attempt to develop a structure within which counselors and educators may function more successfully in their roles with clients.

Research and theoretical frameworks for future studies are important. It is significant that this book suggests major dimensions for future research, and the refocusing of counseling efforts. It is the contention, however, that there is a flagrant proliferation of research literature which is irrelevant and distorted. This book stresses well founded research with meaningful relevance to counseling practices.

Part I considers the value of a careful assessment and appraisal of each client in advance of actual counseling. It is time to consider which method of treatment may be more appropriate in a particular case, or series of cases. The significance of focusing attention on improving client selection is apparent. The counselor with more information about his client is in a position of adapting his counseling techniques for the benefit of that client.

Presently, little in counselor selection research has related a specific rationale for particular traits to a theory of counseling, except in the most general terms. It is fruitless to continue such a vague line of inquiry. Certain human qualities

may well be relevant to counseling. However, the extent to which these qualities are really important and differentiating remains an open and an empirical question. Part II provides suggestions for the answers to these questions regarding improved counselor selection.

In assessing counseling outcome, research which demonstrates a positive effect for counseling remains the exception rather than the rule. Even theoretical structures from which outcomes of counseling may be accurately derived have not been sufficiently explicated. Nor has much progress been made in relating desired outcome criteria specifically to goals of counseling for any particular client. Additional information and suggestions for improving the measurement of counseling outcome is provided in Part III.

By approaching these three areas and undertaking a systematic evaluation of their salient features and existing fundamentals this book has been able to suggest amendments and improvements for much that is traditional in counseling. All dimensions of counseling and related fields should be augmented by such dynamic and progressive contributions.

In editing this book, I have had come to mind Gray's remark to Horace Walpole that "any fool may write a most valuable book by chance, if he will only tell us what he heard and saw with veracity." The same seems true for editors! This editor has felt that he would serve those who wrote major contributions, the discussants, and the drafters of specific recommendations (and, indeed, the reader) best by presenting the work with as little editing as possible, consistent with integration in the collection. What follows is their work.

J.M.W.

St. Louis, Missouri  
1968

## Acknowledgments

A collection of original contributions to any scientific endeavor is necessarily the product of the sustained effort of a number of individuals, without whose contribution final publication would not have been possible. This is particularly true when the contributions were developed for presentation at a conference of leading researchers in a field. The acknowledgments section provides a grateful conference director and proceedings editor with an opportunity of expressing his appreciation to those individuals.

The initial idea for the conference developed from discussions with several colleagues, most notably Norman Sprinthall and Ralph Mosher of Harvard University, Thomas W. Allen of Washington University, and Wade M. Robinson of the Central Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

As the conference began to take shape, an advisory committee was formed composed of: Thomas W. Allen and Martin J. Bohn, Jr. of Washington University; Robert Callis of the University of Missouri, Columbia; Lawrence Taliana of Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville; Frank Stallings of the University of Louisville; and Frank Noble of George Peabody College. They were of invaluable assistance in selecting participants, speakers, and discussants, and in planning the conference format.

The conference itself was held at the Washington University conference center, Bromwoods, located in Lonedell, Missouri. Several individuals were of major assistance in administrative details: Malcom Van Dursen and Marie Pryor of University College, and Barbara Schade of the Office of Student Services.

Throughout the conference, recorders were at work to provide tape recordings of the various sessions and task groups. For this service we are indebted to: Patricia Howell, Ann Godley, Carole Price, Hazel Sprandel, Rita Kragler, Phil Miller, and William Whitney.

When the conference itself was over, work was just beginning for those who drafted the task group reports and those providing clerical assistance in the preparation of the final report of proceedings. Task group reports were drafted by Thomas W. Allen, Martin J. Bohn, Jr., Patricia F. Howell, and T. Kenneth Allan of Washington University; Lawrence Taliana, Southern Illinois University, Ed-



wardsville; and Frank Noble of George Peabody College, Nashville.\* Clerical assistance has been provided by: Barbara Schade, Carole Price, Cynthia Gilda, Judy Kennedy, Judy Cohen, and Janet Lombardo.

Our greatest debt is to Wade M. Robinson and the staff of the Central Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Inc. of St. Louis, Missouri. Dr. Robinson has been of major assistance from the inception of the project through to its completion with constructive ideas, financial support, and easy accessibility for help with problems as they arose. Fay Starr, Associate Director of CEMREL, was administratively responsible for the Invitational Conference. It was he who helped with establishing the Advisory Committee, coordinating business and financial matters, and selecting participants.

Finally, Miss Kay Garrett of Charles E. Merrill has shepherded the book through the editorial and production aspects of final preparation.

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PART III

THE ASSESSMENT OF  
COUNSELING OUTCOMES

## Introduction

Frank E. Wellman, Professor of Education at the University of Missouri, presented the first major paper on the assessment of counseling outcomes, "A Conceptual Framework for the Derivation of Guidance Objectives and Outcome Criteria." Wellman, as his title indicates, proposes a conceptual framework for the development of guidance objectives in the secondary school. An integral part of the guidance objectives is the derivation of behavioral criteria relevant to outcome research on the objectives.

Wellman distinguishes four formidable problems which must be solved before substantial improvement can be expected in the quality of outcome research. First, independent variables must be specified in such a manner that it is clear what constituted counseling. This is essential for the determination of cause and effect conclusions and replications. Second, uncontrolled variables may influence outcome research; therefore, client variables, life situation variables, and process situation variables need detailed description and control. Third, the specification of appropriate, adequate, and manageable criteria for outcome research remains the most complicated issue in the assessment of counseling outcomes. Fourth, the problem of developing an adequate research paradigm within the framework of existing theory has imposed serious limitations upon outcome research.

Following a description of the USOE National Study of Guidance, Wellman proceeds to present a general guidance objective with related operational translations and basic supporting propositions, including environmental and developmental dimensions.

Thomas Magoon, Director of the Counseling Service at the University of Maryland, begins with a systematic analysis of Wellman's paper, then recommends an approach which is the reverse of Wellman's. In the Magoon model, initial concentration should be on (a) observable, specific behaviors, (b) for those behaviors which have served as outcomes, goals or objectives, emphasis should be on the criterion measurement task *first*; the counselor behavior related to client change *second*; and finally the conceptualization of what emerges.

William W. Farquhar, Professor of Education at Michigan State University, indicated that in his estimation the Wellman model is so all inclusive that "it seeks to describe the total life space of the individuals under study." It is



not necessary, however, to validate all elements of the model for it to be useful as a research framework.

For future work with the model, "the fundamental aspect of counseling outcomes—client and counselor goals—have not been given adequate attention." The Wellman model is evaluated by Farquhar as a "well constructed global guideline" which may serve a useful function within the organizational context, but which needs "many refinements before it can be a productive research model."

John D. Krumboltz, Professor of Education at Stanford University and recipient of the APGA Outstanding Research Award for 1965, presented the final major paper of the Conference entitled, "Future Directions for Counseling Research." Krumboltz offers three propositions for future research in counseling. First, it should be designed to discover improved ways of helping clients. Second, the research design should be such that different possible outcomes lead to different counseling practices. In this context he offers the *test of relevance* for evaluating potential research; namely, what will counselors do differently if the result of a proposed project comes out one way rather than another? Third, counseling outcome criteria should be tailored to what the clients and counselors involved regard as desired behavioral changes.

Robert Callis, Dean of Extra-divisional Studies at the University of Missouri, argues that the test of relevance is too restrictive, as it is not always immediately obvious that a particular proposed piece of research will have some observable or inferable impact upon counseling practice.

After evaluating the three Krumboltz propositions, Callis says that throughout the Conference there has been an under-emphasis on the need for laboratory experiments on subjects, not clients, in controlled laboratory situations, not in the natural counseling settings.

Charles B. Truax, Director of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center at the University of Arkansas, indicates that a first step toward remedying present lacks in counseling research is the recognition that much of current research is irrelevant to the process and outcome of effective practice.

Truax argues for the use of multiple measures of outcome. He believes it would be very difficult to argue against counseling benefit if clients showed improvement across a variety of socially-valued measures of outcome such as grade point average, monetary earnings, and work productivity or competence.

He concludes with a recommendation that counseling research establish a measure of *client benefit* as an outcome criteria. Benefit is the extent to which counseling adds to the degree of improvement the client would otherwise show, without the contamination of "spontaneous improvement."

## A Conceptual Framework for the Derivation of Guidance Objectives and Outcome Criteria: Preliminary Statement\*

*Frank E. Wellman*

The primary purpose of this paper is to present one approach to a conceptual framework for the development of secondary school guidance objectives and the derivation of behavioral criteria relevant to outcome research. An overview of the major problems in the research of counseling outcomes and a brief history of the National Study of Guidance are presented as introductory material to the larger problems of which the conceptual framework presented here is only one small part.

A review of outcome research in guidance, counseling and psychotherapy is not included in this paper, but it should be noted that excellent reviews have appeared in recent issues of the Annual Review of Psychology, the reports of the APA conferences on research in psychotherapy, the Review of Educational Research, the Journal of Counseling Psychology, and as a part of methodological contributions in the Psychological Bulletin (Brayfield, 1963; Carkhuff, 1966; Colby, 1964; Cross, 1964; Dittmann, 1966; Farnsworth, 1966; Kies-

\* The author wishes to acknowledge the helpful suggestions received in the preparation of this paper from Drs. Robert H. Mathewson, Earl Moore, Gilbert Moore, and Charles O. Neidt; however, the views expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily agree with those who have read and assisted with parts of the manuscript.

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ler, 1966; Matarazzo, 1965; Myers, 1966; Patterson, 1966; Seeman, 1961; Strupp, 1962; Strupp and Luborsky, 1962; Wirt and Wirt, 1963; Zax and Klein, 1960; Review of Educational Research, 1963 and 1966).

The almost exclusive emphasis in reported studies on counseling and psychotherapy as compared with the broader process of guidance suggests that (1) research effort has been concentrated in the more restricted process area of counseling and psychotherapy, and (2) this research represents the existing body of knowledge which can serve as a point of departure for the development of research more pertinent to the total guidance area. The first part of this discussion is an attempt to capitalize upon the research on counseling and psychotherapy as an aid in making the transition to the broader study of guidance discussed later.

An examination of research in counseling and psychotherapy seems to support the following general observations:

- (1) The vast majority of the studies reported were conducted with readily available subjects in college counseling centers or hospital settings, and relatively few were found dealing with the secondary school age group or in this educational setting.
- (2) The space of free movement of clients has been restricted in many studies by the settings in which they were conducted.
- (3) The emphasis has been on the reduction of negative behavior where disabling deviations are evident, rather than upon the development of positive behavior within the "normal personality."
- (4) Semantic variations among, and sometimes within, the various theoretical orientations tend to create confusion and to increase the possibility of erroneous interpretations.
- (5) Most studies have been somewhat fragmentary in nature, dealing with extremely limited aspects of behavior and restricted independent variables.

The observations are presented, not as a criticism of the work that has been done but as considerations in the interpretation and use of research results, as well as in the design of new research. Before discussing the major problems in outcome research, the issue of the distinction between process and outcome research deserves special attention due to its relevance to the framework suggested later in this discussion.

### Process-Outcome Distinction

The trend toward increased interest in process studies and perhaps some reluctance to undertake outcome studies has been noted frequently (Farnsworth, 1966; Myers, 1966; Strupp, 1963; Volsky, *et al.*, 1965). The traditional distinction between process research and outcome research is the emphasis on

*how* change occurs during treatment as opposed to *what* change resulted from treatment. Process research has, for the most part, been confined to observations made within the counseling relationship with emphasis upon client-counselor interactions. This type of research has relied primarily upon the verbal behavior of the client and counselor as a basis for inferences concerning the process of change during counseling or therapy. The dependent variables have thus tended to be internal, global and preceptual in nature.

Outcome research, on the other hand, has been typified by before-after measurement of the specified dependent variables, with little attention to changes occurring in process. Specific external criteria are more likely to be utilized, though not necessarily to the exclusion of verbal behavior of more global dimensions. While process research has been concerned with change in the interview situation, outcome research has been focused upon change outside the interview.

In addition to methodological questions that can be raised regarding the limited range of behavior usually considered in process research, and the adequacy and reliability of the two point before-after measurements employed in outcome research, there are other major questions that suggest serious limitations to the somewhat artificial distinction between process and outcome. Kiesler (1966) takes the position that "to some extent process research is outcome research and outcome research is equivalent to process investigation." This merger of the two types of research is defensible when behavioral changes observed in the counseling situation are viewed as legitimate outcomes. Furthermore, repeated measures before-during-after counseling on a variety of dependent variables, both internal and external in nature, provide maximum opportunity to observe the process of change and the relationships that hypothetically exist between in-counseling behavior and external behavior. The developmental concept of continuity of movement in sequential progress, as suggested later in this discussion, can be investigated only when both internal and external behavioral changes, in the research area, are viewed as outcomes, and are analyzed to determine the interaction of change in one situation with change in another. In this sense, Farnsworth's (1966) recommendation that process and before-after studies be conducted concurrently seems to be pertinent to any serious effort to improve the design and interpretation of counseling outcome research. The position taken here is that the term process should be used to describe the experimental (independent) variables applied to produce specified outcomes either in-counseling or out-of-counseling or both, and that the issue is confused by trying to label some outcomes as process and others as end results.

### Problems in Researching Counseling Outcomes

Several excellent discussions of problems and issues in the research of the outcomes of counseling and psychotherapy have appeared in recent literature



(Carkhuff, 1966; Farnsworth, 1966; Kiesler, 1966; Strupp, 1963; Strupp and Luborsky, 1962; Volsky, *et al.*, 1965; Zax and Klein, 1960). The recurring points in these discussions would suggest that counseling research is confronted with the same problems of designing and conducting rigorous experimental research as most other areas of the behavioral sciences. They are formidable but not insurmountable problems that must be solved before substantial improvement can be expected in the quality of outcome research.

First, the specification of the independent variables in a manner that will leave no doubt about what constituted counseling in the investigation is essential to any cause and effect conclusions, and to enable replication of the study. Patterson (1966) noted that "a major defect in most studies of counseling or psychotherapy has been lack of control or specification of the independent or treatment variable, that is, the nature of the counseling or psychotherapy." The assumption that counseling is counseling regardless of where it is found, or by whom it is performed, is not sufficient for meaningful outcome research. Kiesler's (1966) point regarding misconceptions arising from the "uniformity assumption" is pertinent here. He contended that the assumption of therapist uniformity "ignores the growing body of evidence that psychotherapists are quite heterogeneous along many dimensions (experience, attitudes, personality variables) and that these differences seem to influence patient outcome." Also, research reported recently by Truax and others (Truax and Carkhuff, 1965a, 1965b; Dickenson and Truax, 1966) accentuates the importance of giving major attention to therapist variability in outcome research. The obvious heterogeneity among counselors and the variability in the counseling situation dictate that every effort must be made to differentiate counselors, and to describe in detail the counseling (process) variables. The effect of counseling on observed outcomes cannot be determined unless these most crucial independent variables are meticulously described.

Second, the uncontrolled variables that may influence outcomes have been a perpetual problem in counseling research. Variables which seem to be related to counseling outcomes, and which may be described and controlled to some extent, include client variables, life situation variables, and process situation variables. Kiesler (1966) asserted that the assumption of homogeneity among patients included in the samples traditionally available for research is untenable, since heterogeneity can be demonstrated using practically any set of characteristics describing the background, personality or abilities of patients. He therefore concluded that studies conducted without taking account of patient variability cannot provide the evidence needed for meaningful conclusions concerning the effectiveness of therapy for different types of patients.

The ability to generalize results to specified populations requires careful attention and precise descriptions in the differentiation of clients treated. Volsky, *et al.*, (1965, p. 173) observed that "the great heterogeneity of client com-

plaints, problems, expectations, and length of treatment increases the difficulty of moving to a sufficiently molar level to provide generalizations which can be applied meaningfully across this array of heterogeneity."

Life situation variables are closely related to client variables in that they are viewed as a means of differentiating clients with respect to social, economic and cultural characteristics of the environment in which the client functions. Only superficial attention has been given to these variables in outcome research, but recent findings regarding their relation to educational outcomes suggests that they can no longer be ignored in counseling research (Strupp, 1963).

Process situation variables are inherent in the setting where counseling takes place. Perhaps the most apparent of these is the institutional setting. Other variables may include the actual physical aspects of the counselor's office. The extent to which outcomes or process is influenced by these situational variables may be difficult to assess, but the situation should be described so that erroneous generalizations can be avoided. Generalization of findings in a hospital setting to a school setting, for example, should be avoided until evidence is available that counseling outcomes are not related to the particular setting.

These three categories of client and situational variables can reasonably be assumed to be related to counseling outcomes. They are, in essence, independent variables that do not readily permit experimental manipulation, but they may be describable. If they can be described, controls can be imposed through statistical and sampling procedures that will permit generalizations that are not possible from a randomly selected sample.

Third, the specification of appropriate, adequate and manageable criteria for outcome research is probably the most complicated issue in the assessment of counseling outcomes. The problem has received the attention of many writers, and a few promising suggestions have emerged (Farnsworth, 1966; Kiesler, 1966; Krumboltz, 1966; Strupp, 1963; Zax and Klein, 1960).

The objectives and goals of counseling are the foundation upon which criterion variables must be built. Volsky, *et al.*, (1965, p. 14) observed that "More past failures to determine unequivocally the effects of therapy can be traced to the lack of agreement on desired outcomes than to any other cause . . . unless the intended objectives of treatment are made explicit and the counselors at least conditionally accept these objectives, there is little point in doing an outcome study at all." Patterson (1966) related values to the goals of the counseling process, contending that "outcomes must be evaluated in terms of their desirability," and that . . . "until we can agree upon what are the desirable outcomes, we can never compare and evaluate the effectiveness of different methods of counseling or psychotherapy."

One of the major issues in reaching agreement on counseling objectives and outcome criteria has centered around the relative merits of internal global type criteria, such as the various measures of "self," as opposed to external behaviors



which can be observed and reported more objectively. Those who take a phenomenological view of counseling tend to prefer naturalistic observations and internal criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of the counseling process, while those who look upon counseling more as a learning process insist upon an experimental approach using external objectively measured criteria. There is reasonable hope that new approaches can be developed which will capitalize upon the major strengths of both types of criteria.

Normative values placed upon external behavior may provide an opportunity to develop multidimensional criteria that can serve as measures of outcomes suitable to those of the various theoretical orientations. Strupp (1962), for example, has stated that "if psychotherapy is effective, the benefits must be somehow demonstrable in the person's behavior. It is unlikely that a single set of criteria will be applicable to all persons, but it may be possible to evolve a limited set of norms having wide utility." Brayfield (1963) has taken a position which does not reject subjective criteria but suggests that "society imposes an external evaluation or performance criterion that is of equal or more importance." Zax and Klein (1960) concluded that "further development of criteria for evaluating the effects of psychotherapy awaits the clarification, resolving and communication of the values we hold" regarding normality in the sense of psychologically and socially desirable behavior. They further suggest an interesting and logical approach for the derivation of behavioral criteria based on the premise that the one common element in all "normal" personalities "is the ability to function in relation to the norms of his particular social setting." Procedurally, this approach implies that broad normative studies could be used to identify common dimensions, and to develop a limited number of criterion models that might serve as the basis for structuring desired outcomes for a wide range of individuals and aggregate groups.

Fourth, the problem of developing an adequate research paradigm within the framework of existing theory has imposed serious limitations upon outcome research. Kiesler (1966) examined three prevalent theories of psychotherapy against criteria for a comprehensive research model, and observed that behavior therapy was too specific, and that analytical and Rogerian therapies were too general in explaining known facts about psychotherapy. He concluded that no one theory is sufficiently comprehensive to structure acceptable outcome research due to inadequacies in specifying both the dependent and independent variables, as well as methodological consideration of confounding variables within the research area. The need for new approaches that will take account of the significant domains of variables is obvious. New theoretical formulations and reformulations of existing theories will no doubt emerge from the integration of empirical findings into more comprehensive research paradigms. Brayfield (1963) has predicted that in the area of vocational psychology and counseling, "the taxonomic quest, both individual and environmental, will converge on the

discovery of a common multidimensional structure with both static and dynamic properties within which the idiographic account of human life may be perceived."

Finally, methodological problems of research design, including instrumentation, controls, sampling and analysis, have received major attention in the critiques of outcome research. This writer would like to take the position that methodology is a problem only because the four major problems discussed above have not been solved. Methodological considerations are an integral part of, and cannot be treated in isolation from, the research variable structure. When the process or independent variables, the situational variables, and the criterion or dependent variables have been identified and precisely defined, and when the relationships and interactions of these variables have been built into a comprehensive research paradigm, adequate methodology will emerge as a requisite part of the total structure.

### *The National Study of Guidance*

What has come to be identified as the National Study of Guidance was initiated eight years ago as an exploratory project by the U.S. Office of Education. The tentative research design and implementation plans for the study emerged in 1965 as a product of the deliberations of hundreds of individuals. In 1959, the Office of Education called two national conferences and seven regional conferences to plan for the evaluation of the effectiveness of guidance and counseling programs under Title V-A of NDEA. These meetings resulted in a publication (Wellman and Twiford, 1960) dealing primarily with programmatic variables but concluding that the only truly meaningful evaluation must be in terms of behavioral outcomes. The Cooperative Research Branch of the Office of Education conducted research seminars in the area of guidance and counseling at the University of Georgia in 1961, and at the University of Michigan in 1962. These seminar groups reviewed the status, needs, and problems of research in the field, and the Michigan group suggested a research model. This model specified four major domains of variables that must be included to insure controls, adequate analysis of variable interactions, and meaningful conclusions. These variable domains were: (1) guidance and counseling or process variables; (2) student variables capable of differentiating clients; (3) situational variables to describe the social, cultural, and institutional setting in which the process is carried out and in which the student functions; and (4) criterion variables based upon the stated objectives of the program or process.

In 1963, the USOE developed a tentative research proposal based primarily upon the recommendations of the above mentioned groups. This proposal was then critiqued by a total of 134 researchers and practitioners who met in 29 small group meetings in 18 different states during 1963-64. A revised proposal and a summary of the suggestions from the critique groups were submitted to



a panel of six experts in June, 1965, for recommended action. This group encouraged the USOE to continue the project and to take immediate steps to develop a more comprehensive design for the research. Pursuant to these recommendations, one contract was awarded to Neidt to develop the research design, and another to Proff to prepare abstracts of related studies. The reports of these projects were completed in October, 1965 (Neidt, 1965; Proff, 1965).

The overall purpose of the project, as reported by Neidt, "is to identify factors of guidance process that are uniquely related to changes in the behavior of students." The determination of these relationships would serve to identify relevant sources of variance associated with student behavioral change, and thus provide an empirical basis for the formulation of hypotheses that could be tested experimentally to establish cause and effect. The plan includes the collection and analysis of sufficient data on a longitudinal basis to fulfill the overall purpose, and concurrently to initiate a series of experimental studies which would examine smaller segments of the model in depth. Approximately five years would be required to complete this aspect of the study. Hopefully the results would generate hypotheses for a coordinated experimental examination of the observed relationships during the years following the initial study.

The Neidt design suggested that the initial study be planned in four phases: (1) the development of taxonomies and operational definitions of variables to be included in each of the four variable domains: process, criterion, student and situational; (2) instrumentation and field testing of instruments; (3) sample selection; and (4) data collection and analysis.

The University of Missouri was awarded a contract in 1966, to carry out Phase I of the project. The balance of this discussion is devoted to consideration of some of the preliminary formulations for the development of a taxonomy of guidance objectives from which the criterion variables can be derived and defined. It should be noted that this project is designed for secondary school students, and the process variables will include not only counseling, but other guidance activities as well. However, it would seem that some of the work may be adaptable to other age groups and the more limited processes of counseling or psychotherapy.

### *The Conceptual Framework*

The conceptual framework developed here is an attempt to provide a systematic means for (1) the derivation of guidance objectives at the secondary school level,\* and (2) the identification of behavioral criteria that may be useful in estimating the degree to which specified objectives have been achieved.

\* This discussion is limited to the secondary school age group, and guidance is interpreted as a total complex of activities centering in counseling but including other functions consistent with specified guidance objectives.

The concept of individual development, through maturation, learning, and adjustment within specified environmental dimensions, is fundamental to the approach proposed. Individual development is thus interpreted from the dynamics of reaction to, and interaction with, an environment which provides resources for development, imposes restrictions upon free movement, and presents models of expectancy. The ultimate global criteria might be structured in terms of the effectiveness of individual functioning, where effectiveness is determined by individual satisfaction and normative tolerances of the culture. The individual's attitudes, values, and judgments, with respect to himself and his behavior are of prime importance, but are adequate criteria of effective functioning only when viewed in terms of consistency with dominant cultural norms in specific situations.

The general guidance objective in secondary schools, for purposes of this formulation, is to facilitate the development of each individual so that he will become increasingly able to understand, to predict, and to control his behavior in a manner consistent with his personal and environmental resources and limits. This objective may be translated within the reduced scope of functions usually relegated to guidance in educational settings by specifying that the purposes of guidance activities are to assist the individual (1) to make essential decisions and to take action relevant to sequential progress in personal development; and (2) to cope with problems which are deterrents to sequential progress in personal development. These objectives can be given practical interpretation, with promise for researching guidance outcomes, to the extent that the concept of personal development can be defined within the practical boundaries of the guidance function in an educational setting. The following basic propositions represent a preliminary attempt to build a structure of personal development with practical limits, and to provide a frame of reference for the research of guidance outcomes.

### **Basic Propositions**

*PROPOSITION 1.* Personal development is a process of continuous, but not necessarily uninterrupted or uniform, change in a pattern of sequential progress toward increasing effectiveness in the management and mastery of the environment for the satisfaction of immediate and probable future individual needs. Effective behavior is the result of selecting and adopting responses which meet the need criteria, and rejecting those responses which do not, as experienced and interpreted by the self. The individual progresses toward effective functioning as he learns to respond in a manner satisfying to him, and in a manner satisfactory in the socio-cultural context. Thus an increasing tendency to respond in a given manner to specific stimuli or situations develops, directional tendencies are formed, and finally commitment to a particular mode of behavior emerges.



This developmental process is at the very core of the guidance function in education, suggesting a structure for the formulation of specific objectives and operational definitions for outcome criteria. Additionally, since development is viewed as a process within an individually variable time dimension, research of developmental outcomes dictates a longitudinal design.

*PROPOSITION II.* The individual tends to value that behavior which is rewarded by his sub-culture. Cultural norms, then, influence the importance placed upon particular behaviors by individuals who identify with the cultural group. The developmental process broadens experience for the individual, and, as a variety of experiences are assigned relative values, a value system emerges as a basis for placing normative values on each new experience. Breadth of experience, the individual's interpretations of values assigned by groups, and perceived identity with groups, may be important variables in the status of values and the development of values. The variability in educational, vocational and social outcomes of guidance is hypothetically related to the variability in the educational, vocational, and social values dominant in the sub-culture with which the individual identifies.

*PROPOSITION III.* The degree and level of development at any given time influences accuracy of perceptions, level of conceptualization, and subsequent developmental rate and direction. This interrelationship of these variables suggests that knowledge of developmental status and dynamics is a prerequisite to planned behavioral change. At the secondary school level no student is at a zero point in development, hence change must be measured from some relative point rather than an absolute. One research step in measuring developmental change is the estimate of status and the differentiation of one student or group of students from others. It would seem equally important that those charged with the responsibility of assisting students with the modification of their behavior should be aware of the students' readiness, ability and freedom to choose and to act in the change process. The relationship of one act or change to the probability of subsequent direction and change is fundamental to the developmental concept.

*PROPOSITION IV.* All positive developmental changes are potential steps toward the achievement of purposeful goals. In this sense, the kind of behavioral outcomes that might be associated with the secondary school guidance function may be viewed as means to the development of other behavior modes, rather than as end results. This approach interprets client change within the guidance process as legitimate outcome, thus providing a more integrated structure for the classification of objectives and outcomes in a developmental process hierarchy where sequential outcomes may be observed and investigated as movement

toward or away from expected outcomes. It may then be hypothesized that behavior change which follows an orderly and systematic course will provide evidence for the prediction of particular directional tendencies and behavior patterns.

*PROPOSITION V.* Environmental or situational variables provide the external dimension for the interpretation of behavioral antecedents and the estimation of mediating influences on future development. Developmental resources, behavior limits, and goal expectancies emerge from the physical, social, and value structure of the culture with which the individual identifies. Knowledge, understandings, skills, attitudes, values, and aspirations are developed from the interaction of these external variables with the internal variables which characterize the individual. Furthermore, the internal variables are never fully interpretable to the exclusion of the external framework. Therefore, guidance objectives and outcomes become meaningful only when related to the external world as the individual perceives it and as members of his cultural group perceive it. The identification and definition of these external variables should be a goal of outcome research design, so that more rigorous controls may be imposed in the investigation and more precise conditions assigned to the results. The achievement of this goal will enable more accurate differentiation of students, and, in turn, a more relevant interpretation of the outcomes of varying guidance practices with reference to such student differentiation.

*PROPOSITION VI.* Developmental models of sequential progress toward effective functioning can be developed for the environmental points of reference closely associated with the guidance function in education: educational development, vocational development, and social development. Current theories, and evidence already accumulated with respect to sequential development (including crucial points for decision and action, developmental stages, developmental tasks, and normative expectancies), represent points of departure for the structuring of tentative models. The study of large aggregates of individuals at various developmental levels over the essential developmental period would be necessary to revise and refine the tentative models. Thus a criterion model would always be subject to modification in the light of new evidence relevant to aggregate populations demographically similar to those for which the model was structured. The Arden House Research Seminar group (Cohn, 1964, pp. 29-31) suggested that the establishment of criterion models, including estimated probabilities and conditional probabilities of the occurrence of significant sequential events (decisions, action, change), would provide a basis for determining the relative effectiveness of various guidance processes in terms of appropriateness or deviation from the criterion (predicted) model. Recently reported longitudinal studies of career development and of vocational interest development lend



some support for the research promise of the model approach. (Cooley, 1964; Super and Overstreet, 1960; Tyler, 1964)

**PROPOSITION VII.** The usefulness of criterion models for structuring outcome research is dependent upon the extent that (1) the breadth and depth of content scaled in the model are sufficient to enable the selection of objectives, and corresponding outcomes, appropriate to the developmental status and needs of individuals; and (2) the model is sufficiently global to be valid for large aggregates of individuals. This proposition recognizes the uniqueness of individuals in the guidance process, and at the same time acknowledges the commonality of developmental and behavioral elements among individuals as a basis for research. The case for this position has been developed in numerous discussions of the use of clinical and statistical data for the prediction of human behavior. One extreme is summarized well by Hunt and Jones in their statement that:

There is sufficient commonality in the behavior of any one patient over time, in the behavior of groups of patients at a given time, in the behavior of any clinician over time, or in groups of clinicians at a given time to make it possible to gather the repetitive data and establish the probability inferences required to make useful and valid predictions. (Hunt and Jones, 1962)

The relationship between the time dimension and the sample size in this statement is significant only with respect to the number of observations needed to establish the commonality of elements. The extreme idiographic position denies the validity of investigations to establish generalized relationships between the guidance process and behavioral outcomes. The approach taken here accepts the modification of behavior as the primary purpose of guidance, and proposes that general principles applicable to the dependent variables must be derived empirically.

**PROPOSITION VIII.** Criteria for the estimation of outcome variables should meet the following conditions to maintain consistency with the conceptual orientation of the foregoing propositions and with the developmental and environmental dimensions in this framework:

- (1) *Criteria should be expressed positively and defined in terms of evidence of the achievement of, or movement toward, specific developmental objectives.* (This suggestion is made in the face of the difficulty that the Minnesota group (Volsky, *et al.*, 1965, p. 174) and others have had in the measurement of "asset-oriented" criteria, but operational definitions of positive movement should in no sense reject "problem-reduction" criteria. It would, however, propose that

criteria can be formulated to express the longer range results of the reduction or elimination of negative behavior.)

- (2) *Basic criteria should be reduced to units of behavior that will permit reliable observation and reporting, and if global criteria are utilized and interpreted by inference, relationship with behavioral manifestations should be demonstrated as a basis for the inference.*
- (3) *Criteria should be defined precisely enough to permit scaling on a continuum, with the extremes of the variables easily identifiable; and where discrete units are utilized, relationships to continuously distributed units should be investigated.* (Farnsworth, 1966)
- (4) *The developmental approach, which attempts to differentiate individuals and to account for environmental influences, dictates the establishment of multidimensional criteria.* (The interrelationships of variables would suggest that any single criterion would be either meaningless in isolation, or too global to satisfy the other conditions of good criteria.)
- (5) *Criteria should be structured to permit the estimation of criterion variables from two or more sources wherever possible.* (Observations by the student, the counselor, and significant others would appear to be the primary informational sources in such variable estimations.) (Farnsworth, 1966)
- (6) *Criteria capable of reflecting change in relation to a developmental model should permit repeated observations with appropriate attention to the time dimension.*
- (7) *Criteria requiring subjective estimations should be balanced with objective data at least inferentially related to the subjective criteria.*
- (8) *Combinations of internal criteria, intraindividual or intracounseling, with external performance criteria should be sought.* (This condition may be considered as a corollary to conditions 4, 5 and 7 above.)
- (9) *Operational definitions of criteria should provide the basis for instrumentation rather than the instrument providing the definition of criteria.* (Existing instruments may be satisfactory to measure the criteria selected but caution should be exercised in permitting the instrument to dictate the criteria.)

### The Self-Environment Dimensions

The conceptual framework proposed for the research of guidance outcomes is a highly complex, two-dimensional schema which takes cognizance of the dynamics of individual development and the interaction among developmental variables and selected environmental variables. The concept of behavior development is viewed as the sequential process by which the individual moves from the most elemental point of awareness to the point of integrative behavior with respect to specified environmental reference points and identified reference



groups. The development of this concept requires the classification and definition of the major elements in these two basic dimensions, developmental sequence, and environmental reference points and groups.

The basic propositions discussed above provide the foundation and serve as underlying assumptions for the conceptual development. Internal consistency, as difficult as it is at times, has been and will continue to be a goal in this formulation. The efforts to draw from learning theory, perceptual psychology, and psycho-social theories have been relatively productive, but have required the formulation of hypothetical transitions that remain to be tested. This is particularly true in the general inference of the orderly course of development, in which each change is hypothetically related to subsequent change within a specified environment field. Additionally, the cognitive process is emphasized, but hopefully not at the expense of the affective and conative forces which influence this process and the interpretation of outcomes as experienced by individuals.

The format and some of the content of the proposed framework were influenced greatly by the attempts of a few writers to come to grips with the structure of behavior and the relation of guidance and education to that structure. The explanations of Callis (1960) regarding the sequential process involved in the development of the behavior repertoire, and the classification of client problems in diagnostic categories, were most helpful in framing the initial structure. The concept of feedback in the process of evaluation and reality testing of new experience was strengthened by the TOTE unit analysis suggested by Miller, *et al.*, (1960), and by the behavior construct developed by Weitz (1964, pp. 1-61). Mathewson's (1955, pp. 132-141; 1963, pp. 4-11) self-situational theory, though somewhat more global, proved most helpful in the initial development of the two dimensional concept. Jahoda's (1958) discussion of mental health concepts, and Tiedeman and Field's (1965) concept of purposeful action, reinforced the desirability of studying positive aspects of behavior, as well as the feasibility of attempting to develop criteria of effective individual functioning within the socio-cultural context. Finally, the work of Krumboltz (1966) has been very suggestive in the examination of conditions for the derivation of researchable criteria.

The Callis theory emphasized the basic individual need structure as the energizer of behavior. This concept is fundamental, and needs are accepted here as central and key forces in stimulating action and subsequent behavior modification or development. The development of an individual's behavior repertoire was viewed by Callis as a process starting with the perception of experience and leading to generalizations of successively higher order. Perception was seen as interpretations of and reactions to new experience as conditioned by past experiences. The modification of subsequent behavior in similar

situations resulted from the generalizing effect of the perception, and as this new behavioral response was utilized in more varied and complex situations, second and third order generalizations occurred, and the behavior repertoire was developed and expanded from the application of this process to innumerable experiences. Thus the behavior repertoire became the dynamic constellation of responses which the individual had at his disposal in adjusting to and solving problems in life situations. For a single experience this process can be diagrammed as follows: Experience → Perception → Generalization<sub>1</sub> → Generalization<sub>2</sub> → ... This oversimplification of the Callis schema omits one important point which was implicit in his formulation. A single experience could rarely, if ever, be traced to the development of a specific generalization. Generalization results from the interactions of many input experiences and is subject to modification with each new input. Unless this latter concept can be accepted there is little reason to think of education or counseling as modifiers of behavior.

Expansion of the Callis theory was necessary to make this structure useful in formulating a developmental sequence as a basis for the derivation of guidance objectives and outcome criteria. Revisions to provide greater definition and hopefully to come a bit closer to a developmental sequence that can be described from behavioral observations, include two major additions and some revision of definitions.

First, the TOTE (Test-Operate-Test-Exit) concept of Miller, *et al.*, (1960) suggested the consideration of a cybernetic process, where a reservoir of established responses, or the behavior repertoire, and the internal resources of self provide a basis for the choice evaluation and reality testing of alternative responses to input experience. The magnitude and quality of this continuous feedback then becomes an integral part of the developmental process.

Secondly, it seemed that the jump from perception to generalization did not adequately account for differentiation, the determination of relationships, the development of meanings, and the formation of concepts that are hypothesized to precede definitive choices, purposeful action, and enduring behavior at the generalization level. Differentiation followed by a conceptualization process is being suggested as a logical bridge for this gap. As development of the schema has proceeded, the work of the school counselor seems to relate very well to the seemingly obvious steps in the conceptualization process.

With these revisions, the sequence of behavior development may be diagrammed as shown in Figure 1. The process is interpreted as a cognitive learning sequence, tempered by the affective qualities which are brought to the experience situation and which develop from the process. It further suggests sequential progress without regard for the time dimension toward behavioral consistency, and by internal evaluation, behavioral effectiveness. Experience becomes related to these ultimate behavioral outcomes only as the sequential steps



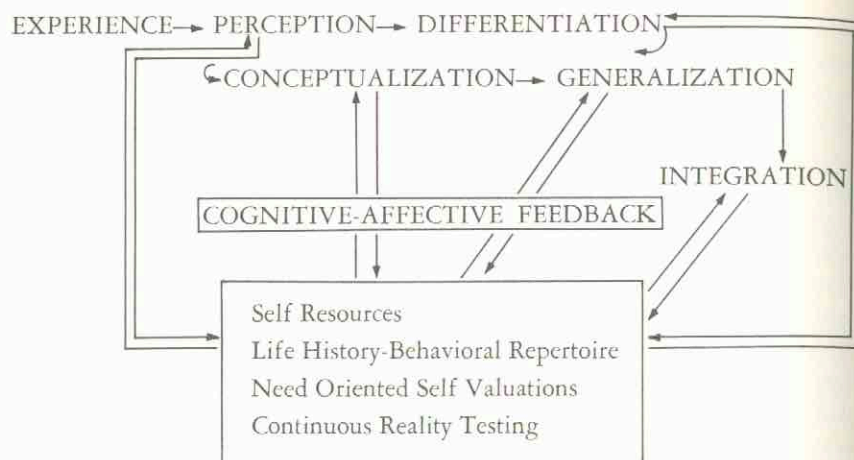


Figure 1. *Sequence of Behavior Development\**

are achieved, but it should be noted that all of the steps are interrelated and interdependent. That is, the nature of the perceptual outcomes influences conceptualization which in turn influences generalization.

The interaction among the process elements is only one part of the dynamics which influence the final outcome. The cybernetic notion of continuous evaluation, based on self-resources, life history, self-valuations and current reality testing, and the feedback into the process may alter the direction and magnitude of the behavioral change at any point in the sequence. That is to say that at the point of initial perception, or awareness, feedback of existing knowledge, values, and modes of behavior affect the nature and accuracy of differentiations.

\* The basic elements of the process are defined as follows for purposes of this discussion: (Some of these definitions are somewhat more restrictive than generally used in experimental psychology)

*Experience.* Any external event or events which stimulates the individual to act.

*Perception.* An awareness of event(s) or object(s) which leads to external differentiation and interpretation of events or objects perceived but does not include internalized interpretations associated with personal meanings.

*Differentiation.* An awareness of concrete or symbolic differences between events or objects which enables the individual to make interpretations and classifications with due regard for the distinguishing characteristics of such events or objects.

*Conceptualization.* The recognition and interpretation of relationships, particularly in relating self to differentiated aspects of the environment, which in turn gives personal meaning to experience and leads to the assignment of values and a tendency to act in accordance with these interpretations and values, thus the internalization of behavior.

*Generalization.* The adaptation of a particular mode of behavior to a variety of situations and to new situations, thus the development of an integrative behavior pattern which enables the individual to respond with effectiveness and consistency.

The criteria for reality testing rests in what the individual has brought to the experience situation. Thus as self is related to the situation, the conceptualization process is shaped in a large degree by interpretations based on the knowledge, values, feelings, and behavior responses which have passed the individual's test of reality and with which he is most comfortable. It is only as the individual is able to conceptualize and thoroughly evaluate new knowledge and modes of behavior that positive development takes place, and behavioral modification becomes integrated into the generalized behavioral pattern. The feedback process enables the individual to predict the consequences of response, and through such prediction to select those stimuli to which response will be made, to determine the nature of the response, and in the final analysis to have some degree of control over his behavior.

The other major dimension of this framework is based upon the hypothesis that behavior cannot be interpreted or changed within the confines of the individual organism, but must be viewed against the backdrop of environment in the broadest sense. If this position is tenable, then the proposed developmental sequence can be structured and interpreted only in terms of environmental factors which influence behavior change and determine criteria for the evaluation of the effectiveness of human functioning. Simply stated, the individual's environmental field provides opportunity and resources for development, but at the same time makes certain demands, imposes limits, and sets patterns of behavioral expectancy.

The proposed classification of guidance objectives within environmental categories is derived from four sources. First, current theories of vocational development and of role development suggest that meaningful environmental differentiations can be made. Second, rather extensive studies of types and causes of client problems, and the development of diagnostic categories in both college and high school settings, support the validity of differentiating environmental variables in terms of task oriented areas and social groups. Third, a survey revealed that most of more than 200 secondary school guidance objectives proposed in the literature could be classified in the environmental categories. Fourth, the most fruitful investigations of the perceptual and conceptualization processes would seem to be within the context of environmental reference points and reference groups.

The environmental dimension has been structured to be consistent with the areas of development and adjustment of primary concern to the secondary school guidance function, and of major significance to the secondary school age group. The environmental reference points are designated as educational, vocational, and social. These areas of development are virtually universal among secondary school students, and appear to be promising for the formulation of criterion models based upon developmental objectives and normative type expectancies or outcomes. The reference groups designated as family, peers, and significant



others are identified as a means of differentiating the major groups involved in the interpersonal relationships of secondary school students. The hypothetical criterion models may emphasize adjustment more in the case of the reference groups and development more in the case of the reference points. However, at the present time it seems feasible to attempt to develop objectives and criteria with both emphases.

The interaction between reference groups and reference points in the sequence of behavior change opens up interesting speculation regarding the desirability of considering reference groups as a third dimension of the reference point developmental processes. This idea will be explored in such areas as the relation of family and peer expectations and values upon the course of educational, vocational and social development.

### *Two Dimensional Derivation of Guidance Objectives*

The basic hypothesis of this proposal is that objectives and outcome criteria, relevant to the guidance process variables, can be expressed in terms of sequential progress toward more global goals with respect to the individual's environmental relationships, and intrapersonal development. That is, to specify behavior change which guidance might reasonably expect to influence in the developmental sequence, and to identify specific kinds of evidence indicative of such change.

The sequence of behavior development represents three major levels of behavior which can be translated into a hierarchy of corresponding levels of guidance objectives: the perceptual level, the conceptualization level and the generalization level. When the three levels of objectives are diagrammed on one axis, and the reference points and groups on the other, an eighteen cell chart is produced representing the possible number of major criterion models that the schema might accommodate (See Figure 2). Whether eighteen sets of objectives and criterion models can be developed which are sufficiently discrete to use for research purposes must be determined from experience.

The three levels of objectives are defined as follows with illustrations of possible objectives and outcomes for the vocational reference point:

**LEVEL I. Perceptual Objectives.** These objectives include the acquisition of information and knowledge, the development of skills and the clarification of attitudes and values so that the individual becomes more aware of, and is able to differentiate more accurately, those aspects of his new environment related to developmental choices and adjustment, as well as his own personal attributes. For example, occupational groups can be differentiated on the basis of the type and level of training required for entry. A perceptual level objective for the student might then be to differentiate occupational groups in this manner, and the criterion measure would attempt to determine the accuracy of such differentiation following the application of process. It should be noted that the objec-

Environmental Dimensions  Developmental Dimensions	REFERENCE POINTS			REFERENCE GROUPS		
	Educational	Vocational	Social	Family	Peers	Significant Others
LEVEL I.						
1. Perceptual						
a. Awareness						
b. Differentiation						
2. Role Identity						
LEVEL II.						
1. Conceptual						
a. Relationships-meanings						
b. Concept formation						
2. Role Concepts						
a. Acceptance						
b. Evaluations-Adequacy						
c. Normative values						
3. First Order Integration						
LEVEL III.						
1. Generalization						
a. Action-pursuit of purpose						
b. Accommodation						
c. Satisfaction						
d. Mastery						
2. Role Performance						
a. Adjustments-Normative Tolerances						
b. Commitment to purpose						
c. Value formation						
3. Integration						

Figure 2. Basic Dimensions of Guidance Objectives and Outcomes



tive relates to student output rather than process, which in this case might be to provide and interpret information relevant to occupational training requirements. Objectives at this level will tend to be expressed as more immediate types of outcomes and will be act-oriented to a greater extent than those at the higher levels.

**LEVEL II. Conceptual Objectives.** Objectives at this level reflect the formation of concepts by relating perceptions of self to specified environmental perceptions. These objectives infer the personal meanings that the individual places upon perceptual relationships. The concept of the various environmental roles and their relationship to normative values is inherent in these objectives. Outcomes at this level should relate to the accuracy, consistency and reality of choice behavior and role performance. For example, a conceptual objective would be to make a tentative vocational choice consistent with the individual's predicted potential for completing needed training. The criterion measure could include self and counselor evaluation of a tentative choice. The conceptual objectives include both immediate outcomes and conations for future outcomes, hence the outcomes of reality testing in the form of valuing and corresponding increase in behavioral tendencies become more significant.

**LEVEL III. Generalization Objectives.** Generalization objectives reflect purposeful action, adjustments within normative tolerances, and consistent and enduring modes of behavior. Objectives classified at this level include the more global performance outcomes, such as the accommodation, satisfaction, and mastery criteria suggested by Tiedeman (1963), and the long range outcomes investigated by Campbell (1965). The systematic and consistent application of a value hierarchy in both internally expressed evaluations and external manifestations, as well as commitment to purpose, would typify generalization objectives related to value formation. Within the vocational development area, one generalization level objective might be to obtain and sustain employment in a position which affords continuing personal satisfaction, and where the individual can consistently meet the employer's performance standards. Two criterion measures of the achievement of this objective might be production output and expressed satisfaction. At this level, a combination of act-oriented and global objectives and criteria will probably be more manageable than at the two lower levels, where behavior development is more fluid and perhaps less integrative.

This conceptual framework hopefully will serve as a structure for the development of meaningful outcome criteria. It will no doubt be modified as criterion models are developed and field tested. To the extent that it may help in more clearly defining guidance objectives and desired outcomes, it will contribute one small part to a more comprehensive theoretical construct and a more adequate research paradigm, both of which must emerge before effective and meaningful outcome research can be expected.

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## Discussion

Thomas Magoon

Having reviewed Frank Wellman's paper, I am left with quite an array of mixed feelings—some of delight, some of despair, and some of puzzlement and frustration.

First, is assessment of counseling outcomes the same thing as guidance objectives for the secondary school? No, I do not think it is, but so what? Perhaps it is even preferable that the conceptual framework be broader than conceptions of what happens to counseled clients. Wellman is saying that a developmental approach to students is much broader than this, and that counseling—as counseling—should be and is included within his conceptions. I agree and obviously like the idea of defining the counselor's role as much broader than the delimited conception often cited. However, considering the complexities involved in gaining more closure in client behavior changes associated with counseling, I feel this broad gauged eclectic approach blunts the impact it could have on illuminating and measuring these behavior changes.

Wellman is following a path recently argued by Carkhuff, "in the past, eclectic practitioners and theorists have been rejected as escapists who do not stand for anything and whose stance is too unsystematic to research meaningfully . . . It is time to develop a systematic eclectic stance, searching out the commonalities as well as the unique contributions of the various approaches to guidance, counseling and therapeutic processes." (Carkhuff, 1966)

Wellman's presentation appears to be broad in design and conception. Tiedeman and Field (1965) have expressed the view that the need is for a broad design, although the broader the proposed theories of guidance, the farther short of the mark they fall. Wellman's presentation also seems quite eclectic in nature. How feasible it will be to bring about a systematic conception is another problem. The formulation appears almost too eclectic in the sense that conceptions are drawn indiscriminately from here and there and welded into



a systematic whole. If it can be done, it is certainly a good trick, and will obviously win wide support from so many of us who find pieces of ourselves included.

When I look at the basic dimensions of the guidance objectives and outcomes, I find much that is unsystematic. The Environmental Dimensions look familiar, but not inspiring. I do not think even Callis would claim they were. But they are reasonably clear and offer a systematic ordering of that universe. The Developmental Dimensions, on the other hand, leave one at a loss. Their level of generality (I am speaking of the three levels—Perceptual, Conceptual and Generalization) is extremely high. The labels are hardly self-evident, and their definitions are ponderous and seem to need the kind of surgical treatment which a rigorous philosopher of science might provide. As an example, I would not think of learning to perform TV repairs as falling within a Perceptual Level of objective. Nor would I expect that job performance that is satisfactory to the performer and the employer and also measurable as productive in work output would be conceptualized as a Generalization Objective. At a minimum, I would suggest more self-explanatory labels be employed. As to the substrata conceptions, I get the uneasy impressions that they represent the various proclivities of the many individuals whom Dr. Wellman has indicated contributed to the total enterprise. I have the impression here that the sub-variables do not order in any reasonably mutually exclusive fashion.

The approach as a developmental one seems most timely and encouraging. This is partly because this contributes to a less fragmented conception of behavior. One way it is less fragmented is in its inclusion of the full array of behavior quality from pathology to asset. The latter end of the continuum sorely tries one's patience in trying to convert conceptions to criterion measurement. This is a frustrating concern epitomized by Carkhuff's recent statement to the effect that healthy individuals are not preoccupied with problems of their identity—that they live theirs! This is a fine example of this frustrating reality. The statement is a clear one—an agreeable one—and yet the variable of "living-ones-identity" is a hard one with which to cope.

Quite candidly, I expect my reactions stem in part from a let down feeling. I expected this paper would deal more explicitly with outcomes. I do not believe it is intended to do so at this stage of its development. Dr. Wellman has presented a conceptual framework of objectives embodying basic propositions representing "... a preliminary attempt to build a structure of personal development with practical limits, and to provide a framework for the research of guidance outcomes." (Wellman, p. 14)

Three issues come to mind here. First, is this much general conceptualizing necessary in order to implement outcome research in counseling? I do not know, but I doubt it. This does not mean that such work may not be necessary for other purposes.

There does appear to be need for some modification of existing conceptions which have occupied places in counseling and guidance texts. At this time, conceptualizations of the total self-environment-developmental processes and interactions therein strikes me as a monster task to undertake—a task for which, I feel, we are not at present well equipped to accomplish.

Second, the next stage in the design, I would think would involve articulation of counselor behaviors, yet it would not deal with instrumentation as is stated in Dr. Wellman's report of the next stage in his research design. Instead, I would think it would deal with the question of counselor behaviors themselves. To build instrumentation to reflect the current vagaries of counselor behaviors I believe would be building houses on sand.

Third, how productive will these conceptualizations be in implementing the next steps involving identification of criterion variables and criterion measurement? Who can tell at this juncture? Then why raise the question? Two reasons prompt it. One is an empathic feel for the criterion measurement workers whose work at this stage appears more difficult than the work involved in the conceptualization. The other reason is to introduce an alternative approach which might be equally or more productive. That approach is, in some ways, the reverse of the present procedure. It says, why not concentrate on (a) observable specifiable behaviors, and (b) for those which have served as outcomes, goals or objectives in counseling of particular clients, concentrate on the criterion measurement task *first*; the particular counselor behaviors suggested for bringing about such changes *second*; and the conceptualization of what emerges *third and last*. In our task group there were several observations made to the effect that much of what we speak about here has been said many times before. Specifically, in the realm of counseling goals, we observed that for years in formal and informal gatherings one has heard—and agreed with—"We need to identify our counseling goals for clients to develop in counseling or behaviors to bring these about, and criterion measures to establish the degree to which the goals have been attained."

To put it in optimistic form, why is it that we have made so little progress toward these ends? One might respond—wait a minute now. We have learned a lot of recent years: or "What about Framistan's four-dimensional galactic space model of Flervistadt's pre-post changes in clients using the Arctic Circle Psychological Inventory." I, for one, view the first type of question as perhaps true but irrelevant, and the latter, perhaps true but peripheral.

We drop profuse references from within and without the psychological literature, and as Frank Robinson indicated in an issue of the *Journal of Counseling*, there is a lot of that literature.

"Why, I repeat, haven't we been able to identify counseling goals for clients; develop counselor behaviors to bring these about and criterion measures to establish the degree to which these goals are attained?" (Robinson, 1966).



I submit that I do not think we have made much headway and we have spent a lot of time talking about it.

How might this more productive talk be accomplished? Here is just one specific illustration. I would propose bringing together selected counselors who were (a) hardnosed, (b) interested, (c) could articulate one or more sequences of counseling with a client or clients manifesting a particular kind of problem. Second, I would involve a group of researchers, if the counselor group did not sufficiently reflect the researcher's orientation. Third, I would involve these groups together with some operant conditioners who were (a) motivated to apply their orientation to such an applied human problem, and (b) interested in counselors' behaviors and dilemma. I would hope to keep these groups together off and on for perhaps two or three months.

Through this mold of the counselors, researchers and operant conditioners, the task would be to recast the counselor's behavior and mission in an operant conditioning model for problem after problem. In such a molecular fashion this procedure might take a long time before a very large amount of client problems and counselor practices were mapped. In effect, though, we would be building an atlas of illustrative models of client and counselor interactions. I would expect that these would provide clear models for tryout by practicing counselors, teaching materials for use in counselor training, and that as they accumulated, they would, by the widening array of examples, have a momentum effect on providing guidelines for other problems which had not been subjected to this analysis.

Would this illustration work? It might not work at all, but I would guess that even if it did not by itself, it might provide a necessary basic underpinning for whatever model evolved in the future. It does seem that such an action illustration would offer a more specific model for counseling goals and one offering a rigorous language system sufficient to be well worth the investment.

Several years ago, some colleagues concluded that it was premature to expect to develop an empirically useful generalized model for counseling goals. Wellman's conceptualization strikes me as such a generalized model. I believe it is still premature, but I say that with very low confidence. Who can say what kind of efforts will be viewed ten years from now as having laid the groundwork for whatever is then in vogue? With much more confidence let me conclude by expecting that with so much to be accomplished and so few guidelines available to us, individually different approaches to untangling issues of counseling outcomes should be fostered for their potential, not deterred for their uncertain prognosis. As several colleagues once said, "... the future will no doubt find both atheoretical, data gathering empiricists and diverse theory builders and testers hard at work, and this is as it should be." (Volsky, *et al.*, 1965)

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## Discussion

*William W. Farquhar*

Before responding directly to Wellman's paper, I would like to make a few general comments.

At times in this conference, we have talked about counseling as if it were mostly art and little, if any, science. If we choose to treat counseling as having the potential of a science, then we must make some assumptions about the processes and products similar to those found in the Hunt and Jones citation of Wellman's paper. That is, we must assume that there are some common elements in whatever we study, that these elements can be identified and isolated, that some of the elements are manipulatable, and that once the elements are identified they tend to remain somewhat stable. My remarks are based on the assumptions that counseling has scientific potential and, thus, ultimately its outcomes will be assessable.

My main reactions to Wellman's paper center on the task he has set forth for himself. How important this reaction is will become apparent when we consider (1) the magnitude of the task he set for himself, (2) the operational definitions needed for his model, (3) trends in assessment, (4) the research goals implied by his model, and (5) the limited type of control groups which might be employed to test the constructs woven into the model.

### Task Magnitude

My impression of Wellman's model is that it has elements which are so all inclusive that it seeks to describe the total life space of the individuals under study. Of course, if we use a theoretical base for such a model, it is not neces-

sary to validate all of the elements of the model. (My point is well documented in the philosophy of science literature, but a succinct summary of its central features can be found in the article by Royce, 1963.) We can choose key constructs and inferentially establish the other dimensions. The problem comes in knowing which are the key constructs and in finding methods of operationally defining those elements. Within the model that Wellman has postulated, we have a framework which could serve as a model for seeking the evaluation of counseling outcomes, but I am left with two impressions which are somewhat overwhelming: one, the elements of the framework lack specificity (a point which I will expand shortly); and, two, the time expense involved in attempting to corner the elements would almost toss the findings into historical rather than current functional research. (That is, social conditions may have so changed by the time the data were analyzed that the findings might have only limited current value.)

### Need for Operationalism

Wellman's model appears to me to be at a highly abstract level of development. He has pulled from more than one theoretical referent, but I am left with the impression that the fundamental aspect of counseling outcomes—client and counselor goals—have not been given adequate attention. The following highly simplified paradigm illustrates my point. Suppose a client comes for help. He states he lacks information and/or is hurting. If he lacks information, we can move into Wellman's model fairly easily and assess the validity of the kinds of information the client received, internalized (even though this one would be a little bit tough to establish), and used. If the client is hurting, the paths in the model become more complex and confusing in attempting to make operational statements. The type of help offered may be tempered by the point of view held by the counselor. But, more important, the level of functioning the counselor strives for and will be satisfied with is also variable. Suppose the counselor decides that, in order to lessen the hurt, it is important to teach the client to be "open." We ask him what he means by "open." He replies, "honest." We begin to ask questions such as, "with whom, under what set of circumstances, and at what price?" Then, we wonder about what evidence we use to determine if honesty has been achieved as a result of counseling, and if the client actually does hurt less for being honest. (We do this knowing full well that honesty creates other kinds of hurts not realized by the client in his initial stages.) We could easily spend many months trying to operationalize this one concept. The net result in feeding the information back to the massive Wellman model is that we have only added a small degree of clarification. In fact, Blocher pointed out that if we observe 50 variables in the

counselor and 50 variables in the client, the possible combinations and permutations are overwhelming.

### Trends in Assessment

Much of Wellman's model attempts to take into account the total life space of the client in assessing counseling outcomes. My own impression is that our field may be moving back to the laboratory with finely controlled conditions to assess the outcomes of counseling. Technological breakthroughs with better and increased instrumentation seem to be heading us in this direction. Hess' (1965) work in studying the expansion and contraction of the pupil as an indicator of response to attitudes, if it continues to hold promise as originally indicated, is one example of a possible tool for verification. The use of unobtrusive measures as detailed by Webb, *et al.*, (1966) is another illustration of possible assessment innovation. Witkin's work (1962) should also not be overlooked as a possible source of instrumentation. Finally, the behavioristic school has brought us to focusing on smaller segments with more depth. The old molar-molecular controversy has been resurrected with vengeance. The full impact of all of the above will be greater diversification in human research, permitting many avenues to establish our constructs.

### The Goals of Research

The goals of research can be stated in many ways, but a commonly accepted definition is that it is the making of probability statements about the nature of reality. How we go about achieving this goal is determined by the type and validity of the designs we select. Campbell and Stanley's (1963) book offers some fruitful guidelines to the possible experimental designs available, and a handy reference point for determining the sources of invalidity which might explain our results better than the variables which we were trying to manipulate. Counseling presents a somewhat unique problem in applying these designs because of the expense of carrying out the process. But as long as we were aware of these limits, there is little reason why our research should not improve, leading us to better understandings of what is actually happening within our field.

A further point about the contribution that Campbell and Stanley (1963) might have made centers on my hope that we will stop reviewing masses of studies by only looking at the outcomes. We need to become extremely critical of design process. I have noticed during this conference that findings from studies have been squeezed in one direction and then another to substantiate a

particular point of view. For the studies that I am familiar with, I feel that often the discrepancies in outcomes were better explained by the research design and measurement uniqueness than by the capriciousness of the experimental subjects.

### Control Groups

The philosophy of science people raise the question of "When do we know when we know?" Of course, one of the ways that we have attempted to find out is to use a no-treatment group, which we label "control." Orne (1962) has raised the intriguing point of whether we can really ever achieve a true control group in dealing with human subjects. In his studies of people who need counseling, he found that when treatment was withheld, these people sought out other human beings to give them aid and comfort. Admittedly, this help certainly does not fall under the auspices of our professional ego, which maintains that help must be given by a trained and skilled person. Apparently, he did find some evidence of psychological improvement even without typical psychological services. For many of the variables that Wellman has listed, we have to assume that they do work to some degree. The question of their relative merit will have to be raised if the Orne studies have any impact upon our research activities.

Wellman's paper is a well constructed global guideline—an organizational schema. It may serve a useful function within the organizational context, but it needs many refinements before it can be a productive research model.

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## Future Directions for Counseling Research

*John D. Krumboltz*

A little over a year ago I attended the annual convention of the American Dental Association in San Francisco. While waiting one afternoon, I was seated outside one of the meeting rooms and overheard a conversation which seems now to have particular relevance for research in counseling. I shall try to reproduce the conversation as nearly as I can remember it while admitting fully that perceptual distortions can occur.

"I missed that last session, but I heard some of the fellows muttering on the way out. Is it true that research has proved dentists are unnecessary?"

"Just that they make no significant difference."

"How did they prove that?"

"Had five dentists cooperating. Out of 20 patients calling each dentist, ten picked at random were asked to wait six months. The other ten were given appointments immediately."

"So what happened then?"

"A year later both groups were examined, and both groups had about the same average number of teeth, about the same average annual income, and were about equally happy when asked to respond on a seven-point rating scale."

"Weren't there any differences?"

"There was almost a significant difference on one rating scale."

"What one?"

"Degree of respect toward dentistry as a profession."

"Well, at least there's a trend in our favor."

"Nope, control group had more respect."

"Now, wait a minute. This kind of research is ridiculous. You can't tell me dentists don't do any good. Why, I know a little girl with a cleft palate whose speech could scarcely be understood. She was shy and withdrawn, teased by her playmates, and some of her teachers thought that she was mentally retarded. Then a dental surgeon produced a prosthesis to close the gap in the soft palate and enabled her to speak normally. You should hear this girl tell what a tremendous difference it made in her life."

"Significant at what percent level? That's only testimonial evidence. No respectable journal would publish anecdotes like that in this scientific age."

"You think this fancy research project is pretty good, don't you?"

"Well, it's going to be published."

"There is one fundamental thing wrong with it."

"What's that?"

"It makes no significant difference."

"What do you mean?"

"It makes no difference that the results are negative, and it would make no difference if the results had been positive. Furthermore, it was obvious from the beginning that a study like this could not possibly advance dental science one bit, no matter how it came out."

"You had better explain yourself."

"Okay, what are the dentists who heard about these negative results going to do differently from now on?"

"Nothing. They complained about the study—Small N, irrelevant criteria (didn't even count the number of dental caries), need for a longer follow-up interval, all that sort of thing. And besides they thought it didn't apply to them."

"Any of them threaten to quit dental practice because of this evidence?"

"Of course not."

"Now, what do you suppose dentists would do differently if the results had been favorable?"

"Precisely. No matter which way the study came out, dentists would continue to do just what they've always done. We will never advance the dental profession by doing that kind of research."

"What kind of research do you think we should do?"

"Research that makes a difference in the effectiveness of what dentists do. We need better ways to remedy dental defects, help people care for their own teeth, and prevent dental problems."

"That's pretty general. Can you give any specific research problems which might affect what dentists do?"

"Sure. We need to know the optimum ratio of mercury to silver alloy in amalgam to achieve various objectives—hardness, adhesiveness, absence of discoloration. We need to know the effect of diet on tooth permanence. We



need to know how to prevent the chemical imbalances in saliva that cause enamel dissolution or the precipitation of calcium. We need to know . . ."

"Okay, okay. But what if we solve all these problems you were about to list? What would dentists do if all our preventive and remedial efforts were successful? We would be out of work."

"That is precisely the objective of the dental profession—to eliminate oral disease and thus eliminate the need for the current type of costly dental services. If we could ever solve all the problems of oral disease, we could turn our efforts toward new problems. Any true profession tries to reduce the need for its own services by preventing or solving more efficiently the problems for which it assumes responsibility."

That was the conversation that I heard, or thought I heard, or perhaps dreamed. In any event, it started me thinking about the kind of research that I have been doing. How much of the research which I have done has actually made any difference for anyone's practice? For that matter, what difference has it made in terms of my own practice of counseling or teaching? I am forced to confess that a great deal of my own research has made absolutely no difference to anyone.

As a result of this introspection and a review of counseling research, particularly that of the last three years, I have arrived at some conclusions which I shall present to you in the form of three propositions.

### **Proposition I: Counseling Research Should Be Designed to Discover Improved Ways of Helping Clients Prevent or Learn to Solve Their Problems.**

The implicit assumption that we already know how to counsel.

Perhaps the most disturbing note running through the counseling literature is the implicit assumption that counselors already know the best way to be of assistance to each client. Many of the research studies we see attempt to evaluate counseling but give very little attention to exactly what it is that counselors do. Everyone seems to know implicitly what counselors do. If so, then the next step is to prove that what they do is good for something. The danger in this belief is that it may cause us to stop searching for new ways to help clients. If we are already convinced that we know the best way to help clients, the next job is to conduct research which will attempt to prove that "counseling" works better than nothing. Such research is futile no matter what the results.

When research efforts produce no significant differences between counseled and non-counseled subjects, we have a ready set of rationalizations. Perhaps counseling has long term effects. If only we could conduct a long range follow-up, we would find greater effects. Criterion instruments can usually be blamed for part of the difficulty, and of course a large N is always desirable.

Every now and then (could it be about one time in twenty?) we do see studies which show significant differences. However, I do not wish to argue here whether counseling does or does not have any effect on clients. I think we are wasting time even to ask if counseling has an effect. I personally am convinced that counseling does have some effect on some clients for some kinds of behavior change. I am not interested in proving to the world that some generality known as counseling is generally effective for general clients. What I want to know is how counselors can do an even better job of helping their clients. It will not do us any good to learn that counseling as it is presently constituted is slightly better than nothing in helping clients. I am afraid that if we did receive some conclusive evidence of counseling's value, all efforts to improve the counseling process would cease.

In order to generate appropriate kinds of research problems, we need to begin with the problems of our clients. We need to ask for each client, "What is the problem that he is facing? What kind of behavior must he engage in if he is to resolve that problem? What are some of the alternative actions that the counselor can take that would help him to engage in that kind of behavior?"

The behavior changes desired by each individual client and his counselor constitute the foundation upon which our research must be based. To do anything else is to attempt to produce changes which are not necessarily desired by either the client or the counselor. But it is essential before research begins that we eliminate the idea that we already know how best to counsel. Instead, we need to consider some alternative ways of helping our clients attain their life desires.

### **Dependent Variable As Client, Not Counselor, Behavior**

It seems almost too obvious to mention, but the target of counseling research ought to be the behavior of the client, not the behavior of the counselor. Some technically excellent work has been done on the effect of alternative types of client behavior on the response of the counselor. It may be of some general interest to know that when a client is hostile toward a counselor, the counselor emits certain types of anxiety responses. However, this would be useful information only if we were interested in training clients to make counselors anxious. A far more valuable research topic would be to determine what types of counselor responses make the client less anxious.

The idea of using coached clients to investigate counselor responses is deceptively attractive. It is attractive because of the ease of establishing rigorous experimental designs which may produce significant results. The deception is in the fact that the results do not actually advance the counselor's knowledge of what actions he may take to help his clients.



Another type of study that appears somewhat irrelevant to the client's welfare investigates the counselor's ability to predict certain patterns of client speech or other behavior. The purpose of counseling is not to predict what the client will say. Besides, Carkhuff's (1966) review of the evidence showed that increasing amounts of graduate training lower the ability to predict client behavior. If we really want to help people predict other people's behavior, we ought to be teaching that skill to the client, not just the counselor. However, it is apparent that we do not yet know how to predict other people's behavior any better than any other normally intuitive person. When we do learn how, we should list it as a skill some clients may wish to learn. Our research should testify that we work for the welfare of the client, not the counselors.

### The Danger of A Narrow Outlook

Most modern industries in America are no longer tied to a single product or a single process. A company which manufactured buggy whips in 1890 might have been very prosperous at the time and even for several years thereafter, but if the company conceived of itself as being in the buggy whip manufacturing business, it was doomed to failure. It would have survived if it had conceived of its role as being in the transportation business. A far-sighted buggy whip manufacturer would have said, "We are in the transportation business, and therefore it is our job to manufacture those articles which enable people and goods to be transported as safely, quickly, and economically as possible." Thus, the advent of the automobile would be viewed as an opportunity to expand the product line rather than as a threat to financial security.

Right now we see the beginnings of a similar development in the book publishing business. Some book publishers are going to say, "We are in the book publishing business, our job is to manufacture books, and we view all other means of storing and transmitting words and images with hostility and suspicion." But far-sighted book companies are going to view themselves more broadly as part of the communication industry. They will ask how they can transmit pictorial and verbal images to the people who wish them most expeditiously. One example of this broader outlook is represented in the merger of the American Book Company with Litton Industries. The development of computers, copying machines, and random access microfilm storage files foretells a fundamental revolution in what used to be the publishing industry, but is now the communications industry.

We are faced with a similar danger, or opportunity, in the field of counseling. In the face of innovations we may be tempted to reply, "We are in the counseling profession. Our job is to counsel. We must provide one counselor who will be available to talk at least X number of hours each year with each

individual." We must not take such a narrow view of our function. We would be much more likely to promote the welfare of clients, counselors, and citizens if we were to view ourselves as part of the education industry.

It is our job to help our clients learn. For a variety of reasons many of them have failed to learn some of the basic things which enable them to function in society. Our job is to promote, somehow, the learning that must be accomplished through a process called counseling. Perhaps someday someone will develop improved ways for helping to promote this new learning. When better ways are developed, far-sighted counselors will eagerly test them, adopt them if they work, and continue to improve them.

Counselors are in the business of promoting behavior changes along certain dimensions just as classroom teachers are in the business of promoting behavior changes along certain other dimensions. We go by many different titles—professors, teachers, counselors, psychologists, administrators, psychotherapists, and even psychiatrists, but fundamentally we are all in the same business, that of helping our clients learn those things necessary for their own welfare. Our research must improve the process.

### Proposition II: Counseling Research Should Be Designed So That Different Possible Outcomes Lead to Different Counseling Practices.

When I was a young and naive graduate student at the University of Minnesota, I soon became duly impressed with the importance of using the proper experimental design, the right statistic for the necessary assumptions, the need for properly validated measurement instruments, and the necessity of choosing a representative sample. So much effort was involved in learning these aspects of research that it was not until later that I really appreciated the far more important lesson from my graduate training, namely: If you ask the wrong question, no amount of statistical sophistication can make the results valuable. Let's consider some of the factors which keep us from asking the "right" questions and how we might increase our ability to ask questions which will make a difference.

### Research Which Gains the Respect of Other Disciplines

Sometimes we read surveys which report that counseling psychology ranks toward the bottom of the prestige hierarchy within the field of psychology. Some of us have felt tangible effects of being at the bottom of the pecking order in the psychological community. We are bothered by this and sometimes



protest (usually to other counseling psychologists) that we are entitled to just as much respect as any other type of psychologist. But respect cannot be requested; it cannot be demanded; and it cannot even be legislated. Respect is earned, and it is earned by demonstrated competency in mastering the problems in one's own field.

A fundamental mistake has been to model our research after the research of some of the academic disciplines. Much of this research is "knowledge for its own sake" (facts gathered for no known reason). (Actually, of course, good researchers in other disciplines gather facts for very good reasons, usually to provide evidence to support or disconfirm a possibly useful theory.) It is a temptation to adopt the apparent policy of those who have more prestige than we have and therefore to conduct research which has no known practical benefit. Much of the research which I read in our professional journals appears to be just of this type, collections of facts (seldom even interesting facts) which make no possible difference in the practice of counseling.

It is not our job to amass knowledge for its own sake. Our job is to improve the practice of counseling for the welfare of our clients. The facts we collect should be those which make some kind of a difference in what counselors do. We will gain the respect of other disciplines when we put our own house in order and accomplish the purposes for which we work. We will not gain the respect of other disciplines by becoming a superficial imitation of a basic science while at the same time counseling practice and counseling research bear no relationship to each other.

New junior colleges are being established, and sometimes they begin by modeling themselves after some prestigious university. Although the primary purpose of the junior college is to provide adult and terminal education for many students who would not benefit from a traditional curriculum, policies and courses are often instituted in an attempt to model the high prestige institution. High standards are set in irrelevant courses, many students fail, and for some strange reason this high failure rate is viewed with pride. The basic difficulty is that an inappropriate model had been chosen. The junior colleges which are gaining the most respect are those which are accomplishing their own purposes most effectively. Those which are providing meaningful courses, stimulating teachers, and relevant occupational training have won respect, not only of the general public, but of responsible professional persons at the major universities also. Demonstrated competence in accomplishing one's own purposes is the route to attaining respect from others.

Counseling research will begin to earn the respect it deserves when the results of that research begin to improve counselor's abilities to help their clients.

Nothing that I have said up to this point should be interpreted to mean that I oppose the seeking of knowledge for its own sake. Many scientific advances and technological improvements have occurred unexpectedly from scientific

attempts merely to achieve a better understanding of some phenomenon. Such fundamental research will continue, should continue, and indeed must continue. Counseling psychologists have an obligation to keep in contact with that basic research which may possibly have relevance for developments in the field of counseling. If, from time to time, the counseling psychologist should wish to contribute to this fundamental research, no one ought to object. However, if we make our primary research activity the development of knowledge unrelated to the improvement of counseling practice, then I think we are neglecting the first responsibility of counseling researchers. The first order of business is finding out what we need to know in order to improve the practice of counseling.

### The Test of Relevance in Planning Research

C. H. Patterson (1966) has written, "To be *engaged* in research is almost an end in itself, and one can actually continue, sometimes for years, doing research without having to show what he has accomplished, or to demonstrate the value of any results" (p. 130). I agree strongly with Patterson that such trivial research has many unfortunate consequences for the entire profession. The solution that I see, however, isn't to give more importance to theory and discussion but to increase the relevance of the research that we do.

To this end I would suggest that in the planning stage of every doctoral dissertation and research proposal in the field of counseling the test of relevance be applied. The test of relevance consists of asking one simple question and probing the answers: *What will counselors do differently if the results of this research come out one way rather than another?*

Suppose a doctoral candidate proposes a research study on some problem in test interpretation. He wonders how accurately parents can estimate the relative test results of their own children. He has developed a whole series of hypotheses that parents will be able to estimate certain abilities more accurately than other abilities, certain personality traits more accurately than other personality traits. Let us now apply the test of relevance. First question: "Suppose you find that parents are able to estimate their own children's verbal ability significantly better than they are able to estimate their own children's mathematical ability, what would counselors do differently as a result?" Second question: "Now suppose that you find that parents are just as able to predict their own child's mathematical ability as they are to estimate verbal ability, what would counselors do differently as a result of this finding?" If it turns out, as I expect it would, that counselors would do just exactly the same thing regardless of which way the results came out, then that proposed research is not really relevant to the field of counseling psychology. It may be a contribution to some



type of basic knowledge, and it may be a publishable research study. But if we allow that research to be conducted, we will have lost one more opportunity to improve the practice of counseling, and we will have taught one more student that research is merely academic calisthenics and need not contribute to solving real problems. A job that is not worth doing at all is not worth doing well.

But the test of relevance can be taken one more step to make it a help in constructing new research problems, not merely a way of eliminating irrelevant proposals. The extension consists of asking what possible alternative counselor actions might be taken as a result of having the proposed additional information. MacQuiddy (1964), concerned with a problem of test interpretation, asked the question: If counselors know how accurately each parent had estimated each ability of his child, would he interpret the results of the testing any differently to the parents? More specifically, if a counselor knows that a parent has estimated some of his child's abilities quite accurately but is markedly wrong in estimating certain others, and assuming that the counselor would like the parent to accept the results of the testing, should the counselor begin by interpreting first the score that the parent has estimated most accurately, or should he begin by interpreting the most discrepant test score? MacQuiddy arranged for several school psychologists to interpret to parents their child's test results after first obtaining the parent's own estimates of their child's abilities. MacQuiddy's hypothesis was that parents would accept the results of testing more readily if counselors began by interpreting the scores that were increasingly discrepant until the last score interpreted was the score that the parents had missed by the greatest amount. The results were surprising, for they came out in just the opposite direction from that hypothesized. The parents who accepted the results most thoroughly were those in the group which received the most discrepant score first. Those whose judgment was initially confirmed were least willing to accept the test results.

This study is cited, not as an example of an earthshaking experiment, but as an example of a study which can affect the practice of counseling in some small way. If I were a counselor interpreting a group of test scores to parents, and if I had some prior knowledge of what the parents thought their children's abilities were, and if I wanted the parents to accept the results of these standardized tests, then I would begin by telling each parent about the test result that was most different from what the parent expected. In short, I would do something differently as a result of knowing the results of MacQuiddy's research study.

Now, you may say that I would be making a mistake to base my practice upon one study done by one person in one school system on a small sample using only certain tests in one year. Obviously, the results of this study need to be replicated. But the basic point is that if this study is replicated, and if the results do come out the same way in these replications, then we have some firm

knowledge about how counselors could act in order to bring about a given result.

One other important point: The rationale for MacQuiddy's study was based on Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory and related basic research. The results of MacQuiddy's research are relevant to the theory of cognitive dissonance and may contribute to the support or disconfirmation of certain propositions in that theory. Practical research questions should not be isolated from basic research knowledge or fundamental psychological theories but, indeed, should be relevant to them, and furthermore, should contribute to such theories as a by-product.

The division of labor that I am proposing is that we counseling psychologists use the theories and basic research of other disciplines to formulate questions, the answers to which affect counseling practice; we leave to Festinger and other theorists the problem of integrating the results of practical research in the modifications of their theories.

### Proposition III: Outcome Criteria of Counseling Research Should Be Tailored to the Behavior Changes Desired by the Clients and Counselors Involved.

Elsewhere I have argued that the goals of any counseling should be formulated in terms of observable behavior changes desired by both the client and the counselor (Krumboltz, 1966a, 1966b). I shall not reiterate the reasons why I consider such a formulation desirable, but the essential point here is that the goals of different counseling sessions may vary markedly. One client may wish to reduce the anxiety he experiences in connection with taking tests. Another may be concerned about his ability to form friendships. Still another may have inadequate study habits. The goals of each counseling session are different for different clients, and therefore it is impossible to apply a single criterion to evaluate counseling in its totality.

### Appropriateness of the Criterion for Each Client

If we examine some of the criterion measures which have been used to evaluate counseling in recent research studies, we are impressed by the creativity involved in generating so many possible desirable outcomes of counseling. But was each possible outcome desired by the client who came to the counselor in the first place?

For example, one criterion measure is the number of constructs borrowed from the therapist. Did the client come to the counselor in order to learn to



use the same terminology as the counselor's? Would the client be happy to learn that success had occurred in his case because he was now using more of the terminology of his therapist than he did in the beginning?

Another criterion measure is an enlarged time perspective. Did the client come to the counselor because he was dissatisfied with his narrow time perspective? Would he be happy to know that counseling had been judged successful with him because his time perspective had been enlarged?

Another criterion measure is the amount of participation in groups. If the client had come to the counselor because of excessive loneliness and an inability to communicate with other people, and if he and the counselor agreed that it would be desirable for him to learn how to get along with other people in group situations, then I think an excellent criterion for him would be his amount of participation in groups. If, on the other hand, he came to the counselor because of an inability to manage his own time and poor study habits, then an increase in the amount of time he spent in groups might be a sign that counseling had been a distinct failure.

Unless the criterion measure represents the kind of behavior change desired by the client and the counselor in each individual instance, the counseling of that client cannot be evaluated. This means that any counseling outcome research with a group of clients must be undertaken with clients all of whom desire to make the same type of behavior change.

### The Danger in Gross Criterion Measures

One of the favorite criterion measures in educational and counseling research is the ubiquitous grade point average (GPA). It seems like a desirable criterion measure since almost everyone would like to have a higher GPA. A well designed study by Winkler, Teigland, Munger, and Kranzler (1965) illustrates the difficulty. The subjects were 121 fourth graders, all of whom had a common problem in that they were "underachievers." They were randomly assigned to client-centered individual counseling, client-centered group counseling, a reading instruction group, a Hawthorne control group, and a no-treatment control group. The criterion measure was the amount of increase in GPA. As you might expect, no statistically significant differences were found among these five groups, but the group that tended to show the largest increase in GPA was the no-treatment control group.

What is wrong with using a gross measure like GPA as a criterion measure in counseling?

(1) GPA is dependent upon innumerable factors beyond the control of the treatment procedures. The student's inherited characteristics, his home environment, his years of education, and the already established expectancies of four

or five teachers are all beyond the control of the counselor. GPA is a very difficult measure to alter under the best of circumstances. To expect a few hours of talk with another person to alter radically such an insensitive criterion measure is to be most unrealistic.

(2) When grades are assigned "on the curve" (and they usually are even when the stated policy is that they are not), any improvement of one person's GPA means that someone else's GPA is probably going to decline. If an entire group is given some kind of effective treatment, the resulting improvement will not be reflected in the GPA because the teachers will still be distributing their grades in about the same proportions. The average will remain approximately the same.

(3) The time required for the experimental counseling treatment subtracts from the time available for regular classroom instruction or study. In order for counseling to show any effect, it must be shown to be more valuable than an equal amount of time spent with the teacher doing the work which contributes directly to the grade point average. Thus, we are in effect expecting teachers to give higher grades to students who have been removed from their classes than to students who have remained in their classes and done the assigned work at the time it was expected. Under these circumstances then, it should not be surprising to find that the so-called no-treatment control group might very well show the greatest improvement in grade point average.

Grade point average is only the most frequently used of gross criterion measures, but there are others, particularly those used in long range follow-up studies, which suffer from some of the same disadvantages. Here are a few examples: (1) annual average income, (2) rating by employer, and (3) self-rating of job satisfaction. All are dependent upon such a multitude of other factors that we should not be disappointed to find that the few hours we spend with a client fail to affect these measures years later. My basic point is that progress will be faster if we avoid using criterion measures of such a gross nature. Instead we should confine ourselves now to criterion measures which represent the first steps toward outcomes desired by the clients. Outcome criteria must not be trivial but must be an indication that progress is being made toward vital client goals.

### Criterion Behavior External to the Counseling Situation Itself

If we are to achieve any valuable assessment of counseling outcomes, we must determine whether behavior learned in the presence of a counselor is later evidenced in the absence of that counselor. I am not at all impressed by evidence that self-references in later counseling interviews are more positive than earlier self-references. It is too easy for the counselor to selectively rein-



force certain kinds of statements and, knowingly or not, increase the frequency of certain types of verbal statements within the interview itself. Truax (1966) has shown that even Carl Rogers himself selectively reinforces certain categories of verbal behavior and not others and thus affects their relative frequency in later interviews. Now we need to know whether reinforcing certain types of positive self-references affects relevant behavior outside the counseling session.

Some of the research we have done at Stanford University has attempted to evaluate the amount of career exploration activity that takes place during a three-week period of time immediately after the experimental counseling treatments. It is quite difficult to collect this kind of evidence since independent interviewers must be hired to interview students individually, asking them buffer questions, as well as the relevant questions, to disguise the purpose of the interview. Then, to determine whether the students' reports of their exploratory activities are accurate, a random sample must be investigated by some small scale detective work (Krumboltz and Schroeder, 1965; Krumboltz and Thoresen, 1964). There are many difficulties with this criterion measure, but it is a type of behavior that is relevant to the reasons counseling was requested in the first place, and it is a behavior that occurs after the counseling itself has been completed.

### *Some Possibly Fruitful Areas for Counseling Research*

While I certainly will not be all-inclusive, and probably will not agree with myself a year from now, I would like to suggest seven possible areas where counseling research might be profitable at the present time.

#### **I. Alternative Ways of Establishing the Counselor as an Effective Agent of Change**

We have some evidence that the client's expectation that the counselor is going to be effective in helping him is related to more effective counseling. What is it that establishes the counselor as an effective and competent person to the client? Up to this point counselors have relied upon establishing a warm, permissive non-judgmental, understanding relationship as the *sine qua non* of counseling. When such a relationship is established, the client values the counselor most highly (cathexis or transference would have occurred in psychoanalytic terminology), and the counselor is in a position of considerable influence in the client's life. At that point, whether he wants it or not, the counselor becomes a much more powerful reinforcing agent to the client. Even minimal cues of approval or indifference become very important to the client and can influence the client's actions. Thus, establishing a warm and understanding

relationship is one way of increasing the power of the counselor as an agent of change. But are there other ways?

To what extent would it be important for the client to be made aware of the competence of the counselor in skills respected by the client? Would the counselor be more effective if the client knew that the counselor had already achieved a high degree of professional success? Would the counselor be more effective if the client were told that this counselor had had great success with problems similar to his own?

Arnold Lazarus tells of the remarkable success he had in counseling a juvenile delinquent referred by the court, a young man who was hostile and contemptuous of all Lazarus' attempts to establish a warm and understanding relationship. Progress began after a series of events provoked a fist fight, during which Lazarus modestly claims he luckily landed a telling blow which threw the youth against a file cabinet, drawing blood, and temporarily stunning him. The first words spoken by the young delinquent after this encounter were, "Say you throw a mighty right for a pen-pusher." This demonstration of pugilistic competency established Lazarus as a person highly valued by that youngster, and made possible a radical transformation in this young man's behavior. Thus, there may be more than one way to establish a helping relationship.

Industrial concerns employ people competent in unrelated but prestigious fields to give testimonials about their products; religious organizations employ successful athletes to spread the word among adolescents who respect athletic success more than theology; and so it seems conceivable that counselors known for success in areas respected by their clients may be more effective than those of equal ability who are not known for these superficially irrelevant competencies. Research on this issue could affect the way counselors are introduced to clients and the extent to which counselors reveal information about themselves.

Though it may grate on the sensitivity of some humble counselors, it may be worth asking whether some outward displays of prestige may not enhance the counselor's effectiveness. The clients of other professions seem impressed by outward displays of prosperity, such as thick carpets on the floor, expensive furniture, spacious office and reception rooms with gracious secretaries. Professional degrees, diplomas and certificates displayed on the wall suggest to the client that the counselor is not one who arrived at his position without gaining the respect of some relevant groups.

Perhaps there are still other ways of establishing the counselor as an effective agent of change. Additional ways could be profitably explored. We have made one feeble attempt to investigate some factors which might affect the counselor's effectiveness (Krumboltz, Varenhorst and Thoresen, in press). However, the study was confined to experimentally manipulating the apparent prestige and competency only of a model counselor presented on a video tape.



No effect was apparent on students observing the tape. However, the effect of different competency levels and prestige levels of the client's own counselor could be a profitable area of investigation.

## II. Learning the Skills of Building Human Relationships

One fundamental problem presented by a large number of clients concerns their ineffectiveness at developing friendships and warm human relationships of mutual trust. A traditional counselor approach to this problem has been to establish the counselor as the client's friend. If done successfully, the client is able to confide to the counselor things about himself that he is unable to communicate to any other human being. The counselor becomes an extremely important person in this client's life, and undoubtedly the experience of being so important to a client is extremely reinforcing to many counselors.

But the fundamental question is whether having such a relationship with a counselor really enables the client to learn the skills needed in developing sound human relationships with other people. If the counselor is not careful, the client may learn nothing about establishing solid relationships with other people. Worse than that, he may learn some patterns of behavior that actually prevent him from establishing such relationships: (1) He may learn that the way to establish a good relationship is to do all the talking, expecting the other person to do all the listening; (2) He may learn that his own personal problems are of overwhelming interest to other people while other people's problems do not seem worthy of discussion; (3) He may learn to talk about his own personal feelings without ever taking any constructive action to do anything about them; (4) If he does adopt the counselor as a model, he may think that the only way to help other people is to listen empathically to their problems. It is highly likely that all of these patterns of behavior, if transferred to his relationships with other people, may actually impede the establishment of sound relationships with other people.

We need to find out the skills and behaviors which enable human beings to establish close and satisfying relationships with each other. Then we need to discover ways to teach our clients to evidence these skills and behavior patterns so that they themselves can enjoy the satisfaction that comes with having a really good friend. Establishing such a relationship with the counselor himself could possibly facilitate this learning if handled properly, but such a relationship by itself should not be considered a desirable outcome or necessarily the only or best way that such skills can be learned. We need to examine much more clearly the ways in which solid friendships are developed, and we must take pains to teach clients how to develop solid relationships so that there is a

mutual giving and receiving and not the one-sided relationship that so frequently develops in the traditional counseling interview.

## III. More Effective Procedures for Helping Members of Specific Subpopulations

It appears that counselors are remarkably ineffective in dealing with certain subpopulations with whom society expects us to have some positive effect. The subpopulation known as "the culturally disadvantaged" seems remarkably immune to the traditional approaches employed by middle class counselors. The Education and Training Committee of Division 17 has been investigating this problem and has recommended that counseling psychologists give their attention to some of the research problems involved in working more effectively with the culturally disadvantaged. An excellent article by Calia (1966) outlines some of the problems and some possible approaches to them.

Another subpopulation for which we seem ill-prepared consists of elementary school pupils. In a session of Congress, the establishment of the child development specialist was proposed. While the bill failed its mere existence is some testimony to the fact that whatever it is that counselors attempt to do, they apparently are not doing it very well in the elementary school. It is quite possible that the behavior changes for which counselors work at the secondary school level are totally inappropriate at the elementary school level. Research efforts need to establish the type of behavior change problems presented by elementary school age pupils, and to investigate appropriate procedures for helping the children overcome these problems. Additional investigation is needed to determine teaching procedures, curriculum innovations, as well as counseling techniques which will enable these youngsters to unlearn their maladaptive behavior patterns and relearn more appropriate ways of coping with their environment.

## IV. Extrapolating from Research in Other Disciplines

Remarkable benefits seem possible by integrating counseling research with the basic research of other disciplines. Goldstein (1966) has suggested some possible ways in which social psychology can be applied to research in counseling and psychotherapy. Some of the research which shows that the expectancy of the experimenter and the expectancy of the subject may be related to actual outcome is of considerable relevance to counseling. Ways in which both counselor and client expectancies can be modified could be experimentally investi-



gated. Goldstein suggests other possible analogous research problems stemming from social psychology research on role compatibility, interpersonal attraction, authoritarianism, cognitive dissonance, and convergence.

Another constructive possibility is the suggestion of Zytowski (1966) for the use of therapy analogs. He suggests that many practical problems, not readily solved in the actual counseling situation, could be investigated by setting up experimental analogs in the laboratory. He reviews the evidence on a number of attempts to simulate counseling in laboratory situations. For example, instead of working with clients with real problems of anxiety, it may be possible to induce artificially some temporary stress (say by making false and negative Rorschach interpretations to clients) and then experimentally investigate the ways of relieving such temporary anxiety. Such laboratory investigations may be fruitful in investigating ways to reduce hostility and guilt, and to increase persistence, frustration tolerance, cooperative behavior, and various opinion, attitude and value changes.

### V. Building a Library of Effective Models

Many client problems are due to behavior deficits. The client simply has not learned some of the behavior patterns necessary for coping with his particular problem. Some of our research has shown that though tape-recorded models may be very effective at stimulating learning activities for some clients, they are not equally effective with all clients. For example, a tape recording which promoted the career exploration of high school boys proved ineffective for high school girls. Another video tape proved effective for the girls. Counselors could increase their effectiveness if they possessed a library of models designed to help various types of students learn various kinds of behavior. Extensive research would be needed to develop and test these models.

The job of building such a library would require the efforts of many persons over a long period of time. Research would be needed to establish that each model was effective in helping a particular group of students learn a particular pattern of behavior. The end result of many such researches would be to arm counselors across the country with a library of effective learning aids. Problems involved with matching clients and models would pose additional problems for research.

### VI. Improving the Career Decision Process

The one area where counselors are reputed to have unchallenged competency is in the area of helping clients investigate feasible alternatives. Many clients are unable to make realistic decisions because they have no occupational infor-

mation that seems relevant to them. Much of the traditional occupational literature is difficult reading, and many of the answers are to questions students never ask. One attempt to solve this problem is to provide simulated occupational problem-solving kits (Krumboltz and Sheppard, 1966). These kits enable high school students to engage in the problem-solving activities of various types of occupations. The problems are deliberately designed to be easy, but still realistic, so that students can solve the problems and have the feeling of success at working at a given occupation. Hopefully, students who experience these problem-solving kits will be intrigued by their experience and eager to learn more about the occupation they have experienced. Innumerable research questions arise from this kind of a project. What is the effect of the difficulty level of the problems that are posed? How does the difficulty level interact with the ability level of the students? How should the determination be made as to which particular occupational kit should be used with which students? Is it really advantageous for students to take the kit that they request, or to take a kit in an area in which they have had no experience? How many kits provide the optimum effect? These are some of the questions on which we are working now and for which we hope to provide some tentative answers in the near future.

Occupational simulation is just one way to encourage the exploration that is necessary for students to make realistic choices. Other ways need to be devised and tested to encourage students to explore their own future possibilities.

As the result of the work of a competent counselor, clients ought to be better able to engage in the total decision making process. We have considered a few of the questions involved in the first two steps of the decision making process: posing relevant alternatives, and investigating information about these alternatives. Other steps in the decision making process include estimating the probability of success in each alternative, relating personal values to each course of action, deliberating and weighing all the factors which must be considered in eliminating the least favorable courses of action, formulating a tentative final plan of action, and then generalizing this entire decision making process to future problems.

For each of these steps in the decision making process we must ask: How can the counselor best help the student?

How shall the counselor most effectively help students estimate their probabilities of success in various alternatives that they have considered? The Palo Alto schools, under the leadership of H. B. Gelatt, have developed programmed "experience tables" which enable high school students to estimate their probability of being accepted into different kinds of colleges on the basis of their grade point average to date. The approach appears to be effective in giving students a realistic idea of their chances for being admitted to each school. Much



research will be needed to help students estimate their chances of success in various other alternatives they may consider.

How does a counselor help a student arrive at a relative ranking of his alternatives and develop a sequence of choices including alternative actions in case the first choices are not reached? How does the counselor insure that this involved decision making process will be learned so that the client will use it again as he faces new problems in life?

## VII. Preventing Problems

Just as responsible dental authorities place high priority on instituting fluoridation to prevent dental problems, so counselors should begin to put high priority on ways of preventing problems of inappropriate vocational choice, inadequate social relationships, unfortunate marriages, wasted talent, and inadequate learning. At the moment, we really do not know the best ways of preventing problems such as these. Since the answers to problems of this magnitude go far beyond the confines of the counseling interview room, some counselors may not recognize their responsibility for helping to solve them. Counselors should consider the prevention of such problems to be at least as important as any of the other problems that I have already discussed. Preventing problems may involve administrative arrangements within the institutions in which we work. For example, the grading policies in many educational institutions create far more problems than they solve.

Another area of concern consists of the dating behavior of adolescents which frequently leads them to marry the wrong person for the wrong reasons. Very often young people have no opportunity, or little opportunity, to meet people with whom they might be most compatible because of the superficialities of the introductory process. Though we may be disdainful of the commercial exploitation of so called "computer dating," the possibilities of this on college campuses are being explored by a few of our more courageous colleagues. If a sound scientifically tested system could be developed through which young people could be made aware of the names of others with whom they might be compatible, perhaps one slight step would have been taken toward increasing the future happiness of a significant number of persons who would otherwise end up at the marital counseling office.

But the development of a sound preventive program must be based on the highest professional ethics, the soundest research designs, and the most noble of human motivations. Who else but counseling psychologists could provide all that!

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## Discussion

*Robert Callis*

In the introduction Krumboltz says (paraphrased) that a criterion for research should be the difference it makes in our practice of counseling, taking the dental model as an example. But I have concerns about this kind of criterion. Must it always be immediately obvious that a particular proposed piece of research has some observable or inferable impact upon practice? To take his own example of the veteran versus the non-veteran study (or nonstudy), someone else might have said that it has possibilities. When you break into the life span of a group of individuals and interrupt the continuous flow of their education, you have a chance to get some idea of the impact of interruption on education. You could have one group that has had continuous education, and another group which has had their formal education interrupted with some other experiences. We do not know very much about this problem. Within the counselor education field are those who require interruption between a Bachelor's degree and entry into graduate study. There are others in the counselor education field who require direct entry into graduate study after having received the Bachelor's degree. This is a rather far reaching question of continuous education versus interrupted education. And yet with Krumboltz's impact on practice theory, this problem might not be considered worthy of study. In summary, whether research results would be obviously applicable in practice may pose a too serious limitation on the research which we undertake as a profession. I would like to comment on several of the propositions for research:

### Proposition I: Counseling Research Should Be Designed to Discover Improved Ways of Helping Clients Prevent or Learn to Solve Their Own Problems

The level of abstraction is very difficult to grasp and convert into behavior, to make meaningful operationally. While Krumboltz does make it more explicit in his discussion, the proposition taken out of context is sort of like the "for home and agin' sin" statements. There is a gap between the proposition itself and the implementation or design of a piece of research.

The paper accurately points to the prevalence in the literature of what might be called incomplete experiments; where one part of the design is carefully specified, such as the outcome criteria, without any further specification of the differences between the experimental and the control group, or what type of counseling was employed.

There are other experiments which have a rather intensive analysis and specification of the counseling process, but inadequate description of the outcome measures. Either one of these leads to inadequate data on which to base conclusions.

### Proposition II: Counseling Research Should Be Designed So That Different Possible Outcomes Lead to Different Counseling Practices

Where Krumboltz says, "the rationale of MacQuiddy's study is based upon Festinger's theory," he implies that the study was dependent upon Festinger's theory. I recall a comment by L. L. Thurstone that nature is immune to our theories, that our theories have no impact on nature, and that nature continues on its merry way, in spite of our feeble, or valiant, or astute efforts to explain nature. The implication is, though not directly stated, that an experiment ought to be based upon, and dependent upon, a theory. MacQuiddy's findings could have stood just as well without the comment that these were based upon Festinger's theory, because the findings of the experiment were independent of the theory. It really does not make any difference to MacQuiddy's design, or to MacQuiddy's findings, if they happened to be related by someone to one theory, and by someone else to another theory. It is irrelevant to the operational definition and conduct of the experiment, once it is conceived.

### Proposition III: Outcome Criteria of Counseling Research Should Be Tailored to the Behavior Changes Desired by the Client and Counselors Involved

The important aspect is not embodied in the wording of the proposition, but where he talks of the appropriateness of the criteria for each client. He



argues that the outcome criteria ought to be idiosyncratically determined client by client. While perhaps we must start with outcome criteria derived idiosyncratically client by client, interview by interview, or segment by segment, we ought to look beyond to see if there is a simpler structure which would give us fewer variables to work with than the thousands that would be generated by the aid of idiosyncratic criteria.

The fruitful areas for future research are clear, and warrant no additional comment from me. I would like to move on into what I call the omitted or the under-emphasized categories. There was under-emphasis on the need for laboratory experiments on subjects, not clients, in a controlled laboratory situation, not the natural setting of counseling. I would say this as a response to almost all of the Conference papers so far. They have ignored this kind of sub-assembly line in the totality of the research pattern. I would have enjoyed having Krumboltz take the literature as it exists, or several good examples of it, and analyze the outcome criteria that have been used in terms of its strengths and weaknesses.

The strength of the paper is his concept that there is a need in our research and by implication in our practice, for a differential diagnosis leading to differential choice of treatment. What is to be learned in counseling? How can this material be learned is a subsequent question. Is a counselor or counseling necessary to this identified learning task, or even to the determination of what needs to be learned? Is a counselor necessary? Findings so far really should never be published, because they indicate that a counselor is not necessary in many of the tasks that come through a general university counseling center.

Gilbert and his associates at the University of Illinois have developed a programmed counseling manual which substitutes for the counselor, and produces good results in these kinds of simple cases that they assign to the book rather than to the counselor. They are getting about as good a result from a programmed counseling manual as they are with a live counselor.

This is one of the things that ought to be added to somebody's paper—the need to sort out the tasks which we include under the label of counseling, divide them into those which a live counselor is needed for, and those which one of the automated program learning books, or the computer, or other kind of non-human device is able to produce, should be undertaken.

This would ultimately conserve live counselor time for things that he is uniquely needed for, and relegate to the mechanics those things which can do without interpersonal relation in the treatment formula.

In Tom Magoon's work on learning skills, instruction, and remediation, he has found that they can be programmed by tape recordings and other programmed learning materials. He has also done some work on what we can euphemistically refer to as the random access information center for the dispensing of occupational, educational, and other kinds of information which consume counselor time, perhaps unnecessarily.

The counseling profession has not tested out job description segments to see if the counselor is necessary to perform them or if other more efficient and economical means may be used. What Kagan and Farquhar, *et al.*, are doing on the interrogation of clients and counselors immediately after the counseling interview in order to capture the thought processes of both, independent of each other, as to why they were behaving, what they were perceiving in the interview, is most revealing. Our evidence about the process of counseling has come either from the verbatim audio recordings, or perhaps an additional video of the interview itself. One of the most important new learnings out of this technique is that we do not have the slightest idea, or have not had in the past, of really how the client perceives counseling. Our ideas have often been grossly erroneous. We have, through this technique, the opportunity to quickly assess the perceptions of the participants in counseling. Such additional data, and evidence about the counseling process, is a fruitful new kind of data.



## Discussion

*Charles B. Truax*

Krumboltz's presentation is a clear recognition of the inadequacies of much of past and current research in the field of counseling. It is also an awareness of our current lack of effectiveness in practice, in training, and in research.

More specifically, the recognition that much of the so-called counseling research is irrelevant to the process and outcome of effective practice, is a first step toward remedying present lacks. While some might wish to disagree with him, my own review of the available evidence dealing with counseling and psychotherapy would suggest that less than one out of one hundred published articles in the fields of counseling and psychotherapy actually do contain information that makes a difference. If journal editors or doctoral dissertation committees were to actually use the test of relevancy as a basis for accepting contributions, the field might have to read less to learn more.

Those familiar with our field of research must recognize that the frequent use of the counselor as a dependent variable, and of so-called "process" research has been mainly dictated by its *cheapness*. It is expensive both in money and in time to do competent outcome research. Especially since our research centers and universities are so often separated geographically and administratively from the field of practice and service, it is very difficult, time consuming, and costly to gather data from effective and ineffective practitioners in a variety of settings. It seems to me that it is this *reality*, not a matter of intention, that results so frequently in meaningless research. Coupled with this is the general rule of academia that deans and administrators count publications, not the frequency of meaningful research: thus a bright investigator is reinforced or "shaped" toward socially meaningless but scientifically rigorous small bits of research.

How does Krumboltz envision competent outcome research? While he does argue for the necessity of solid outcome criteria that are tailored to the goals of counseling, he claims that it is "impossible to apply a single criteria to evaluate counseling." However, his alternative is to tie the outcome measurement to the expressed goals of the client and counselor. Specifically, he rejects such socially meaningful criteria as grade point averages, monetary earnings, and work productivity or competence. The approach we have been using for several years now (Truax, 1963; Truax and Wargo, 1966; Truax and Carkhuff, 1967) is to use multiple measures of outcome. We believe it would be very difficult to argue against counseling benefit if groups of clients showed average improvements across a variety of socially-valued measures, and equally impossible to argue against the harm of counseling if groups of clients showed average deterioration on the same measures.

Grade point average is certainly a socially meaningful measure, and, *therefore*, an outcome that is meaningful or should be meaningful to any client. We (Dickenson and Truax, 1966) have not found that it was unrealistic to expect change in underachievement or grade point average (underachievement being the discrepancy between predicted grade point average using entrance examination scores and the obtained grade point average of a given student). In fact, if grade point average was unaffected by counseling, then society may not wish to pay the price of a procedure that leads only to changes in self-concepts without changes in socially valued behaviors. This is not to argue that grade point average is an ultimate criterion, but it is to argue that it is a fundamentally important criterion for any student just as earned income and work productivity is an essential ingredient of happiness for adult members of society. In our own research efforts over the past ten years (Truax, 1966; Truax and Carkhuff, 1967), we have found that hard and fast socially valued measures, such as grade point and time out of hospital, are more likely to give positive findings in research than psychological test measures.

When Krumboltz speaks of attempting only to measure the "first steps toward outcome" he is really speaking apologist nonsense and abandoning the possibility of finding counseling procedures whose outcome is meaningful to society and thus to the individual. If, for example, his work on "career exploratory behavior" has nothing at all to do with grade point averages, earning power, the satisfaction of employers and peers in his work performance, his objective work productivity, then we must conclude that "career exploratory behavior" is not relevant to the practice of counseling. It has no socially meaningful outcome and therefore has nothing more than illusory private meaning to a given counselor or client. In this, as with his work on the "occupational problem solving kits," he should perhaps follow his own advice and concentrate immediately on outcome research: *that is the first step, not the last step*. A great deal of valuable and creative energy may be spent before even asking



whether or not it is a waste of time: does it make a difference, does it have a socially meaningful effect upon future behavior of the client?

Much of Krumboltz's presentation is a plea for innovation in counseling procedures. Let us hope that such innovation will be tied to careful outcome measurement rather than simply being promoted on the basis of its logical or even "gimmicky" appeal. The use of conditioning, desensitization and modeling criteria, thus the suggestion that counselors use testimonials to provide them with more prestige in the eyes of clients, has actually been supported by the Bergin study (1962). We also know that such procedures as vicarious therapy pre-training and role induction interviews tend to have significant positive effects on outcome by structuring expectancies and roles. As to his private speculations in the other specific areas he deals with: they are simply speculations that when translated into practice may result in client benefit or may result in significant client harm. When we do not know, we should be most cautious both for ourselves and others in encouraging such innovations.

Our own research does not suggest that counseling is necessarily ineffective with the culturally disadvantaged or with different age groups. We find instead that some counselors do provide low levels of counseling relationships to certain groups of clients whom they are prejudiced against and therefore have poor outcomes. We also find that when selected counselors provide high levels of therapeutic counseling (in specific, accurate empathy and non-possessive warmth) then counseling with the culturally disadvantaged proves significantly effective (Truax, Wargo and Silber, 1966).

His recognition that the prevention of psychological and behavioral maladjustments is intimately connected with their amelioration and therefore of vital concern to the field of counseling is to be commended. It remains true that the more we know about how to help people, then the more we also know about how to hurt people. That is, using the same tools and knowledge gained from understanding the helping process, we can identify and intervene in situations that lead to the maladaptive behavior in the first place.

There are three areas not dealt with specifically by Krumboltz that seem central to the improvement of counseling effectiveness. The first deals with research strategy.

The article by Kiesler (1966) on "Myths" of therapy research has been quoted here as if it were a contribution to clarity and rigorous thinking in research. It is not. Instead it is an apologist contribution to confusion. It attempts to excuse the null evidence concerning the efficacy of psychotherapy and counseling by claiming that such evidence is itself invalid. Specifically, he argues that such research naively assumes uniformity of patient and therapist. He further argues that patients do not show "spontaneous remission," and certainly not much in any case. This later point is absurd: it ignores a moun-

tain of evidence from "control" groups in psychotherapy and counseling research, and a very large body of evidence dealing with client change in premature therapy terminators. The evidence actually tends to strongly support the estimates of expected spontaneous remission by Eysenck (1960) and Levitt (1957). Kiesler's first point concerning the patient (or client) uniformity assumption is the epitome of apologist arguments. A requirement of client uniformity has never been applied to traditional psychological or human research: the potency of research findings in, for example, the field of learning, lies precisely in the fact that classical and operant conditioning procedures produce behavior change (learning) in almost all intact human beings—from the mentally retarded to the Ph.D. In fact, exact client uniformity is not possible: even a single human being changes from moment to moment and day to day on a variety of important dimensions. To contribute to practice, research should focus on therapeutic dimensions that produce significant physiological human types. While almost any therapeutic dimension may not apply to extreme subgroups, to be of practical significance a therapeutic dimension must apply to a large segment of the needful population. There would be little interest in reinforcement if, on the average, reinforcement had no effects on humans, but, under some circumstances (with subject uniformity) it was shown to change some types of human responses!

The second area also deals with research strategy, and is somewhat related to Kiesler's attempt to argue away spontaneous improvement.

In some ways it would seem that the energy invested in outcome research has been misdirected. It has become quite clear (Truax and Carkhuff, 1967) from a variety of studies that some patients tend to show improvement while others show no change and still others show deterioration—regardless of whether or not they receive any form of treatment. When any therapeutic treatment, such as counseling, is added to the net effects of random positive and negative experiences in daily living, we are apt to assume that any change is due to treatment. Instead, it would be more useful to measure *therapeutic benefit* rather than simply therapeutic outcome. This can be done in relatively easy fashion. There are a number of studies aimed at predicting client improvement which have yielded individual predictors. In studies where these same predictors were used in control groups not receiving counseling, the results were quite similar. These predictors then identify the kind of clients who are likely to improve (or deteriorate or show no change) regardless of the treatment that they receive. It is likely that the same factors that contribute in the patient to his readiness to improve do so whether he receives counseling, some other form of treatment, or no treatment.

Research criteria should ask the very different question of "to what extent will effective counseling *add to* (or subtract from) the degree of improvement the given type of client would otherwise show?" This is the appropriate one



to ask in identifying criterion for therapeutic benefit in counseling research. This will allow us to predict which patients will *profit* most from counseling. The person who will actually profit most from counseling may improve the least or the most. For some time, researchers have asked this same kind of question in terms of evaluating underachievement rather than simply the raw score or grade point average. We can use the same procedures in counseling research to establish a measure of *benefit*.

To approximate an answer to the question, "what kinds of clients will *profit* most (and least) from counseling?" we simply have to estimate the degree of *predicted* improvement (or deterioration) and subtract that from the "observed" change with (and without) therapeutic intervention.

Our own procedure has been to take the best predictors based on psychological measures prior to counseling, compute the degree of expected improvement on each of these measures, then *average* these, and finally to subtract this "average predicted improvement" from the actual observed improvement. This gives a relatively clean measure of counseling *benefit*. Until counseling research uses some such estimated measure of "benefit," studies aimed at predicting therapeutic response (for the practical purpose of selecting clients most likely to benefit from counseling), studies dealing with therapists, contextual, and situational variables will be fraught with contamination. It might be pointed out that this proposed measure of "therapeutic benefit" is uncontaminated by "spontaneous improvement" since the expected improvement is already subtracted. With such a measure, we might find that some variables related to counseling outcomes in the past were artifacts of our measurement, and were simply related to expected improvement and not to actual counseling benefit.

As things now stand, we do in fact have considerably more information about effective counseling procedures than is being currently translated into the training of counselors and into the practice of counseling (Truax and Carkhuff, 1967). A central problem for the field of counseling is to identify the most effective procedures for translating research knowledge into effective training programs that demonstrably enhance the effectiveness of counseling in practice.

It is a sad reflection on the field of counseling that there is no demonstrable evidence that counselors being produced today are any more effective than the counselors produced ten or even twenty years ago. The bulk of training in counseling is obviously irrelevant to practice, and is made up of highly speculative pieces of "information." Only a small handful of training programs have even been concerned with their effectiveness. Of these, an even smaller number have demonstrated their effectiveness in changing the counseling trainees' behavior, much less his effectiveness in practice. Thus, we continue to produce a mass of counselors who, on the average, do not benefit clients.

Moreover, it is not only possible but probable that a student entering counseling training today will receive his training and even his Ph.D., go on to be certified or licensed in his state, be hired, promoted, and even be endorsed by passing board examinations without anyone along the way requiring that he produce evidence of his average positive or negative effects on the all too human client. It is a rare or almost non-existent employer (school system, university) that even bothers to keep records of the individual positive and negative effects of a counselor on his unfortunate clients. I have never heard of a company that failed to keep sales records on its salesmen. If we were to keep such records, even poor ones, through selection and retraining it would be probable that we could at least double our current effectiveness in counseling practice.

The evaluation and measurement of positive and negative effects upon clients is indeed imperfect, but I for one cannot believe that it is any more fraught with difficulty and error than the more typical evaluation of intellectual prowess and the speculation about the amount of information that a student has learned. Moreover, if this information were routinely kept by schools, universities, counseling centers, and clinics, then the job for the researcher would be enormously simplified, and we could begin to seriously discover the antecedents and processes associated with therapeutic counseling and psychonoxious counseling.

Since we know that counseling, on the average, is not more effective than no counseling, that some counselors and indeed some clinics, counseling centers, and other units are therapeutic, while other counselors, clinics, and counseling centers are in fact, on the average, harmful, the field of counseling itself has an ethical responsibility in the identification of participants and ingredients in therapeutic versus psychonoxious counseling.

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## PART IV

## TASK GROUP REPORTS



## Introduction

The format and procedures of the working task groups were described in detail in the Introduction to this volume. Briefly stated, the task groups met throughout the conference to identify the salient issues raised by the formal presentations, and the major points which were not raised.

At the conclusion of the conference, one member from each task group was requested to draft a comprehensive task group report based on the deliberations during their working sessions.

The content of each task group, therefore, is based on ideas from a number of individuals. Only the person who drafted the report, however, is responsible for the specific phrasing and content on the final report.

Chapter 7, the report of Task Group #1, was drafted by Thomas W. Allen of Washington University. Members of the task group included: John J. Cody, Southern Illinois University—Carbondale; William C. Cottle, Boston College; Charles Homra, Murray State University; John Krumboltz, Stanford University; Jack Ray, Missouri Guidance Association; and Frank Robinson, Ohio State University.

Chapter 8 is the task group recommendations for research refocus in the area of client selection. The specific proposals of each task group are presented, along with an explanation of the rationale for the particular proposal. A similar format is followed in Chapters 9 and 10. Chapter 9 presents the recommendations for refocus in counselor selection. Chapter 10 is the recommendations for refocus of research in assessing counseling process and outcome.

The recommendations from Task Group #2 were drafted by Lawrence Taliana of Southern Illinois University. Members of the task group included: Darryl Albright, Washington University; Emmet Burkeen, Western Kentucky State University; Robert Davis, Memphis State University; William Farquhar, Michigan State University; Ralph Mosher, Harvard University; George Mowrer, University of Missouri; and Glenn White, Missouri State Department of Education.

The recommendations from Task Group #3 were drafted by Patricia F. Howell of Washington University. Members of the task group included: Robert Callis, University of Missouri; Thomas Kolweit, University of Louisville; Charles Krauskopf, University of Missouri; Thomas Magoon, University



of Maryland; Norman Sprinthall, Harvard University; Elizabeth Stokes, Austin Peay State College; and Sam Thornton, Richland County Psychological Service.

The recommendations from Task Group #4 were drafted by Frank Noble of George Peabody College. Members of the task group included: Donald Blocher, University of Minnesota; Kearney Campbell, Kentucky State Department of Public Instruction; John Ferguson, University of Missouri; Lyle Schmidt, University of Minnesota; Dean Taylor, Alton School District; and Kingsley Wientge, Washington University.

The recommendations from Task Group #5 were drafted by T. Kenneth Allan of Washington University. Members of the task group included: Richard Melloh, Indiana University; Lucille Peers, Glasgow High School; Ernest Purkey, Brentwood Public Schools; Charles Truax, University of Arkansas; Richard Walsh, Southern Illinois University—Edwardsville; and Frank Wellman, University of Missouri.

The recommendations from Task Group #6 were drafted by Martin J. Bohn, Jr., of Washington University. Members of the task group included: Lester Crow, East St. Louis High School; Sylvester Dunn, Nashville Public Schools; Norman Gysberg, University of Missouri; Richard Nickerson, St. Louis University; C. H. Patterson, University of Illinois; and Frank Stallings, University of Louisville.

## Task Group Report One

*Thomas W. Allen*

### Client Selection

That clients who need counseling least are most likely to respond to it, as Blocher, Sprinthall, and Schmidt suggest, is a disquieting notion. It is certainly one which merits a good deal of examination. In the first place, it contradicts much clinical experience. But, as is usually the case, the verdict of clinical experience is far from unequivocal.<sup>1</sup> Still, there are a number of theoretical and psychometric considerations. For instance, it is interesting to note that Eysenck's criticism of the Rogers and Drymond (1954) design includes the complaint that their "normal control group" was not really a "control" since one would not expect normals to improve. They are at or near the optimum state and therefore have nowhere to go. The studies alluded to above cast some doubt on this objection. But more to the point is Truax's (this symposium) claim that a distinction must be made between "benefit" and "improvement." It may well be that clients with varying levels of disturbance have different natural remission rates. Hence, the fact that clients who begin at higher points on the adjustment scale make larger gains than those commencing further down the scale may be largely a function of a greater rate of natural reparation endemic to the former, rather than of a greater ability to use therapy. Indeed, the smaller absolute gain on the part of the latter group may represent a greater improvement over the natural recovery rate of that group. Certainly, this possibility must be investigated before a final conclusion can be approached.

<sup>1</sup> The same may be said for research findings here also. See Stone, Frank, Nash and Imber (1961).



Similarly, Sprinthall's concern with the adequacy of the various commonly employed "control group" designs seems to be well-founded. Clearly, the fact that the experimental and control groups are matched in regard to given variables, sex ratio, IQ, age, does not justify the all too frequent claim that these factors did not have any effect on whatever differences are found between the two groups on the outcome measures. It does not mean that the counseling procedure in question is appropriate for the whole population of which the experimental and control groups were samples. For it may well be that it was the improvement of only a relatively small subgroup within the experimental group, a subgroup with certain peculiar (IQ, sex, socioeconomic) characteristics, which distinguished it from the control group. Nevertheless, this caveat does not entirely vitiate the matched groups design as one to assess whether the treatment in question has any effects or not. Rather, it bespeaks a more rigorous analysis of the results.

A further objection to the utility of control groups is the evidence that its members so frequently seek help elsewhere (Gurin, Veroff and Feld, 1960). Thus, they are not appropriately considered to be "no-treatment groups." Nevertheless, a comparison between the fates of such groups is not without value. It provides important information concerning the contribution which counseling can make to the lives of various types of clients *beyond* those made by resources otherwise available to clients. If, indeed, the reason that so few studies have been able to demonstrate significant differences between the outcomes of counseled and non-counseled groups is that therapeutic effects are assessed by the criterion tests (Barron and Leary, 1955; Goldstein, 1960) or of interaction with nonprofessionals (Bergin, 1963), then the social significance of counseling becomes problematic.

It is interesting to note that none of the speakers concerned with client selection concerned himself with self-selection on the part of the client. While this approach is, admittedly, of little use in deciding which among those who apply for counseling should be accepted for treatment, it speaks more directly to the problem of matching clients with specific counselors. The necessity of pairing specific clients with particular counselors is generally recognized on the grounds that a certain minimal degree of positive feeling for the counselor is necessary for counseling to proceed optimally. In part, this positive feeling is one of the levers which the counselor can use to effect behavior change. For instance, the "uhuh" of a counselor for whom the client has some respect and/or liking is apparently a more potent reinforcer than the same response made by a counselor to whom the client is less favorably disposed (Sapolsky, 1965; Back, 1951).

Perhaps, then, a procedure that allows clients to select the counselor with whom he will work from those available would have desirable results. It is, of course, essential that provision be made to acquaint potential clients with the nature of the various options (counselors) available to them. In the public

school, this might be accomplished by arranging for students to meet with each of the available counselors for several brief interviews throughout the school year. Although the subject of these interviews might be quite mundane, they might well serve as useful introductions to the kind of interaction that the student might expect to take place between each of the counselors and himself. In college and university settings, prospective clients might be allowed to listen to a sound tape of the available counselors introducing themselves and their diverse approaches to counseling. He might then pursue further those which are most appealing to him by means of other tapes presenting their specific assumptions, interests, ploys, and objectives in greater detail. These additional tapes might also contain hints as to how the client is to "play the game." That is, examples of desirable client behavior could be displayed. The client would then select the counselor whose services seemed most relevant to him.

A number of positive consequences might well be anticipated. In the first place, much of the ambiguity of the early stages of the process would be eliminated. And, perhaps as a result, the high mortality rate of the "negotiation period" (Blocher) would be reduced considerably. In the second place, the fact that it is the client himself who chooses which counselor he will see and, accordingly, what method he will encounter is significant. For there is a growing body of evidence that the "choice" of and the "commitment" to a particular course of therapy are closely related to a reduction of "resistive behavior" within it (Goldstein, Heller, and Sechrest, 1966). Third, the "pre-treatment" tape sessions may, indeed, be therapeutic in themselves. That important therapeutic gains can be made by such relatively impersonal means is becoming evident, Rogers' (1957) insistence on his "necessary and sufficient conditions" notwithstanding (Schwitzgebel and Kolb, 1964; Krumboltz, 1966; Phillips and Wiener, 1966; Goldstein, Heller, and Sechrest, 1966). Indeed, it might well be the treatment of choice in certain cases, not only because it produces similar results without the expenditure of staff resources, but because, as Goldstein *et al.* (1966) suggest, the relationship with current practices foster may well be irrelevant to, or an impediment to, the acquisition of important material. Finally, the number of clients for whom counseling is presently of little use, since they are unwilling or unable to cooperate at that time seen by counselors, would probably be reduced. For instance, those who expect and/or demand a magic solution to be proffered them would be quickly disabused without encroaching upon the time that could more profitably be devoted to more promising clients. Perhaps of greater importance, such a person might well be more likely to make a later entrance into counseling, since his initial rejection of it could be made on an impersonal basis, reentry would involve no loss of face.

It was suggested that the knowledge for making meaningful prognostications in regard to the fate of clients in counseling and for matching clients



with counselors to maximize the possibility of a positive outcome already exists. That is, it was maintained that the experienced counselor is indeed able to interview clients and assign them to those counselors on his staff who are actually most likely to be of service to him.

Such a suggestion evokes skepticism, given the failure of "experienced and certified clinicians" to perform with any distinction on "person perception" or "behavior anticipation" tasks (Sarbin, Taft, and Bailey, 1960; Allen, 1964). Nonetheless, it is clear that such an assumption underlies much of our practice, and should, as a result, be submitted to empirical test. For instance, a study of the following kind might be conducted:

The director of guidance for a school or the head of a college counseling center would interview clients at intake. He would then specify which of available staff members would most likely be of the greatest assistance to each and estimate the probable outcome of counseling. Some of the clients would be assigned to the counselor thus specified, while others would be assigned to different counselors on a random basis. Success would be determined in this case by means of goals set by the counselor to whom the client in question was entrusted, as a result of his initial interview with the client. It would, of course, be necessary to control for the level of aspiration of the individual counselors. Otherwise, some counselors might appear to be very successful simply because the goals they set for their clients and themselves were extremely low ones, while others might seem to be regularly quite unsuccessful as a result of setting their goals so high.

After a given number of interviews or at the end of a given interval, an external panel of judges would rate each client in terms of the degree to which his behavior seemed to approximate that which the counselor had indicated as a goal. The success of the two groups, that assigned according to the insights of the experienced clinician and that assigned by chance, could then be compared.

The foregoing study brings to mind several important issues surrounding research in the field. First, it is clear that practice rests almost entirely on such invalidated assertions as that which the present design would investigate. Second, large scale studies of these assertions are difficult to do. For instance, the prosecution of this research would be fraught with complications due, in large part, to the predominantly service orientation of most agencies. Many of them would, as a result, be reticent to assign clients on a random basis when their subjective opinion was that a specific counselor would have the greatest chance of success with a given client. That is, the "service" emphasis militates, paradoxically, for the rather rigid adherence to invalidated practices and against careful evaluations of their utility. Third and last, it is again evident how dependent research in virtually all areas of counseling is upon solid measures of outcome. No matter how ingenious one's selection method-

ology may be or how elaborate the design, research on the selection of clients can be no stronger than the criterion measures of outcome.

## Selection of Counselors

There seems to be some significant interaction between the counselor's approach, his personality and outcome. One aspect of this is that some students appear to choose the training program which suits their personalities best. However, the effect of this selection is variable. For it appears that students' judgments are often based on inadequate conceptions of what a given program stands for. That is, students may either seek out or avoid programs which are associated with leading names in one school of counseling or another. But given the students' lack of insight into the approach and also the fact that programs may be much broader than the predilections of a single faculty member, self-selection may be considered a process with a large variety of results.

Moreover, even the approach preferred by an experienced counselor does not appear to be the one best suited to his personality in terms of outcome. In Forgy and Black's (1954) study, one of the three counselors they employed was more successful with a method with which he had little sympathy than with that to which he was committed. His two colleagues produced better results by means of the latter procedure. Another example is provided by Paul (1966). Insight therapists of various persuasions employed their customary procedures with a group of anxious students and a desensitization procedure in which they were trained briefly with a similar group. The results were overwhelmingly in favor of the desensitization procedures. Thus, there is evidence that neither the prospective students' bias nor his theoretical predilections which are acquired through training are reliable guides to the most effective use of himself in counseling.

The projective studies reported by Sprinthall and Mosher (this conference) are subject to the criticism that the use of projective techniques is so laborious and time-consuming that it is impractical. However, if the Rorschach, for instance, works as well as suggested, then although it requires a relatively large amount of time to administer and to interpret, it would nonetheless be an extremely profitable procedure to employ on a routine basis. The time invested in it would be repaid by reducing the number of students whose work causes counselor educators so much concern and absorbs so much of their time and effort.

A more cogent criticism of this work might be directed at the criteria of success as a counselor trainee employed. Supervisors' judgments are a doubtful criterion given the dearth of information generally available concerning



the supervisors' own efficacy either as a counselor or as a predictor of human behavior. A more promising approach would depend upon the development of a better taxonomy of client behavior. Given such a taxonomy, counselor trainees could be ranked in terms of their success in eliciting various types of client behavior and in reducing certain others.

It might be objected that the belief that such a taxonomy is possible rests upon the assumption that desirable outcomes can, indeed, be specified. The behaviorist position is that one can be specific about goals in terms of which the success or failure of counseling can be assessed. This involves working out with the client what it is that the client wants to accomplish. This goal is stated not in abstract terms, such as dependency reaction, but in terms of specific behaviors which the client wishes to modify. Krumboltz offers the following example:

I've had a client who had a problem that you could categorize as a "dependency problem." His problem was that his mother was attempting to dominate him, and he was a man 24 years old and he was reacting in a very childish way. He was rebelling; sending her nasty letters and so on. We talked about this, and our problem became one of saying, "Well look. How would you want to react toward your mother? What would you like to be able to do when she makes these ridiculous demands on you?" He could then tell me what he would like to do. And, as a result, we were able to rehearse it and I could reinforce him right there as to alternative ways of reacting when his mother came out to visit him. For example, he practiced, "I'm sorry mother but I really don't think I want to do that." So that was the goal for that particular counseling session. This was something we could measure when it was accomplished. The client could report back and say, "I was able to do it."

Furthermore, this position is that research ought to be testing the efficacy of alternative ways of reaching the same counseling goal. The difficulty with current investigations is that they have focused heavily on the process without designating what it is that is to be accomplished. Indeed, the degree of confusion is evident in the apparent endlessness of controversies over what is an acceptable outcome of the counseling process. It appears, at times, that counseling is a process in search of a consequence, a cause desperately seeking an effect. Would it not be better to focus on objectives, stating clearly what it is that is to be accomplished and then looking for the most effective ways to accomplish it?

A somewhat contrasting view is that we already know a good deal about what things can and should be done by counselors. For instance, the client

needs to become relaxed. At least this is an article of many of the most popular forms of counseling. However, it might be objected that there is too much emphasis on becoming relaxed and that this emphasis is a source of the high client defection rate to which Blocher's paper points. Is it, indeed, that the client comes to have his behavior changed and instead gets relaxation? It seems, at least, that a good deal of subtle salesmanship goes on in Blocher's "negotiation period." It would appear that in many cases the counselor attempts to sell the client a goal different from that which brought him to counseling. For example, not a few counselors are in the business of purveying insight, and will apparently attempt to get the client to accept this as the legitimate goal of their work in lieu of the change in behavior which the client initially seeks, but which the counselor knows to be resistant to his efforts.

Consequently, the counselor's job may be more appropriately defined as programming the client's efforts so that he will be able to reach his own objectives more readily, rather than as the establishment of a comfortable atmosphere where insight can flourish. It then becomes clear that the establishment of a series of reasonable sub-goals, each of which can be achieved with a modicum of effort over a sharply circumscribed period of time, is a crucial part of counseling which is frequently overlooked by those whose conceptions of counseling are of the "relaxation" or "atmospheric" variety. By this means, the client is regularly reinforced by indications of movement toward his initial objective. That is, as he achieves each sub-goal, he is vouchsafed a (realistic and meaningful) feeling that he is making progress, a feeling which he would not have if he were allowed to focus exclusively on his ultimate goal or on some elusive abstraction, such as "self-actualization," or on the production of "insights." A lack of this sort of programming and a fixation with the ultimate goal which appears so far off tends to make small gains appear negligible, and negates their potential reinforcement power. Indeed, the client's objective may look so distant to him that he despairs of ever achieving it, and since its achievement is so problematic, the effort and the suffering which he puts into counseling appears to be a poor investment.

It is clear that even though one talks about helping the client realize his own goal, his determination of that goal is rarely, if ever, achieved independently of the counselor's influence. This influence may, however, be more subtle in some instances than in others. One point of view is that if the client's goal is inappropriate, such as acting in a violent manner, the counselor can be of service by helping the client get behind his feelings. For example, why is it that he hates his mother so strongly? This view is in contrast to that just articulated. It might be said that the former approach is concerned with coping behavior: the effort is to get the client to state a problem around which coping behaviors can be programmed. The latter might be termed the "inside



approach:" "I understand why I feel this way and when I do I don't feel so strongly." However, for the proponents of the former approach, considerable doubt exists as to whether insight into *why* he feels the way he does will help at all.

Clearly, what is required is research which employs these different strategies to obtain a specific, generally agreed-upon, behavioral objective. Once the most effective approaches to a given objective are determined, attention can be turned to the specification of the characteristics of the persons who are best suited to the utilization of that approach. For instance, work is presently under way at Stanford (Krumboltz) in regard to "modeling" as a mode of behavior change to determine what sorts of "models" are most effective with different kinds of people. Models are presented to a high school student as being very popular, moderately popular, or unpopular, or as being successful, mediocre, or unsuccessful (athletes, students) to assess the effects these dimensions have on their influence. The findings indicate that it is far from a simple matter. Indeed, a number of interactions are apparent in the data.

Clearly, then, even the adoption of a learning theory framework does not make counseling a simple task which can be readily performed by anyone who can master a somewhat involved but nonetheless highly routinized procedure. Even if our present level of knowledge would allow for a virtually mechanical administration of reinforcements, the personal attributes of the counselor retain their significance since they are obviously an important aspect of the reinforcements themselves. For example, the "uhuh" of a person held in high esteem has been shown to be more potent than the "uhuh" of someone less favorably regarded, or, to return to the Stanford studies, the example of a high prestige person tends to be more compelling than that of a person who is less prestigious. This fact provides researchers with other important questions, for example, how best might a counselor go about enhancing his standing with clients.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, it has interesting implications for a number of our current assumptions and practices. Take, for example, Farson's (1954) observation that counseling, as it is presently understood, demands that the counselor assume a largely feminine role and the behavior of students is shaped this way. Perhaps, if this factor guides selection to some extent, if not initially on the part of training institutions, it may influence the character of the people, particularly the men, who apply to counseling programs and those who are ultimately graduated. The present discussion casts considerable doubt on the strength of this position. It suggests that the forthright masculinity of the counselor might have very desirable effects on a good many clients.

<sup>2</sup> Goldstein *et al.* (1966) confront this problem directly. They draw on the findings of social psychology for possible plays. The result is a number of plausible and rather exciting suggestions which now require testing in the counseling situation.

A broader issue is that of "premature closure." Counseling programs tend to accept and graduate people not greatly unlike the faculty more frequently than they do those who are very dissimilar to them. The selection procedures are frequently guided by the predominant theory in the institution, being either directed at constructs drawn from it like "ego strength," "positive self regard," or "nonpossessive warmth," or by abstractions from the faculty's assessment of its own practice. A successful predictor, then, is one which provides a basis for anticipating how likely an applicant is to adopt the procedures which the faculty *believes* to be efficacious. But it is not at all clear that the traditional modes of counseling are indeed the most effective routes to its goals. Consequently, prevailing selection procedures may not be making any beneficial contribution to the field. They may, in fact, be supplying it with practitioners who resemble those presently practicing in a very ineffective way.

It would seem crucial, as a result, to anchor the selection of counselors (like that of clients) firmly to outcome. The question is not how closely he resembles the established counselor, or the counselor educator *qua* counselor; it is, rather, how well his clients fare as judged in terms of their attainment of certain behavioral objectives.

The selection and training of counselors may suffer, as well, from the failure of counselor educators to discriminate among the diverse demands made of elementary, secondary, and university counselors. Indeed, no little part of the thinking in regard to the matter of counselor selection and education proceeds from the assumption that one or another of the various systems of psychotherapy is *the* appropriate model for practice of counseling in any of the foregoing settings. There is good reason to question this thesis. The tasks of the secondary school counselor and of the elementary school counselor, are, in fact, quite different from those of the university counselor. To make the latter the touchstone for the selection, training, and graduation of the former is a doubtful practice. But it is clearly a prevalent one.

The situation is, of course, understandable, since counseling procedures have been drawn wholesale from psychotherapy and there are few, if any, that are endemic to it. There can be little doubt that schools expect something other than psychotherapy from their counselors. Yet, if guidance is indeed a profession whose members are custodians of special knowledge and skill, it has an obligation to go beyond obeisance to principals, superintendents, school boards and parents. Counselor training programs must not be, in Robinson's phrase, "servant schools." Counselors have a moral obligation to exert as much influence as they can to implement those procedures suggested by their training and experience. Does this mean that counselors should stump for a role which emphasizes the practice of psychotherapy? This would imply that the psychotherapist is the appropriate model for the school counselor, the present attitudes of the educational and lay communities notwithstanding.



However, such a conclusion can be faulted on grounds other than public reticence. It is questionable that, even were we to take the efficacy of traditional procedures as an established fact, psychotherapy in its present form could never meet the needs of the school or the community. Clearly, an approach tailored to the unique demands of the educational setting and to the special resources and opportunities for growth it provides is required. Fortunately, new paradigms are beginning to appear. In many of these, the classroom process itself becomes the vehicle of change, rather than sharply circumscribed discussions in the counselor's lair. Perhaps the counselor most capable of helping teachers modify their classroom behavior to meet the needs of the individual students is a different kind of a person from the one who is most skillful in utilizing an insight approach. If this is the case, then the present procedures by which counselor educators tend to select and reward students who are similar to themselves, (in most cases, counselors of the latter variety) are in urgent need of overhaul in terms of the reconceptualization of the school counselor's role.

At present, however, students are selected and trained to apply a single technique—insight, which is in the main poorly suited to the educational milieu. That is, while insight may promote desirable changes in some instances, there seem to be other strategies available in this environment which are more promising. Take, for example, the nature of the curriculum, disciplinary procedures, and classroom management techniques. These appear to be the most direct routes to the objectives which counseling espouses; alas, perhaps much more direct than the interview methods around which counselor training revolves.

### Outcome

The question of assessing outcome imposed itself on all of the issues set before the conference. It is unclear how meaningful work can be done in regard to the selection of counselors or clients in the absence of solid criteria of success in counseling. Obviously, each of these issues derives its importance from the desire to maximize the possibilities for positive outcome. But so long as the objectives of an enterprise cannot be clearly specified, one is at a loss either to determine what kinds of people should engage in it, or precisely what methods are most appropriate to it. A counselor, a client, or a counseling procedure can be deemed "good" only in so far as it is clear what it is that they are "good" for.

Although counseling arose and flourished in response to a need, the desire to remedy certain states of affairs, the question of assessing how successful it has been in achieving those ends has proved to be a prickly one. So prickly is it that many researchers have abandoned it for "process studies." Strupp, for

instance, avers that "more pressing matters must be dealt with first before we can address ourselves meaningfully to the question of the effectiveness of psychotherapy" (1963). However, serious issue must be taken with this position. The outcome question simply cannot be tabled in good conscience; neither can it be put off on the tacit assumption that counseling is, of course, efficacious, and that it is simply a matter of studying *how* it effects the changes it can be relied upon to produce.

Nonetheless, the current emphasis on "process" at the expense of more traditional investigations of outcome is not without definite virtues. One of these lies in the fact that the focus of many "process" studies is on the success with which various goals, intermediate to the ultimate outcome sought, are achieved (Kiesler, 1966 cited by Wellman). As a result, they may function as a valuable corrective to the practice of employing very gross outcome measures, a practice which has undoubtedly contributed to the present disillusionment with outcome studies. Certainly emphasis on such criteria, as grade point may serve to obscure the various effects of the individual components of counseling. That is, by attending solely to the realization of overall objectives, for instance, to the establishment of certain very complex behaviors, the fact that some factors within the process make a positive contribution while others are largely inert or negative in impact is lost. Consequently, the former do not receive the proper emphasis and the latter are retained.

Wellman's proposal seems to illustrate the limited utility of global outcome studies in regard to the improvement of guidance services. While Wellman's design is lacking neither sophistication nor comprehensiveness, it is unclear how such a study could exert much influence on practice. Suppose that it were mounted and there were virtually no significant differences to be found between those students who received guidance services and those who did not in terms of the categories specified. What then? At least some doubt would be cast upon the *whole* counseling process, including those elements that would actually have been somewhat helpful had they not been neutralized by others. In the main, however, the results—so dissonant with the beliefs and interests of practitioners—would be dismissed as experimental artifacts and committed to the archives. But suppose, on the other hand, some "significant differences" emerged. The results would be the same, there would be no information on which to base the improvement of guidance services. Of course, a certain smugness would be generated to buttress the status quo. Such an occurrence takes on an even less appealing aspect when one recalls how small discrepancies can be and remain "statistically significant" when a large sample is employed, and how steadily "statistically significant" is transmuted into "practically significant" through the alchemy of vested interests.

Consequently, research which focuses on the achievement of more limited goals and attends closely to the contribution of the constituent factors in the



counseling process would appear to be preferred over such undertakings as that proposed by Wellman.

### What is an Appropriate Criterion for Counseling?

As noted in the foregoing section, the very existence of such a question casts considerable doubt upon the claims of counseling to scientific and practical significance. No little effort is expended in the attempt to dissolve this doubt through the discovery of the appropriate set of outcomes to be expected of counseling. The aim is apparently to secure the position of counseling by uncovering goals which are perfectly generalizable to all manner of human difficulty, and acceptable to persons of all persuasions. Thus, counseling becomes a process in search of a consequence, a cause earnestly seeking an effect.

In a similar vein, Patterson (1966) criticizes Frederick Thorne's "eclectic" approach to counseling for assuming "that if a method is or has been used (in counseling), it must have a use" (p. 102). Would it not be more "scientific and logical," Patterson suggests, to proceed from the identification of a psychological problem to the selection of a remedial measure suited to it?

This line of argument might be profitably applied to a great deal of the work in the area. It is far from unusual for researchers to apply their pet therapeutic procedures to a number of different client samples to ascertain whether any results which might be construed in a positive light will perchance ensue. Patterson's (this conference) own approach seems to be subject to this criticism. It appears to contain more concern with what can be accomplished by means of "counseling," defined specifically as an interview situation in which a professionally trained person discusses another's attitudes and feelings with him, rather than with the discovery of the most satisfactory ways to solve behavioral problems. Perhaps more could be accomplished if the focus were placed upon what needs to be done, rather than on what can be found to justify the existence of this ritual we have at hand.

The present strategy seems to be:

- (1) Invest in Process A.
- (2) Look for some promising product of A.
- (3) Argue assiduously that this product is important.

An alternative strategy would be:

- (1) Confront Problem X.
- (2) Give operational definition to a desired state of affairs (Resolution  $X_1$ ).
- (3) Investigate the relative success of a variety of procedures in achieving  $X_1$ .

The persistent and careful application of this alternative strategy would hopefully produce a set of empirically-grounded guidelines for the selection of techniques most appropriate for the attainment of stated behavioral objectives. As a result, the counselor would know that if he wishes to resolve X in favor of  $X_1$ , his best recourse is to method T, which has been shown experimentally to be more closely related to the replacement of X with  $X_1$  than other methods suggested (P, Q, R, and S). This is not to say that  $X_1$  is self-evidently and universally accepted as the desirable solution, perhaps not even a desirable solution. Such a decision must be made by each client and counselor. What is important is that they have at their disposal as much reliable information concerning the options open and the contingencies involved as possible.

The development of such guidelines is obviously a task of no mean proportions, but it is far from being an impossible one. Its importance is underscored by the accuracy of Rogers' (1952) remark that research, which was and is generally of the Strategy I variety, has made virtually no contribution to the practice of counseling.

A promising beginning for this enterprise would be the formulation of a number of specific research designs which are amenable to use by practicing counselors in educational settings. Each design would stipulate the exact procedures by which (a) the nature of the experimental samples are to be described, (b) the character of the intervention defined, and (c) the outcome assessed.

Researchers would then be encouraged to undertake studies employing these designs in regard to whatever independent variables seem to be most promising to them whether they are included within the current listing of guidance practices or not.

Replications of these studies would be given high priority. Hopefully the result would be that a good many comparable studies would be generated to provide a sound base for estimating the relationship of a wide range of tactics to the achievement of given objectives. The question is not: How do we achieve certain goals using one-to-one relationships? It is: How do we achieve these goals at all?

Accordingly, one begins with the criterion, a definite state of affairs that requires alteration, generally some sort of unwanted behavior, a symptom. Success is the removal of that symptom, something that can be assessed quite directly, rather than the modification of some hypothetical process whose status can only be inferred in the most speculative manner, if at all.

Of course, the view that the relief of symptoms is a trivial matter, if not a harmful practice, has long been stalwartly maintained by depth-oriented theorists. In the first place, it is argued, the removal of symptoms is easily achieved. In the second place, it is held that the "real problem" is what lies



beneath the symptoms. As long as this is not dealt with, other symptoms—perhaps of a more pernicious nature—will inevitably arise to replace those laid to rest.

This view is increasingly difficult to sustain. The depth psychologist's disdain for "symptomatic cures" smacks of face-saving. Certainly, depth techniques have been remarkably unsuccessful in producing such change (Eysenck, 1964; Wolpe, Salter and Reyna, 1964; and London, 1964). It appears that more potent approaches<sup>3</sup> are deemed superficial<sup>4</sup>. The subtle attempt is frequently made to convince clients who come seeking assistance in changing their behavior that "insight," and the "examined life," are infinitely more precious acquisitions. Until the client is convinced of this, he is led to believe that behavior modification is the main order of business.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that the removal of so-called symptoms is a much more respectable outcome criterion than the representatives of the various "evocative therapies" (Frank, 1961) have been willing to recognize. In fact, it is a somewhat sad commentary upon practice in counseling and psychotherapy that it has been so long reticent to face up to evaluation in the same terms that it is sought by clients (Volsky *et al.*, 1965).

The doctrine that symptoms are quite easily dismissed and that their dismissal is a relatively trivial matter seems, at last, to be recognized as an inappropriate generalization from the hysterical conditions which provided the

<sup>3</sup> Behaviorally oriented therapy is frequently criticized on the grounds that research proffered in support of its claims to efficacy are vitiated by the same manner of deficiency that undermines investigations of the other approaches: a heavy reliance on individual case reports and a dearth of studies employing appropriate control groups.

This objection is, however, blunted by the fact that the behavioral approach emphasizes a careful specification of the individual steps taken toward the ultimate therapeutic objective. That is, the behavior therapists tend to structure their therapeutic endeavors in such a way as to demonstrate the extent to which effective "stimulus control" was actually achieved at each step.

For example, consider the practice of including "extinction" or "reversal" trials within the treatment process. That is, in order to determine if, indeed, the experimental procedure is effecting the change in behavior noted, the procedure is interrupted or even reversed temporarily (Bijou, 1966). The differences in the response rate during the period when the procedure is in effect and that before it was instituted and while it was suspended provide solid evidence for the power of the procedure (Sidman, 1962).

It should also be noted that the target behavior with which these workers are concerned is directly and reliably observable. It is not a matter of inferring whether or not the client may indeed have been influenced in the direction of some quite abstract psychological construct, self-actualization/self-acceptance, which has only putative relationships to overt behavior.

<sup>4</sup> Wilder (1945), in reviewing the methods for estimating the success of psychoanalytic treatment, comments, "It is interesting to note that freedom from symptoms as a criterion plays a minor role" (quoted by Wolpe, 1964, p. 8). More recently, a well-known analyst declared that the success of an analysis cannot be measured in terms of symptom presence or absence, but rather in terms of insight into them (Dewald, 1962, p. 300).

initial impetus to psychoanalysis. Certainly the point is clear to many workers in educational settings. They know that the alteration of behavior is no simple task, but that once accomplished it can have a far reaching implication. The evidence is steadily accumulating, much depth-theorizing notwithstanding, that internal states (anxiety) need not be altered prior to "meaningful" behavior change. To the contrary, the modification of important behavior will almost certainly lead to a significant subjective change.

Take, for example, the following case. The problem or the symptoms are, from the school's point of view, a "lack of academic achievement," a "short attention span," and "disruptive behavior." The traditional formulation of the situation is apt to be that such distressing behavior is the product of an underlying conflict. The latter, it is held, must be worked through before anything important can be hoped for on the behavioral level. However, a greater measure of understanding and control seem to be possible if one does not concern himself with the "real cause" of the objectionable behavior hidden beneath it. A much more promising approach attends to the interrelation of contemporaneous factors.

In this "cybernetic" framework (Phillips and Wiener, 1966), it may be recognized that the child's school difficulties are sustained by the conviction that he cannot succeed. This conviction engenders an "inability to delay gratification." Why should he go through all the discomfort and privation which striving for achievement entails when he "knows" that it cannot possibly lead to anything appreciable in *his* case? Consequently, almost anything can distract him from his work. The result is a poor academic performance which confirms his belief about himself, a belief which may be reinforced even further by punitive reactions of others. The situation is thus a "vicious circle."

Instead of searching diligently for the origins of the problem by such means as open-ended interviews, projective tests, and elaborate reconstructions, the system may be entered at the point of the symptoms themselves. For instance, the learning situation might be modified in order to maximize the child's probability for success. Materials which are both appealing to the child and well-suited to his present capabilities could be employed. Provision could also be made for the reduction of extraneous stimulation, much of which is endemic to the normal classroom but which tends to attenuate his concentration (Harling and Phillips, 1962). The process might be leavened with the introduction of desirable learning and learning-related behavior (Holland and Skinner, 1961; and Whelan, 1966).

It may then be expected that in so far as the child's behavior is modified, other factors in the "loop" will also be altered. He will, for instance, get realistic "feedback" which militates against his original assumption of hopeless incompetence. And, as a result, he will be more capable of committing him-



self to the learning tasks placed before him. Being less distractible and more persistent, he is likely to learn at an increased rate which, in turn, brings greater reinforcement.

The point is that overt behavior is not something to be taken lightly. It is the proper touchstone not only for the evaluation of counseling, but a promising focus for the direct application of treatment procedures. The "disease model" of behavioral difficulties is rapidly falling into disrepute (Ullman and Krasner, 1965). The failure of the "symptom substitution" hypothesis to obtain empirical support, and the demonstrable efficacy of therapeutic approaches which ignore the covert sources of behavior problems postulated by the model in favor of methods which bear on the responses themselves, have generated no little discredit for it (Wolpe, 1965; Whelan, 1966; Paul, 1966; Yates, 1958; Eysenck, 1964).

### Conclusion

It appears that "outcome" remains the *piece de resistance* for research in counseling. It must remain, perhaps for some time, its central focus. Moreover, no apology is required for the use of overt behavior as an ultimate criterion in such work, as the "disease model" suggests. To the contrary, the use of convoluted inferences as to the status of clients in regard to highly abstract and speculative psychodynamic variables (which are offered as criteria to be preferred to behavioral observations) smacks somewhat of sophistry. Particularly in the case of counseling whose justification is frequently stated in terms of facilitating "instrumental behavior" (Steffle, 1965) or of improving certain rather sharply circumscribed interactions with reality (Tyler, 1961), appeals to vague "internal states and forces" far removed from observable phenomena have a hollow ring indeed.

It may be that such appeals are more acceptable for psychotherapeutic practice in so far as it speaks of "radical personality change." Yet even here the suspicion arises that the resort to esoterics represents an attempt to divert attention from the failure of the process to produce the more public results in whose name it was originally undertaken.

Consequently, "outcome research" in counseling might well take its departure from a careful specification of the changes desired by those persons and agencies which support counseling. The problem, then, becomes one of ascertaining what procedures are most effective in realizing these objectives. If the verbal-interpersonal means of influence which now are virtually coextensive with "counseling" should fare poorly in the competition, then, unhappily, so much the worse for them.

Such a task seems to be a great deal more promising than the more common one which attempts to ferret out some justification for present procedures by

means of statistically significant (albeit pragmatically miniscule) discrepancies between treated and untreated groups in regard to proximate criteria of problematic relevance to the problems for which help was sought. For instance, the success of treatment begun to ameliorate such things as learning disabilities, shyness, and a lack of satisfactory interpersonal relationships is frequently judged by means of reference to measures of increased talk about feelings, changes in Q-sorting proclivities, Rorschach responses, or the scores of *ad hoc* questionnaires.

The shift from this line of research to that which focuses on the relative merits of a variety of methods for accomplishing specific, behaviorally-defined objectives would logically entail a reduction in the volume of theoretical disputation aimed at rationalizing outcome criteria different from those initially agreed upon in the original treatment contract. As a result, greater attention might be paid to the development of strategies by which changes in the behavior which brings clients to counseling can be objectively assessed (Webb, *et al.*, 1966). It is, after all, in the arena of the client's everyday life that counseling's right to public support must be decided. A long chain of theoretical speculation extending from some details of the client's in-counseling behavior simply will no longer suffice.

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## Refocus of Research in Client Selection: Task Group Recommendations

The most important charge of each task group was to provide specific recommendations for both types of research and concrete research projects which should be conducted as a result of the evaluations and refocus provided by the papers, discussions, and preliminary task group work.

In the area of client selection, the specific task group recommendations were as follows:

**Recommendation 1.** *Central client criteria which are related to certain counseling approaches should be identified.* (Task Group #2)

A suggested investigative approach involved the identification of central client criteria related to certain counseling approaches. Random assignment of people within these counseling classifications would be made. It was hypothesized that client variables would not be particularly crucial in assessing the effects of counseling. One of the myths we should contend with is that there is not homogeneity of counselors.

A discussion of the intake counselor in one counseling center raised illustrative experimental questions. In this intake system, a senior staff member serves as a screening agent for all client referrals. Following a brief diagnostic screening interview, the client is assigned to an appropriate staff member. One criterion used is one of trying to match up characteristics of counselor and client. Positive interaction effects which will hopefully facilitate the greatest amount of growth on the part of the client are considered. The questions raised during the discussion involved such things as, "What do you look for in determining factors that interact well with client and counselor?", or "How do you know that this is effective?" It was admitted that presently empirical

data is lacking, but that rational considerations certainly make these pairings logical.

Productive research investigations could be made centering upon such factors as: On what does the intake counselor base his diagnostic impressions? Are there any factors involved in the presenting problem? Do certain personality characteristics of the individual play a role? In the same fashion, what client characteristics are considered interactive with the personality factors of the counselor or his theoretical approaches? Numerous research hypotheses could be generated with such an intake arrangement using a lengthy follow-up period on which to assess outcome.

The rationale for the intake procedure was illustrated by the following example: A young woman came to the counseling center who could be characterized as a rather hostile person, especially antagonistic toward males. The intake counselor made the judgment following the interview that a more assertive-aggressive male counselor would provide a more therapeutic atmosphere rather than a counselor who tended to take a more passive, non-directive stance. Assumptions such as this could be tested experimentally. Hypotheses could be developed from clinical experience.

A suggested test of this hypothesis would be to assign a group of individuals with similar characteristics to both passive and assertive counselors, then assess the outcome. Such a procedure might require a considerable length of time because of the infrequency of certain kinds of individuals appearing at the counseling center.

**Recommendation 2.** *A client classification system should be developed.* (Task Group #2)

The development of a client classificatory system is essential. Several historical approaches dealing with the presenting problems of counselees, Williamson (1939), and Bordin (1946), as well as some of the more recent ones developed by Erikson (1950; 1959) or Havighurst (1953) are promising places to begin work. The diagnostic categories developed by the American Psychiatric Association (1952) do not seem appropriate nor particularly helpful for counseling settings. Adequate research in the area of assessment of outcomes as it relates to the matching of counselor and client must be based on a classification system. Some of the problems related to this kind of counseling research would be alleviated if a taxonomy of counseling objectives was constructed based on counseling theory.

We still do not have accurate descriptions of the possible counseling strategies. Taxonomic descriptions of reflection, interpretation, and confrontation, facilitate the characterization of counselor styles. In any kind of matching of counselor and client, taxonomies would be needed.



**Recommendation 3.** *Broader research populations need to be included in basic research on counseling.* (Task Group #2)

There is criticism that much of our knowledge and research dealing with counseling is based upon people who are similar to the counselor; Caucasian, middle to upper class, verbal, college level. There is a need to conduct counseling research with populations other than college students. Communication patterns are essential in the treatment process. Accustomed ways of interaction and communication do not seem to be successful with certain groups, and therefore more innovative approaches should be tried and evaluated. Replication of the same techniques could be made with different populations on many variables.

The predominant emphasis on the verbal approach needs to be scrutinized. Our current treatment strategies were recognized to be largely verbal. It was generally agreed that lower socioeconomic groups do not seem to be affected by typical counseling strategies. The anomaly of matching someone of comparable socioeconomic status, especially that of a counselor from the lower socioeconomic group who rejects one from his own background, was cited as an example of problems in this area both of a professional and research nature.

**Recommendation 4.** *Prognostic evaluations should be related to specific treatments in constructing research designs.* (Task Group #3)

The important issue is the client's prognosis for a specific treatment, not just any treatment, or "the" treatment. Prognostic evaluations need to be related to specific treatments in order for diagnostic or prognostic evaluation to be justifiable in terms of the counselor's or diagnostician's time. If treatments do not vary specifically in terms of the diagnostic or prognostic evaluations made, then such evaluations become mere intellectual exercises. The time and effort expended in refining our measures for evaluating states of client health/unhealth, ease/disease, adjustment/maladjustment should allow us to predict the most successful methods of treatment. Pigeon-holing has negative connotations in our profession, yet perhaps we should consider it as an impetus for closer alignment between diagnosis and treatment.

**Recommendation 5.** *Investigation is needed into the range of possible accesses to the client.* (Task Group #3)

A further consideration in client selection is the alternative accesses we may have to the client. Verbal, insight therapy has been shown to be lacking in universal applicability; hence, in client selection, should we not consider other means of access, such as parents and teachers, or with the counselor serving as a model of behavior for the client to incorporate? Again, considerations as to the method of treatment become vital in the process of client selection.

**Recommendation 6.** *A focus on diagnostic and prognostic variables in relation to intervention is needed.* (Task Group #4)

A central issue of the conference for our group was the question of whether any single counseling treatment (or other form of intervention) is likely to provide optimal benefit to all types of clients. There appeared to be considerable support for an answer to this question in the negative, and a recognition of the interaction between client characteristics, counselor characteristics, counseling treatment, and counseling outcomes. More particularly, there was agreement that counseling research should focus on diagnostic and prognostic variables which would enable us to predict the counseling treatment or other intervention most likely to be useful to a particular type of client with particular problems. Of prime importance to such research is the recognition that input, process, and outcome variables must be studied simultaneously.

The rejection of diagnosis by some counseling theories, and the obvious inadequacy of a nosology based on pathology have led, in recent years, to a disregard for the importance of individual differences among clients in counseling practice and research. Too frequently differences in clients prior to counseling have been ignored or attended to only in terms of "matching" treatment and control groups. Much greater attention must be given to client characteristics, and much research needs to be done to determine what salient variables are associated with client benefit from any particular counseling treatment.

For heuristic purposes, a widely accepted schema for ordering client characteristics would increase the cumulative effect of research. A common data language and instrumentation within the schema would further enhance the possibility of an accumulation of knowledge. Blocher (Chapter 1) has suggested such a schema in his "life stage, life space, life style" model. Sprinthall and the discussants of his paper have identified some of the relevant variables which might be considered within each dimension of the model.

Concern with client characteristics should not obscure the need for attention to the characteristics of counselors and the process of counseling. There is considerable evidence that the personality, maturity and values of the counselor are related to counseling outcomes. These data need to be more clearly tied to the kind of counseling treatment provided, and the type of client benefited by it, if the differences are to become of sufficient significance to provide a basis for screening in counselor education.

**Recommendation 7.** *Systematic attention needs to be given to the effect of professional setting on counseling.* (Task Group #6)

Counseling is often discussed in terms of the universally applied process, without adequate discussion of differences in settings, agencies, or even client types. Counseling may always be counseling, but differences in an approach to specific cases are partly a function of the setting.



**Recommendation 8.** *Input variables such as client expectation require further investigation.* (Task Group #6)

Related to the neglect in discussing variations in counseling settings was the suggestion that more discussion of client input variables was needed. For example, the issue of client expectations was not discussed at all. In addition to the kinds of client input variables discussed, other variables such as referral source, specific agency, and goals of the agencies are appropriately considered relevant to client selection.

**Recommendation 9.** *Alternate methods of predicting client response should be investigated comparatively, such as initial interview versus tests.* (Task Group #6)

Research on the prediction of client benefit in counseling should focus on methods of study such as use of the initial interview versus tests before counseling. Again, related to this were the questions of specific types of agencies, various approaches to treatment, and the relationship of these factors to counseling benefit.

**Recommendation 10.** *The efficiency and effectiveness of counseling in helping clients needs to be compared with other intervention strategies.* (Task Group #6)

There was the question of efficiency of counseling versus other approaches to personal problems. This could be studied within the framework of personnel services in general, in which counseling would be just one of a variety of approaches available to students. Data is needed for a better understanding of the potencies and limitations of counseling as a helping process.

**Recommendation 11.** *Client characteristics need further comparison with the populations from which they come.* (Task Group #6)

One of the important issues in this type of research would be obtaining knowledge concerning client characteristics compared to the characteristics of students in general. Not all students become clients: personality factors which differentiate clients from students are clearly relevant to client selection.

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## Refocus of Research in Counselor Selection: Task Group Recommendations

As a result of the evaluations and refocus provided by the papers, discussions, and preliminary task group work, specific recommendations for both types of research and concrete research projects which should be conducted were requested.

In the area of counselor selection, the specific recommendations were as follows:

**Recommendation 1.** *Assessment of effects of training programs is needed.* (Task Group #2)

We know very little about the effects of our training programs. These need to be systematically assessed. Existing knowledge in the behavioral sciences has not had adequate incorporation into some of the programs. Programs may be too rigid, preventing at least some students from cross-discipline influence.

One program was described with a four-pronged approach. Each student will undergo therapy, participate in didactic courses, be placed in a practicum immediately, and be assigned to a staff member for involvement in a research program. This will be initiated immediately upon entry into the program. They will not be expected to have competency in these areas immediately, but involvement will be facilitated. This will presumably assist evaluation and direction of the student. Initial selection may be assessed in terms of extent and quality of involvement in each of these areas.

**Recommendation 2.** *Self-selection and self-evaluation represents an unexplored area which should be investigated.* (Task Group #2)

The issue of who should be admitted to a counselor training program aroused considerable interest. One issue was whether self-selection would be

an effective way of determining who should continue in such programs. Some rather sharp differences in opinion were presented. Some voiced the view that it is the responsibility of the training staff to determine who should be graduated from such programs. Others felt individuals should have a choice. This would be in keeping with certain philosophical frameworks in counseling. It was admitted that either position has sparse objective evidence at this point. Exploratory research should be conducted in this dimension.

**Recommendation 3.** *The stability of changes resulting from supervision needs to be established.* (Task Group #2)

It is expected that changes will occur from supervision. Whether these changes are permanent, how they occurred, and which changes continue in effect after termination from the program needs to be established.

**Recommendation 4.** *Process in counselor education needs further investigation.* (Task Group #2)

Although counselor education process was not explicitly considered at the conference, there was agreement that it should be investigated. The characteristics of counselor educators could be studied with their effects upon students. One important dimension in the training of counselors was described as psychological openness. The degree of openness presented by the counselor educator seemingly tends to facilitate the development of this process in students.

**Recommendation 5.** *The study of effective counselors should be given a high priority.* (Task Group #2)

The study of counselors proven to be effective holds research possibilities. Of critical importance here is the criterion to be used in selecting such effective individuals. Closer parallels should be drawn between theories of effectiveness in psychology and sociology and the counseling process.

**Recommendation 6.** *The presence and extent of a "g-factor" in counselor characteristics needs to be investigated.* (Task Group #2)

Whether there is a g-factor as it relates to counselor characteristics was discussed. Can an individual be equally effective with all kinds of clients; children and adults? There were rather strong opinions voiced on this dimension, and with little agreement. It was felt by some that instead of a g-factor, there were n-factors with various combinations occurring depending upon the kind of client or presenting problem. Considerable skepticism was voiced over the possibility of finding only a few factors accounting for the majority of variance



in counselor characteristics. It was felt that some of the sources of the variance had been isolated, but there was doubt whether the bulk of it had been defined.

**Recommendation 7.** *The effectiveness of lay personnel working as counselors represents a new area for study.* (Task Group #3)

Consideration was given to the reported effectiveness of VISTA personnel—for the most part intelligent, well-educated, middle class people working with persons considered culturally deprived. One implication from this in reference to the selection of counselors is the possibility of selecting empathic, and not necessarily trained people to work with clients living within their own communities. At present there are not enough well-trained counselors to meet the need for services. It might be feasible for some of our trained personnel to serve as "diagnosticians," and have other persons such as housewives and block workers serve to some extent as "technicians" who implement a particular counseling strategy.

**Recommendation 8.** *The study of approaches of others interested in changing human behavior may contribute to our knowledge of counselors as behavior changers.* (Task Group #3)

Implications for further research, as drawn by task group members from Mosher's paper (Chapter 4), included the possibility of examining the sensitivity, affect, and flexibility of music teachers and other artists, as well as the methods of inducing behavioral changes employed at Marine Boot Camps. Counselors seem to have their greatest hesitation regarding the specific goals of their endeavors: music teachers and Marine officers do not. Counselors shy away from the thought of there only being one possible behavioral alternative presented to the client. Were counselors more definite on the specific outcomes desired in their clients, various other procedures for influencing behavioral change could be reconsidered.

A further ramification of this problem is illustrated by parent-child relationships. One idea advanced was that for parents whose plans and goals for their children are clear, the process of child-raising is less fraught with apprehension and difficulty. Such parents are less afraid of inducing trauma in their offspring. On the other hand, counselor-trainees are instilled with great fear of somehow "hurting" their clients. The resulting timidity may decrease their real involvement with their clients and may increase problems of treatment.

**Recommendation 9.** *Definitions of effectiveness need further clarification and extension.* (Task Group #3)

Concern was expressed over Patterson's acceptance of criterion measures now at hand. Counseling effectiveness for many researchers and practitioners in this field still remains at the philosophical level. We should perhaps halt research

of the traditional variety until we know what the final product is we wish to measure.

**Recommendation 10.** *The examination of warmth/coldness continuum represents a fruitful area for study.* (Task Group #3)

"Warmth" is a quality generally felt to be highly correlated with effectiveness. We have become terribly afraid of the effects of punitive relationships and, hence, bend in the other direction, which perhaps has the undesirable effect of reinforcing the client's confusion and the continued expression of his anxiety. Possible inherent dangers on both sides of the warmth/coldness continuum should be examined.

**Recommendation 11.** *More reliance should be placed on studies of counselors and less reliance on studies of counselors-in-training.* (Task Group #4)

A principle fault in much of the research on the characteristics of counselors and counseling effectiveness is the fact that these studies most frequently utilize counseling-trainees rather than counselors. It is quite possible that the most salient personality characteristics associated with success as a graduate student are minimally or even negatively related to success on-the-job. There is, furthermore, some evidence that maturity of years of experience as a counselor are related not only to effectiveness, but also to the methods of counseling employed. Some of the research on teachers' attitudes may be relevant here: a fairly consistent finding is that the attitudes of experienced teachers are more like pre-training attitudes than they are like those of recent graduates of teacher education programs. A study by Blocher (1967) using video-tapes of pre-training and practicum level counseling interviews indicates that judges' ratings of the pre-training video-tapes are more predictive of rated success as a counselor than are the post-training (practicum) tapes. All of this, as well as the force of logic, would indicate that studies attempting to discover the essential personality characteristics for counseling success must be based on mature counselors, not students in training.

**Recommendation 12.** *The relationship should be studied between counselor characteristics, client characteristics, and success.* (Task Group #4)

Another aspect of counselor selection that needs additional study is the relationship between counselor characteristics, client characteristics, and success. Some research suggests that counseling may be essentially a convergence phenomenon. Clients are most likely to profit from contact with counselors who are somewhat (but not too) dissimilar from themselves. The work of Rosenthal (1955) and Pentony and Banks (1957) is relevant here. In both instances,



client improvement was related to the client's movement toward the counselor's value system. The concern during the conference with specialized counseling approaches for the disadvantaged may reflect the fact that most counselors are essentially middle class and seem to serve best people essentially like themselves.

**Recommendation 13.** *Counseling developmental tasks can be investigated productively as an important area in counselor training.* (Task Group #4)

Counselor training might be more effective if the training program was based on a graded series of interpersonal problem situations—"counseling developmental tasks" (get the client to talk at least 40, 50, or 60 percent of the time; get a client to actually initiate some exploratory behavior outside the interview; get an obese client to lose weight). Much research would need to be done to determine what should be included and to establish the hierarchy of difficulty of the tasks. If such a "developmental tasks" program could be instituted, it would have the advantage of focusing students on particular goals without necessarily legislating the means to their attainment, and certainly would make possible more objective evaluation of counseling potential.

**Recommendation 14.** *The use of socially valued, external, objective (SVEO) criteria as outcome measures should be related to counselor selection in research studies.* (Task Group #5)

When counselor selection is examined within the context of common socially valued, external, objective (SVEO) counseling goals, two major considerations arise. They are: the ability of the counselor to directly modify behavior, and the indirect influence of the counselor, by virtue of his actions, appearance, and values, to serve as a model for his clients. In order to more fully understand the pure effect of these influences, they should be analyzed both in terms of benefitting behaviors and harming behaviors.

With the present trend toward a need for competence in a larger variety of counseling techniques, it seems likely that the personality patterns and behavioral styles of successful counselors will become more numerous and increasingly complicated. To the extent that this situation develops, it was felt that attempts to refine counselor selection procedures will be deemphasized, while the focus shifts instead to developing and teaching specific counseling techniques for use in specific counseling situations.

Members of this task force reacted to two characteristics logically related to counseling effectiveness: flexibility and persuasiveness. In the case of the former, it was hypothesized that people who demonstrate flexibility in certain behaviors may not necessarily demonstrate them in other behaviors to the same degree. For this reason it was felt that attempts to assess behavioral modes as

a means of selecting effective counselors needs further research before decisions are made based on broad behavioral criteria.

It was also hypothesized that persuasion is a completely acceptable means of causing a client to experiment with new modes of behavior. This idea needs to be researched to determine to what extent defensiveness or other detrimental reactions are produced in the client. It will be necessary to determine which types of persuasion (if any) are most effective in effecting behavior modification. Until these questions are answered, it will be difficult to assess the importance of counselor persuasiveness as a basis of selection.

Research needs to be conducted to determine if the present devices used to screen applicants applying to graduate school are achieving their purposes with regard to the profession of counseling. What would happen if a group of people who failed to get into graduate school on intellectual dimension were conditionally admitted to counselor training?

**Recommendation 15.** *Advances in the selection of counselors are intimately related to advances in counselor training; therefore, research on them should be interrelated.* (Task Group #5)

At present, the major means of evaluating selection procedures is in terms of success in the various courses required in training programs. This is ironic when it is so generally conceded that counselor training itself requires revision. It was suggested that counselor education needs a Flexner Report like the one that revolutionized the medical schools. Many schools are just not equipped with faculty or facilities to provide adequate training to would-be counselors. Perhaps certain courses now required should be eliminated and others added to replace them.

Evaluations of counselors-in-training have generally been made on the basis of the students' ability to perform in a manner consistent with the tenets of the acceptable theory or theories. What would be the effect on training methods if, in addition to or instead of oral or written comprehensives, professional certification was granted on the basis of externally supervised objective assessment of socially valued changes in the trainee's clients? Research is needed to determine the subject matter and type of instruction most beneficial in training "effective" counselors, when the measure of effectiveness is of this type.

It would help greatly in making decisions related to counselor training if counselor educators could agree on the nature of the services to be expected of counselors. In the course of our discussion, three such services were proposed: (1) The counselor should be able to help the client clarify his goals in life; (2) The counselor should be in the position of being able to help the client better predict the consequences of his various possible behaviors; and (3) The counselor should be able to help the client to modify his behavior



toward being successful. These three propositions need to be researched in terms of the SVEO criteria.

We need to think creatively about how we can most effectively shape administration's image of a counselor's role in the school. A preliminary step in this direction would be to develop a more universally accepted counselor role. As it now stands in many schools, the administration defines the role very differently than does the profession itself. There needs to be more dialogue between counseling trainers and employers of counselors.

It was also felt by the group that more needed to be done in the training of counselors to enable them to accept their defined role, instead of chasing that of the social worker, clinical psychologist, or psychotherapist.

**Recommendation 16.** *The balance between the affective and the cognitive in counseling needs to be discovered.* (Task Group #6)

It is possible that counseling is more affective than cognitive. The affective side of counseling was hardly noted in the paper by Mosher (Chapter 4). Either aspect can be taken to an extreme, and extremes tend to be detrimental. The extreme of complete cognitive flexibility would lead to a confusing inconsistency in the counselor. Thus, it was noted that optimal levels of cognitive flexibility would need to be established.

**Recommendation 17.** *Care must be exercised in drawing research parallels between counseling and teaching.* (Task Group #6)

Although both the counseling and teaching professions are intimately involved with students and in affecting changes in students, there are striking differences between the aims of the two professions. Thus, caution must be exercised when a concept developed in teacher selection is transferred to use in counselor selection.

**Recommendation 18.** *Client type should be a dimension incorporated into research designs on counselor selection.* (Task Group #6)

In the discussions of counselor selection, the effects of client participation in the counseling relationship are not usually noted. Although much of what a counselor does is a function of his own personal attributes, the effects of a client in a counseling relationship cannot be totally ignored. Unless it is assumed that a counselor can work with *any* kind of client, counselor selection would need to take into account the types of and kinds of clients for whom these counselors are being selected.

**Recommendation 19.** *A first step in future counselor selection should be the definition of counseling.* (Task Group #6)

A first step in future counselor selection work should be the definition of counseling. This step is not necessarily a research process in the sense of data gathering and hypothesis testing. Rather, it is a logical first step which must be taken before research can be meaningfully conducted and results can be meaningfully interpreted. It is not necessary that one definition of counseling be totally accepted by everyone: it is necessary that the definitions used be explicit and stated in such a way that studies can be replicated and cross-validated.

**Recommendation 20.** *Counselor selection should be studied comprehensively at the levels of preselection, performance in training, and performance as a practicing counselor.* (Task Group #6)

Emphasis in this area was on a number of issues. First, there should be consideration of the initial data gathered in counselor selection programs. Attempts in this direction should be toward making the initial data gathering more systematic and more usable in studies of later counselor performance. Secondly, initial data should be related to performance in the training program. While performance in training is at best an intermediate criterion, this information should be helpful in the selection of future students in counseling. Finally, selection procedures should be related to performance of counselors who have finished the program and have taken positions as counselors. Thus, counselor selection will be studied at the levels of preselection, performance in training, and performance as a practicing counselor.

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## Refocus of Research in Assessing Counseling Process and Outcome: Task Group Recommendations

Recommendations by the task groups in this area of counseling research proved to be the most encompassing. The reports generally linked criteria of outcome to broader aspects of research design.

The specific recommendations in assessing process and outcome were as follows:

*Recommendation 1. Developmental models should have an increased role in establishing measures of counseling effectiveness.* (Task Group #3)

In developing criterion measures of counseling effectiveness, the appropriateness of developmental counseling seems apparent. It becomes the developmental counselor's function to encourage and facilitate the emergence of an ability in the client to cope with the demands of society.

Blocher's concepts of life stage, life space and life style, if combined with Wellman's framework might refine counseling outcome criteria to a greater extent. It would remain to be seen if the drawbacks encountered by the ensuing bulkiness of the Blocher-Wellman model would be counterbalanced by greater specificity of our outcome criteria. At that point we could then aim for more simplified frameworks.

*Recommendation 2. More detailed specification of counselor process is necessary.* (Task Group #4)

With regard to the study of counseling process, a major concern was with the present lack of specificity in published studies regarding the counseling method or techniques used. Most reports of counseling research do not provide sufficient information concerning the counseling treatment to make repli-

cation possible. Whether this is due to the treatment actually being vaguely eclectic or to the limitations of space in journal reports cannot be ascertained. It is clear, however, if we are to approach the goal of accurate prognostication based on client characteristics, the type of treatment must be clearly specified. At the same time, it was recognized that complete replicability of treatment procedures is impossible and perhaps undesirable. Complete replicability could be based only on an entirely mechanistic approach and perhaps achieved only by a computer. There will probably always remain individual differences in the application of techniques, and for this reason the counselor characteristics mentioned earlier will remain of significant importance.

*Recommendation 3. A shift is necessary from proximate outcome measures such as process changes to follow-up outcome measures less global and more subject to direct objective measurement.* (Task Group #4)

Appropriate criterion measures of counseling effectiveness remain a problem. There was general agreement that measures of behavior change in clients during counseling interviews are at best proximate. Even change scores on personality and attitudinal measures are suspect. These indices should be regarded as intervening variables and means of assessing the process of change rather than as outcome measures. While no one was satisfied with the utilization of criteria such as grade point averages, divorce rates or annual income, these indices were recognized as criteria unlikely to be manipulated directly by the counselor's behavior. Perhaps we must establish outcome criteria idiosyncratically as Krumboltz suggests, specifying clearly for each client what will be accepted as "success" and basing research on percentage of clients meeting idiosyncratic "success," criteria. Certainly there was an indication in the conference that outcome criteria should be less global and more subject to objective measurement than the attainment of a "realistic self-concept" or "greater ego strength."

*Recommendation 4. Persuasion needs further investigation as a method of influencing outcome.* (Task Group #4)

An area of considerable interest was that of the importance of persuasion or prestige-suggestion in counseling. The study that indicated more favorable counseling outcomes for a well-dressed counselor in a fancy office would suggest that status is a relevant variable in counseling effectiveness. While many would balk at the idea that a counselor should or does persuade, it is probable that operant conditioning of verbal behavior is enhanced by the perceived status of the experimenter. Certainly counseling researchers would do well to acquaint themselves with the literature on persuasion and prestige-suggestion.



**Recommendation 5.** *Counseling analog research merits intensive study for increasing understanding of process.* (Task Group #5)

An idea which received considerable discussion was the use of counseling analogs in the laboratory to do pilot studies of the relevant variables in the counseling process. It was recognized that such laboratory studies would not prove conclusive. Field testing of findings in actual counseling activities would be essential. One such study might be an attempt to determine how status or friendship affected the operant conditioning of verbal behavior. Subjects would be subjected to operant learning situations in which the persons doing the conditioning would be in some instances "scientists" (white coats, Ph.D.'s) and in other instances friends.

**Recommendation 6.** *A Technical Manual needs to be developed for counseling research which will contribute to a common data language.* (Task Group #4)

There is great need for the development of a common data language if research in counseling is to result in an accumulation of knowledge. Terms are used loosely, and often mean quite different things to different experimenters. There is also need for some standardization, instrumentation, and greater agreement concerning the important client characteristics to be measured and reported. Finally, a handbook that would indicate the most efficient experimental designs and methods of data analysis would be very helpful to counselors who have not had extensive training in statistics and research methods.

The development of a technical manual for research in counseling is recommended. The manual would include suggestions for research design and data analysis, and would also attempt operational definition of the major constructs relevant to counseling research. A significant aspect of the latter would be descriptions of various instruments used to measure client characteristics, process variables and outcomes. The description of a particular instrument would include a brief summary of significant findings of research utilizing the instrument and an annotated bibliography of related studies. The manual should also list the client characteristics that should be assessed prior to counseling, and should specify the elements to be included in reporting the treatment utilized. Such a manual should do much to establish a common data language, and also should encourage research by practitioners who are presently reluctant to do research because of lack of sophistication.

**Recommendation 7.** *A priority should be given to the replication of counseling research studies in practical settings such as schools.* (Task Group #4)

There is a significant need for the replication of studies which have produced significant results, but are limited in their generality because of small

samples or non-representative sampling. There is also great need to move the results of research into practical application. Both the goals of accumulating knowledge and communicating it might best be served if large numbers of practitioners could be involved in replication studies. A representative group of schools that would be willing to become involved in the replication of studies that show promise for the improvement of school guidance and counseling should be identified. Large scale replication or field testing would not only assure us that the original study has practical significance, but should also give the practitioners involved in the study psychological ownership of the results. If such a procedure were initiated, the traditional fifty-year gap between research and application in the schools should be considerably shortened.

In order to implement such an idea, a board should be set up to screen research studies submitted for replication. The studies should be judged on the basis of the soundness of the design and the probable significance of the finding to improved practice in the schools. When a study is accepted for replication, the local school would be provided with complete directions for carrying out the study, would supply the necessary instruments, and would handle the data analysis centrally, usually with the collaboration of the initial investigator. While we are particularly interested in counseling research, the same pattern might be initiated in many other areas of educational research.

**Recommendation 8.** *Socially valued, external, objective measures should be emphasized in outcome research.* (Task Group #5)

A consensus was that "socially valued," external, objective (SVEO) measures (such as appropriate change in weight, grades or dating frequency) were preferred to the immediate criteria generated by the various counseling theories (such as congruence between self and ideal self, frequency of positive self-references). It is a value judgment, rather than a proven fact, that frequency of positive self-references is necessarily good for everyone.

The problems of using such intermediate criteria even when they have been found to be related to the "socially valued" measures are numerous. Perhaps the most difficult aspect is that of the logistics involved. It has been demonstrated that although A and C may be meaningfully related to B, they can, nevertheless, be unrelated to each other. Furthermore, even though significant correlations abound in the research involving intermediate criteria, casual relationships have seldom been adequately demonstrated.

What could be done to remedy this situation? Representatives of the various institutions that are conducting research on counseling could meet, and, along with experts in the field of psychological measurement, decide on the nature and method of measuring socially valued, external, objective (SVEO) criteria of counseling effectiveness. Decisions would be made without regard to par-



ticular theoretical persuasion of the participants. Certainly such a task would be difficult, but the advantages of a common basis for evaluation are extensive.

For example, it would be possible to set up independent evaluation teams that could measure counseling outcomes for all research projects of this sort in a particular area. The advantage of these teams in providing uncontaminated assessments of counselor and client behavior is obvious. It might be possible to reanalyze the data of certain previous studies. On-going or future research could be designed to include gathering SVEO criteria.

Agreement on criterion measures would make intensive studies of the characteristics and coping styles of subjects who are most successful in terms of the SVEO criteria more meaningful. It might be valuable to know what it is that "over-achievers" have that enables them to perform as they do. Taking this idea of examining that which is "good" a step further, it should be possible to pull together the pertinent existing knowledge to formulate a so-called "psychology of joy."

An additional benefit of switching to SVEO goals is the positive effect it could have on the attitudes of employers of counselors toward counselors. At present there is a great gap in communication between these two groups with predictable detrimental effects. Since school administrators are generally held accountable for the changes in students of the SVEO criterion sort, a move in this direction might be expected to ease friction in the area to a great degree.

It would be naive to assume that common criteria would solve all problems in counseling research. It could even create a few. For example, we can all recall individual instances in which socially valued goals were for some reason inappropriate. However, if numerous criteria are employed, discrepancies of this sort are apt to cancel each other out. If the majority of 10 or 15 culturally approved goals have improved for a client, it would be hard to believe that the client had not also basically improved.

**Recommendation 9.** *Theory should be accorded a different role in counseling research by shifting emphasis to effecting preselected changes in client behavior.* (Task Group #5)

It is interesting to contemplate what effect a shift in emphasis from justifying a theory to effecting a preselected change in behavior might have upon counseling research. For one thing, eclecticism might lose much of its tarnished image. The panaceistic use of a single approach for dealing with widely differing problems might have difficulty in surviving. Focus would shift to matching specific techniques to types of clients possessing particular problems. In training counselors, such things as diagnostics, knowing the relative effectiveness of various techniques for modifying specific behaviors, skill in employing these techniques, and appropriate referrals would all be apt to assume greater importance.

What might the place of theories in counseling be? Certainly theories will always be useful to the practitioner. They keep him from acting in contradictory ways which would only serve to confuse both the therapist and his client. They bolster counselor confidence which may have a positive influence on the therapeutic relationship. Undoubtedly, theories will continue to suggest new counseling behaviors. However, they should assume little if any importance in the eyes of an SVEO evaluation team. Success for counseling procedures will stand or fall on the basis of the previously determined SVEO criteria.

**Recommendation 10.** *A system should be developed for the classification and quantification of counselor behavior.* (Task Group #5)

Counseling researchers are faced with a second task which is only slightly less difficult than that of measuring the SVEO changes in client behavior. What is needed is a mutually acceptable system which permits the classification and quantification of counselor behavior. Again it would be necessary that such assessment be objective and externally administered. Step-wise regression analysis might be useful in selecting relevant counselor behaviors for each of the SVEO criteria.

Research into the relationships between the counseling approaches or techniques taught and counselor behaviors would be made more meaningful as a result of objective measures of this sort. One of the models suggested for investigating these relationships as well as other relevant questions included the following assessment levels:

- (1) Counselor educator status and behaviors
- (2) Counselor status and behaviors
- (3) Client status and behaviors
- (4) SVEO outcomes

Canonical analysis between the six possible assessment pairs might throw light on which levels are predicting SVEO outcomes. It would be highly desirable, for example, to discover that if initial status differences between counselor and/or client are controlled, then techniques taught are significantly related to the SVEO outcomes.

Not all problems in counseling research would be solved by common SVEO criteria. One that requires consideration involves predicting outcome from initial client status. The difficulty in this case is that client change in therapy is contaminated by the individual's general tendency to change even in the absence of therapy. It was suggested that linear regression be used to estimate the amount of expected change regardless of therapy. Approximate change due to therapy would be the difference between observed change (with therapy) and expected change (in the absence of therapy).



**Recommendation 11.** *The degree to which each counseling relationship is a unique or replicable experience needs investigation.* (Task Group #5)

There have been considerable differences in opinion concerning degree to which each counseling relationship is a unique or replicable experience. Analyses of variance could be designed which would permit comparisons of the amount of the total variance in client improvement, controlled by such factors as differences in approach employed, problem type, counselor status, and client status with the variation due to interaction between individual counselors and clients. Such an investigation could provide insights into which variables must be controlled to permit replication of the counseling process.

**Recommendation 12.** *Masters and doctoral candidates should be encouraged to replicate important studies in the field.* (Task Group #5)

There is obviously considerable research which needs to be done. And much of that already done should be replicated. How can this imposing task be accomplished?

Doctoral candidates should be encouraged to design interlocking studies for their dissertations which with others would combine to form a massive attack on some important question in counseling. A new trend might be started by requiring candidates for the Master's Degree to carry out replications of provocative studies in place of the "original research" usually required in a Master's Thesis or Project.

For example, there is a need to replicate, after appropriate revisions, college counseling studies in less advanced academic settings. Much of the resistance on the part of elementary or high school personnel to adopt techniques proven in college work may be due to their reluctance to believe that what will work in colleges will work in grades one through twelve.

Research ideas are numerous, but unless the bottleneck of obtaining access to the data is dealt with effectively, little is apt to be accomplished.

**Recommendation 13.** *A system needs to be developed for gathering data necessary for conducting counseling research.* (Task Group #5)

We need to set up a system for gathering data necessary for conducting counseling research. This might be done by selecting certain elementary, secondary, and college counselors who would be paid to participate. Participation would involve being tested and submitting tapes of interviews of pre-selected clients who had also been tested. Follow-up information concerning SVEO outcomes would be obtained.

## PART V

# CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH



## Refocus of Counseling Research

*John M. Whiteley*

A corollary of the test of relevance as proposed by Krumboltz is, "What should counseling researchers do differently because of the evaluation and refocus provided by the major papers, discussions and task group reports of the Invitational Conference on Research Problems in Counseling?" The purpose of this chapter is to present the major currents of conference thought regarding what counseling researchers should do differently in the future.

The question of the effectiveness of counseling with particular groups of clients cannot be answered with any degree of certainty at this point. A general assessment of counseling research in 1967 based on the work of the Conference, was consistent with Brayfield's (1964) comment that there is little to be impressed with in the results of counseling research to date.

An important reason for the low quality of counseling research was provided by Mosher in his parallel consideration of teaching research. Changing Mosher's wording from teacher to counselor provides a clear statement of our current difficulties. Counseling research "has been conducted with no, or inadequate, conceptualization of counselor (personality) or of its interaction with counseling. Many studies entail little more than 'shot gun empiricism.' A hypothetical example may stand for dozens of such studies: the MMPI is administered to a sample of undergraduate majors in education. Correlational analysis is done with ratings of the subjects' counseling. Findings, generally nonsignificant or inconclusive, are reported. What is not given is any (let alone plausible) idea as to why or how these measures of static psychological variables in the counselor might be expected to differentiate counseling effects."

Mosher goes on to comment about the recurring problem of the validity and the reliability of instruments which are used in rating teaching. An analo-



gous problem obviously exists in counseling. Mosher concluded this section of his paper by noting that such studies generally involve no control on the content—subject field of what is being taught, or on the kind of pupil being taught. He noted "it would have to be a very significant personality variable indeed to show consistent, significant effect for all content and for all pupils."

The parallel to counseling research is obvious. Clients are different. Counseling strategies, at least inferred from the statements of the theorists, are different. And outcome measures have been offered in great number. To expect without any control that one measure is going to provide the answers to all problems in counseling research is to commit the same error which Mosher has documented in teaching research.

Furthermore, to assume that counseling for five or ten sessions is going to change entire groups of people on some measure which may not be at all salient in the client's life—or at least not the only measure available for assessing change, or the lack thereof, for the client as a result of that counseling is to provide an expectation in which the past has proved quite fruitless.

It was to provide a careful evaluation of previous research strategies in order to develop more fruitful approaches that planning for the Conference was initiated and the major papers commissioned. The purpose of the Conference was to provide an evaluation and refocus of counseling research. Toward this goal the Conference looked systematically at problems in selecting clients, problems in selecting counselors, and problems in assessing counseling outcome. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to the contributions of the Conference in each of these areas, focusing specifically on what counseling researchers should do differently.

### The Selection of Clients

Blocher's paper underscores the necessity in the future for considering individual differences more carefully in the selection of clients for counseling. Kluckhohn and Murray (1948) made the statement that everyone is like everyone else, like some other people, and like no one else. Selection of clients is going to have to focus more and more on the individual aspects of each client. In Allport's (1961) terms, the approach must be more idiographic than nomothetic.

Blocher offers a three dimensional framework for capturing these client individual differences with: (1) a life stage or time dimension; (2) a life space or psychological dimension; (3) a life style or effectiveness of coping dimension.

The purpose of the life stage dimension is to allow the counselor to systematically evaluate his client in relation to the characteristic developmental

tasks of a particular stage. Counseling interventions may be based on the developmental stage a client is in at the time he seeks counseling. Blocher (1966) has developed a five stage dimension for conceptualizing developmental tasks. Whether one uses Blocher or Erikson (1950, 1959) or Havighurst (1953), the essential point remains that counseling intervention must be designed in response to a student's location on the developmental continuum.

The focus of the life space dimension is on the interaction between the client and his environment. The advantage of a framework such as Blocher provides is that the counselor can choose his intervention from a whole range of specifiable social groups, intellectual and educational characteristics, or social roles of the client. This dimension provides the counselor with information for use in determining the life area or areas at which this intervention can make its initial impact.

Blocher's final area is called the life style dimension, and refers to the coping and mastery patterns of clients. On the basis of an assessment of coping strategies, the counselor would work with the client to develop behavioral goals for counseling which are "idiosyncratic to the client's own particular life situation." The goals thus set primarily involve changes in coping behaviors "appropriate to various social role situations and their achievement represents in essence the mastery of key developmental tasks."

For Blocher, assessment on the life stage, life space, and life style dimensions can lead to a diagnosis which "permits the counselor to identify a set of age appropriate learning or developmental tasks, select a focus for intervention in the client's life space, and formulate a set of specific coping behaviors which can be established as outcomes, against which the success of treatment can be measured."

This is not the first diagnostic system which has been proposed by any means. There have been major systems by Bordin (1944), Pepinsky (1948), Byrne (1958), Callis (1965) and Robinson (1963). The importance of the Blocher system, as with the ones just enumerated above, is their delineation of clients' problems in a systematic fashion on which interventions can be based.

An impressive feature of the Blocher system is its comprehensiveness in scope, and its facilitation of simultaneous consideration of counselor strategy and outcome measures, all centering around a detailed focus on individual differences. It is this latter feature which makes it a particularly promising model to be followed in the future.

Sprinthall underlined the importance of considering individual differences in his paper by focusing on the importance of considering within group differences. Sprinthall proposed that research in counseling take a step further back from the outcome problem to examine more carefully the composition



within the group which has received counseling rather than confining considerations, as in the more classical research model, to a comparison of experimentals and controls. Under the classical design, counseling would have been expected to achieve a simultaneous change in a large group. Sprinthall argues that counseling will result in improvement for some, no change for others, and some clients will actually get worse. By shifting the analysis to prior client conditions and relevant pretreatment variables, it will be possible to identify the individual characteristics of those individuals who got worse, did not change, and changed on the basis of counseling. As with Blocher's work, Sprinthall's focus on within group differences marks a shift to greater individual analysis and away from the assumption of homogeneity in response to counseling which has long plagued and prevented advancements in counseling research.

Related to the systems evaluated above would be a simultaneous consideration of the client from three viewpoints: (1) psychological characteristics in terms of traits or types; (2) demographic social statistics and considerations of age, grade and intelligence; and (3) presenting problem. As the Editor of *Phi Delta Kappan* (1963) noted, the research on underachievement will "prove anything you care to prove." One influential reason that he could make such a generalization was the high degree of dissimilarity in clients who had been all categorized as underachievers. Further specifications of the nature of the clients being studied and on whom subsequent generalizations were being based would have gone a long way toward avoiding the current state of confusion in the literature on this topic.

By looking at the psychological characteristics of the client, we provide ourselves with a focus for systematically evaluating the client as seen by the counselor, whether his predilection is as diverse as psychoanalytic terminology or self theory. As part of initial diagnosis, a statement could be made about the client in dynamic terms as seen by the counselor as psychologist and diagnostician. By agreeing on the range of classification criteria to be used, psychological characteristics could be comparable from study to study rather than merely labels such as the misleading "underachiever."

By evaluating social statistics, we can consider such factors as socio-economic status, age, grade, and intelligence of the client. Again, by agreeing on the procedure for routinely reporting social statistics, studies could be made more comparable. With this information readily communicable, the problem encountered in the underachiever literature will be avoided.

The final method recommended achieving interstudy comparability related to evaluation of the presenting problem, or the difficulty as the client sees it. While the range of conceivable presenting problems is theoretically very large, there is evidence (Callis, 1965; Miller, 1963; Whiteley, 1967) that the range of the client's presenting problems can be specified with a moderate range of

alternatives, at least within educational settings where the bulk of counseling research is taking place.

In summary, the major Conference recommendation for change in client selection in the future is that counseling research designs become more sensitive to individual differences within and between clients, and simultaneously develop a system for communicating this individuality so that more sensitive comparisons and generalizations can be made utilizing the results of different studies.

### Selection of Counselors

A central thrust of the Conference was toward a reconceptualization of counselor selection from what the counselor *is* to what he can *produce*. Mosher noted in his introduction that the issues of who to select and how to train are inseparable from the conceptual issue of what effects the counselor is to produce. This marks a shift from the more traditional approach to counselor selection based on the trait model which worked in somewhat the following manner: if a person were considered trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, he was a fine, warm, genuine person and, therefore, a fine counselor. While the proposition might be true in a particular case, it was not necessarily so. In fact, the assumptions based on this method are certainly problematic; the resulting research work has been equivocal. The preoccupation with static traits by researchers is responsible in large part for Patterson's pessimistic conclusion that "the results of these (the prediction studies he had reviewed) prediction studies do not appear to be particularly promising. The studies reviewed here offer little in the way of validated selection procedures." He went on to note that "research on the selection of counseling students is surprisingly sparse." In other words, there is not much research on the topic right now. What little research that exists, does not appear to be particularly promising.

A direction for future research studies was proposed by Patterson in his call for longitudinal studies of predictive relationships. It has obviously proven much simpler for counseling researchers to do studies of students in training, and to terminate their research investigations at that point. Patterson indicates that while concurrent studies can make contributions, it is only from longitudinal studies that more promising information can be gained.

Another direction Patterson recommended was an exploration of the Truax (1963) and Truax and Carkhuff (1964a, 1964b, 1965a, 1965b) studies which demonstrated that four characteristics in counselors can be measured empirically and related to outcomes in clients following counseling. These conditions Patterson lists as: (1) empathy, "or the ability of the counselor to under-



stand sensitively and accurately the clients' inner experience;" (2) unconditional positive regard, or nonpossessive warmth and acceptance of the client; (3) self-congruence, or genuineness and transparency (authenticity) in the counseling relationship; and (4) concreteness or specificity of expression. Whether these dimensions can be applied to applicants prior to training is an empirical question of high priority in Patterson's estimation, and must be subject to longitudinal studies of the predictive relationship.

Both Bohn and Patterson stress the importance of the counseling relationship in functioning as an effective counselor. Patterson hypothesized that an important predictor of counselor effectiveness might well be the quality of human relationships an applicant would be able to establish and display prior to beginning training. While Patterson claimed to personally doubt this, since he believes that given appropriate training, the aspects of the therapeutic relation can be developed in counseling students, it is still possible in his estimation that those deemed best at the beginning would be best at the conclusion of training.

Mosher raised a similar concern with the effects of training in regard to his consideration of cognitive flexibility as a dimension in counselor effectiveness. Briefly stated, the flexible counselor would be expected to respond easily to both the content of what the client said in their communication and to client feelings. The counselor can "ask or answer questions as necessary and yet keep the counseling dialogue open for additional exploration by the client. Put another way, flexibility would imply a general avoidance of either excessive structuring in the counseling situation or the complete ambiguity of non-direction."

After developing the rationale for cognitive flexibility as dimensions of counseling and teaching effectiveness, Mosher raised the question of whether those students most flexible at the beginning would be most flexible at the end, or whether flexibility was a behavior which could be learned. This is very close to the research priority question established by Patterson, both having a common denominator of the impact of training on applicant conditions prior to beginning graduate training.

The impact of training and supervision as it relates to the selection process represents an area of recommended concentration for future researchers, instead of the attempt to find specific traits which will differentiate counselors from people in other occupations, or successful from unsuccessful counselors.

Robinson noted the difficulty in attempting to do research on counselor selection when it is not clear what is meant by counseling. In other words, it is critical for future counseling research to specify what is meant by counseling as part of the selection process. Robinson noted five difficulties which must be remedied in future selection work. First, our predictive measures in the past have been validated against contaminated criteria. Administrators, for example, rate counselors in terms of absence of trouble, clients rate counselors in terms

of their liking for them, and college professors rate in part on brightness and grades in other courses. Second, the kind of counseling which a particular researcher had in mind in doing his selection work was not necessarily always specified, such as client-centered therapy or vocational guidance. Third, a further source of problem of definition has been the pressure under which high school counselors have worked to mold pupil behavior and decisions to conform to parent plans and hopes. Fourth, the term counseling and therefore its inclusion in validation studies of instruments for counselor selection have been adopted by numerous people from fields completely unrelated to therapeutic counseling. This has meant that it was not always possible to tell from study to study what the counselor was expected to do. Finally, Robinson noted that the changing purposes of counseling along with the discovery of new approaches to counseling work have combined to provide a source of confusion. To remedy this, he recommended that studies in the future be defined in terms of different types of counselors rather than using the generic term alone.

He feels that different types of counselors will be necessary in the future; the predictive studies must be tied to these sub-groups of counselors. In other words, there would be a specific but different problem in predicting vocational counselors as distinct from therapeutic counselors, or counselors who would be experts in psychometric techniques.

Related to the Mosher recommendation to shift the focus from what the counselor is to what he is to produce was the stated need for the development of a system for reporting what the counselor *does*. Such a system would have to be general enough to rate a variety of counseling approaches (or for rating by research report writers of what they did in counseling as an adjunct for submission to journals), yet specific enough to allow both the replication of the study and the production of the same *effects* by other counselors on a specific group of clients.

A difficulty with terms like client-centered counseling when used in the context of the "clients received ten sessions of client-centered counseling" is that it leaves it up to the reader to project onto the term "client-centered counseling" what he particularly feels it to be. What is necessary is the development of a mutually agreed upon set of standards for reporting what constituted counseling.

This need for specification has been studied in the past in psychotherapy (Fiedler, 1950a, 1950b, 1951; Sundland and Barker, 1962; Wallach and Strupp, 1964; McNair and Lorr, 1964; Strupp, 1962). These studies have by and large tended to look at therapeutic similarities and differences. Analysis of them may provide useful suggestions for use in reporting what goes on in counseling.

Mosher discussed the analogous research on the problem of process specification in teaching. Interaction analysis as developed by Flanders (1964) was a method for quantifying selective qualitative aspects of verbal communication



between teacher and student. Such a method is obviously needed for counseling. In the Flanders system, seven categories of teacher talk are employed; (1) accepting student feelings; (2) giving praise; (3) accepting, clarifying, or making use of a student's ideas; (4) asking a question; (5) lecturing, giving facts or opinions; (6) giving directions; or (7) giving criticism.

Parallels to counseling could be drawn with categories such as accepting client feelings, giving support, clarifying, or making use of the content of a client's expression, providing interpretation of the relationship between different client behaviors. The purpose of this brief example is to be illustrative of possible approaches to the development of a specific system for communicating what goes on in counseling so that other counselors can employ the same method.

Such an approach is particularly important if it is found that specific counselor strategies are related to specific outcomes with specific kinds of clients. If a client who turns out to have a particular constellation of characteristics comes with a problem which in terms of empirical research is known to be solved with a form of client-centered counseling or behavioral counseling, the counselor simply must know in detail how he is to act in the counseling situation if he is to produce the results previously found to be associated with that approach.

He must know if he is to be an active therapist using interpretation, persuasion, clarification; or if he is to be focusing on un verbalized feelings, simple acceptance, or non-directive leads. It may be that he is to provide structure, approval, encouragement, or merely provide information or reassurance, and if these different possible approaches are specified as part of the research study as related to specific outcomes, then the counselor will know with more certainty how to approach a particular client.

Counseling researchers need to report the results of their studies differently. Windle (1952) did a comparative study of psychological tests in relation to response to psychotherapy. As part of his tabulation he listed tests as well as the counseling method employed. Regrettably, he was forced to have as a major entry the notation NG, which stood for "not given." Therapists simply were not spelling out the nature of their counseling intervention. This must be done in detail, and done in a way which is communicable to a wide variety of counselors.

### Assessment of Counseling Outcomes

There was substantial agreement within the Conference on the importance of the outcome problem to the future of counseling research. Patterson raised the question of whether a definition of counseling should not specify the

changes which would constitute the outcome criteria based on the counseling. He noted the difficulty inherent in such an attempt:

Goals of counseling have been variously defined, including such things as self-acceptance, self-understanding, insight, self-actualization, self-enhancement, adjustment, maturity, independence, responsibility, the solving of a specific problem or making a specific decision, learning how to solve problems or make decisions, and the elimination or the development of specific behaviors. There are those who feel that the goal or goals of counseling should be identical for all clients, while others, such as the behaviorists (Krumboltz, 1966a, 1966b, 1966c), believe that the goals should be specific for each client. The behaviorists see general goals as vague, indefinable, and unmeasurable. Some would see many of the specific goals of the behaviorists as trivial, partial, or limited in significance or meaning.

If Patterson has outlined correctly these specific problems for us, a future direction for counseling researchers would be an attempt to develop ways of taking the measurable and definable goals of the behaviorists, and relating them systematically to higher order but more general goals such as self-enhancement or maturity.

Krumboltz offered three general propositions for research in counseling which could provide a first step toward bridging the gap which Patterson and others identified. Krumboltz recommended that future research should have three characteristics. First, it should be designed to discover improved ways of helping clients. Second, the research should be designed so that different possible outcomes lead to different counseling practices. In this context, he presented the *test of relevance*, which asks what counselors would do differently if the results of the proposed projects came out one way or another. Thirdly, Krumboltz argues that counseling outcome criteria should be tailored to what the client and the counselor involved regard as desired behavioral changes.

The central focus of this outcome procedure would be observable behavior changes. By specifying goals with the client, they can assume major importance and meaning with him for his life. While the goals would be different for each client, they could well be higher order goals and be salient to the problems which brought the clients to counseling originally.

Krumboltz and Truax presented different opinions on the usefulness of gross criterion measures as counseling outcomes. Using grade point average as an example, Krumboltz said it seems like a desirable criterion measure "since almost everyone would like to have a higher GPA." He outlined three major disadvantages in using such a gross criterion measure. It is dependent upon the innumerable factors beyond the control of the treatment procedures when grades are assigned "on the curve." Any improvement in one person's



GPA means that someone else's GPA is probably going to decline. Furthermore, the time required for the experimental counseling treatment subtracts from the time available for regular instruction or study.

In order for counseling to show any effect, it must be shown to be more valuable than an equal amount of time spent with the teacher doing the work which contributes directly to the grade point average. Thus we are in effect expecting teachers to give higher grades to students who have been removed from their classes than for students who have remained in their classes and done the work assigned at the time it was expected. Under these circumstances, then, it should not be surprising to find that the so-called no-treatment control group might very well show the greatest improvement in grade point average.

Krumboltz goes on to criticize other gross criterion measures such as annual average income, rating by employer, and self-rating of job satisfaction, on the grounds that all are dependent upon such a multitude of other factors that we should not "be disappointed to find that the few hours we spend with a client fail to effect these measures years later." His basic point is that "progress will be faster if we avoid using criterion measures of such a gross nature."

Truax proposes multiple measures of outcome as the appropriate direction for counseling research to proceed. He feels that it would be difficult to argue against counseling benefit "if groups of clients show average improvement across a variety of socially-valued measures, and equally impossible to argue against the harm of counseling if groups of clients showed average deterioration on the same measures." He did not feel that grade point average, a socially meaningful measure, is an unrealistic measure on which to expect change with underachievers.

Truax goes on to say that if grade point average was found to be unaffected by counseling, then society might not wish to "pay" the price of a procedure that leads only to changes in self-concepts without changes in socially-valued behaviors. He pursues the same logic with earned income and work productivity, as they are essential ingredients of happiness for adult members of society, and, therefore, meaningful criteria for counseling. Citing several studies (Truax, 1966; Truax and Carkhuff, 1967), he stated that hard and fast socially-valued measures such as grade point average, and time out of the hospital are more likely to give positive findings in research than psychological test measures.

Another direction for future counseling research in regard to counseling outcome was provided by Truax in his distinction between client improvement based on multiple measures of outcome and client benefit. He defined client benefit as the difference between the expected improvement found in spontaneous remission research, and the actual improvement indicated by the

multiple measures of outcome. Researchers should ask the question "to what extent will effective counseling add to (or subtract from) the degree of improvement the given type of client would otherwise show?"

Referring to Truax and Carkhuff (1967), he indicated that some patients tend to show improvement while others show no change and still others show deterioration regardless of whether or not they receive any therapy. The random positive and negative experiences of daily living which effect change would be partialled out by the benefit measure approach, allowing prediction of which patients will profit from counseling.

The procedure by Truax in his research has been to compute the degree of expected improvement based on the multiple criteria predictors, average them, and subtract the "average predicted improvement" from the actual observed therapeutic improvement. This, Truax feels, is a relatively "clean measure of counseling benefit."

Another concern of Truax relevant to planning for the future was his feeling that the profession as a whole has considerably more information about effective counseling procedures than is currently being translated into the training of counselors, and therefore into the practice of counseling. He sees a central task to be the identification of the most effective procedures for translating research knowledge into effective training programs that demonstrably enhance the effectiveness of counseling in practice.

Wellman raised four problems which he felt to be of major importance in outcome research. Future efforts in the counseling research area will have to take cognizance of each of these problems if the results are going to be any more effective. Wellman cited Patterson's (1966) statement that "a major defect in most studies of counseling or psychotherapy has been lack of control or specification of the independent or treatment variable, that is, the nature of the counseling or psychotherapy."

Wellman indicated that the assumption that counseling is counseling regardless of where it is found or by whom it is performed, is not a sufficient basis for meaningful outcome research. It is obvious that future research should specify in greater detail the nature of the counseling intervention. It is not possible to study outcome unless the crucial independent variables are meticulously defined and described.

Wellman cited Kiesler's (1966) presentation of issues in patient variability as a second major area for research investigation. Unless account is taken of patient variability, it is not possible to obtain the evidence needed for "meaningful conclusions concerning the effectiveness of therapy for different types of patients."

Kiesler (1966) noted that the assumption of homogeneity among patients is untenable since "heterogeneity can be demonstrated using practically any set of characteristics describing the background, personality, or abilities of patients." Wellman reasons that while client and situational variables are in



essence independent variables not readily amenable to the experimental manipulation, they are describable, and if they are sufficiently described from study to study, "controls can be imposed through statistical and sampling procedures that will permit generalizations that are not possible from a randomly selected sample."

A third problem which Wellman raised was the importance of the specification of appropriate, adequate, and manageable criteria for outcome research. This topic was the subject at one time or another of every task group, and permeated the discussions of the Conference. Volsky *et al.* (1965) were quoted by Wellman to the effect that "more past failures to determine, unequivocally the effects of therapy can be traced to the lack of agreement on desired outcomes than to any other cause . . . unless the intended objectives of treatment are made explicit and the counselors at least conditionally accept these objectives, there is little point in doing an outcome study at all" (p. 14). Wellman raised again the relative merits of internal global type criteria as opposed to external behaviors which can be observed and reported more objectively.

The fourth problem Wellman raised concerned the development of "an adequate research paradigm within the framework of the existing theory." Quoting Kiesler (1966), Wellman drew the conclusion that at present no one theory is "sufficiently comprehensive to structure acceptable outcome research due to inadequacies in specifying both the dependent and independent variables, as well as methodological consideration of confounding variables within the research area." Wellman stressed the importance of relating theory to research practice. This argument was seconded by Cottle, who criticized current research for being piecemeal, lacking a necessary interrelation of theory and practice.

Wellman's final point in this connection was that methodological problems of research design, instrumentation, controls, sampling, and analysis have received major attention where focus should have been on the four major problems he discussed above. Had they been solved, methodological considerations would not have been such an issue. Wellman feels that adequate methodology will emerge as a "requisite part of the total structure" when the "relationships and interactions of these (four) variables have been built into a comprehensive paradigm . . ."

Where Wellman approached the problem from the view point of theory, Magoon provided an alternate model, the reverse of the Wellman approach. The Magoon model says:

Why not concentrate on (a) observable, specifiable behaviors, and (b) for those which have served as outcomes, goals or objectives in counseling of particular clients, concentrate on the criterion measure-

ment task *first*; the particular counselor behaviors suggested for bringing about such changes *second*; and the conceptualization of what emerges *third and last*.

What Magoon is proposing as a first step has been attempted by Krumboltz (1966a) and Pascal and Zak (1956).

Krumboltz specified a range of outcome measures could be used as observable behavior change. The following are illustrative behavioral goals concerned with altering maladaptive behavior:

- Increasing socially assertive responses
- Decreasing socially assertive responses
- Increasing social skills necessary in meeting new people
- Decreasing fear responses to examinations
- Increasing ability to concentrate for longer periods of time on school work
- Decreasing the frequency of stealing (p. 155)

Pascal and Zak (1956) took a somewhat different approach in that they made specific predictions for each client and specified *before* counseling began what an outcome measure would be in terms of their clients' problems. They then evaluated the effectiveness or lack of effectiveness of counseling by whether their goal was achieved and whether what was achieved was in the predicted direction. Several examples of the Pascal and Zak approach are as follows:

<i>File No.</i>	<i>Behavior to be changed</i>	<i>Change</i>
380	1. Acute alcoholic episode where he was continually drunk 2. Unable to work	1. Sobered up 2. Working steadily for 2 years
895	1. Indecision over impending engagement 2. Dreams and nightmares 3. Had broken engagements in past and avoided becoming serious with boys	1. Became engaged 2. These ceased 3. Got married
110	1. Attacks of nausea and depression 2. Left school and was indecisive about future	1. Ceased for about 3½ years 2. Returned to medical school (pp. 167, 169, 170)



Again, what is important about this method is the specification of what was to be changed—and also what the criterion for change (outcome assessment) was to be in terms of observable human action.

A clear recommendation from the Conference was that the approaches following both the Wellman and the Magoon-Krumboltz models be pursued at this point. With both approaches, an important direction for counseling researchers in the future is to provide more specifiable outcome measures, including operational steps for their implementation. Related to this is the problem of taking the developed observable measures of changed human action and relating them to broader criterion for change such as those mentioned by Patterson and Truax.

### Concluding Observations

The bulk of this chapter has been devoted to a consideration of what counseling researchers should do differently as a result of the evaluation and refocus provided by the Invitational Conference on Research Problems in Counseling. The different directions which should be pursued in the selection of clients, the selection of counselors, and the assessment of counseling outcomes were considered in turn.

Perhaps the most important conclusion of the Conference was that research designs should allow a simultaneous consideration of client characteristics which seem to be associated with specific measures of outcome when a given counselor strategy is employed. By definition, research so constructed would meet Krumboltz's test of relevance in that counselors would behave differently depending on the findings of the research.

The advantage of a simultaneous consideration of client characteristics, counseling strategy, and outcome measures is that research so conceptualized will ultimately result in an experience table which can facilitate the selection of the potentially most successful counselor strategy. The practicing counselor can decide *before* counseling begins, on the basis of the characteristics of his client, and the client's stated goals for counseling, what approach the counselor should use and the probability for success.

If this comprehensive experience table is to be ultimately developed, it will be necessary for professional journals, and other means of communication within the profession, to adopt a practice of reporting in greater detail the research methodology employed, the characteristics of the clients and the interventions, and the outcome measures.

In the previous section on client characteristics, several possible systems for conceptualizing individual differences in clients were elaborated. To facilitate research retrieval and communication, the details of each of these methods

for reflecting individual differences could be given a code. This code would allow a ready comparison from study to study on the basis of client characteristics.

The second feature in this comparison structure would be an evaluation of what the counselor actually *did* in the counseling intervention. By shifting the focus to observable counselor behavior, and by specifying those aspects of a counseling intervention which can be described in detail, it will be possible to develop a code for counseling strategies as well.

As outlined in the section on counselors, such a taxonomy of counselor strategies should include both aspects of the structure of the counseling such as frequency, duration, and length of session, as well as aspects of the counselor's verbal and non-verbal behavior within the counseling session. Examples of this would be the use of reflection of feeling, interpretation, or restructuring.

Along with the codes for clients and counselor strategies, the nature of the outcome measure in terms of observable human change and the method by which such measures were translated into meaningful criteria become the final aspect of counseling research which needs to be coded. The code, when linked simultaneously to client characteristics and counselor strategy, may assist in bridging the gap between the specific goals of counseling presented by those with a behavioral orientation, and those of a more non-directive persuasion which tend to be more global in nature. The emphasis in any case will be on the relation of the outcome measure to the total design.

The codes will provide a method for systematically comparing counseling studies, as well as developing a set of relatively standard methods for describing clients, counseling strategies, and outcome measures. The common language communicated through the code can prove an important addition to reporting in the professional literature.

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*Appendix*



## *Supplement*

The Central Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory and Washington University were hosts for an Invitational Conference on Research Problems in Counseling on January 10, 11, and 12, 1967. Forty-five national and regional leaders in counseling and counseling research were invited to Bromwoods, the Washington University Conference Center, to evaluate and refocus the research literature on three problems of critical importance to the profession: selection of clients, selection of counselors, and assessment of the counseling outcome.

The conference convened because there is a lack of sufficient theoretical and empirical knowledge about counseling. This knowledge is vitally needed and must come from research. Yet, Brayfield (1964) in a recent review found little that was impressive in counseling research.

To call for more research clearly was not the answer. Research which is not well formulated is more than worthless since it becomes deceptive as well. A prior step was necessary: the formulation of an explicit conceptual and research framework including a reexamination of the theoretical and operational ideas developed with regard to counseling.

### *Significance to the Profession*

Therefore, the efforts of the conference were directed to three substantive areas of research in counseling which are crucial to the advancement of the profession. In the following sections, the rationale for each area of the conference will be developed.

#### *A. Research on Counselor Effectiveness and Characteristics of the Counselor*

A traditional area for counseling research has been the study of counselor characteristics or traits. The assumptions are explicit. Personality traits such as sociability or friendliness are conceptualized as relevant indicators or appropriate dimensions within the personality organization of the individual counselor. There are even a few graduate training facilities which use some of these so-called trait measurements as part of their selection procedures. The assumptions of this approach are at least problematic and certainly the research evidence is equivocal. Cottle (1953), has reviewed the work of Bailey (1940), Baas (1950), Brown (1946), DiMichael (1949), Wrenn (1952), and others. He notes that, "In the



light of the above data it seems obvious that most of the attempts to evaluate the personal characteristics of counselors are sporadic and unrelated" (1953, p. 450).

There is little in this research that attempts to relate a specific rationale for particular traits to a theory of counseling except in the most general sense, for example, if counseling includes working with people then the counselor ought to score high on a trait of "liking" people. Cox (1945) attempted research along similar lines in her examination of counselor characteristics through a case study technique. She lists 24 traits ranging from fairness and sincerity to health and a sense of mission. Other descriptions of the counselor as a person range from qualities such as "belief in each individual" and "commitment to individual human values" (ASCA 1964) to the counselor "as a woman" (Farson, 1954).

It seems rather fruitless to continue this line of inquiry. Certain human qualities may indeed be relevant to counseling. The extent to which these qualities are really important and differentiating, however, remains an open and certainly an empirical question.

#### *B. Characteristics of the Client: Implications for Selection and Method of Treatment*

It is becoming increasingly important to be able to predict before counseling begins who may respond to short-term treatment and who may need long-term counseling or other forms of professional assistance. Yet, research has been directed away from this critical area.

It is time to consider the value of a careful assessment and appraisal of each client in advance of counseling. In fact, it is also time to consider which method of treatment may be more appropriate in a particular series of cases. If we are to stop proliferating the number of counseling research studies with indeterminant results, we need an array of procedures for particular client concerns. Research is needed which examines and appraises the array of methods used to effect change; for example, individual counseling( group procedures, social modeling, the systematic presentation of information (teaching) and even reinforcement procedures.

Tiedeman (1960) notes that it may be important for the counselor to specify for each client what he can and cannot accomplish. The counseling profession is in need of a basis not only for such decisions but also for the selection of most appropriate counseling procedures for the individual client.

#### *C. Assessment of Outcome: Evaluation of the Interaction of Client and Counselor*

Most counseling research projects have followed a classic research design. After treatment, a counseled group is compared to a control group on a series of variables. There are obvious problems of finding (1) A "real" control group (similar in all respects to the experimental group save counseling) and (2) "genuine" criteria which measure expected outcome (change in attitudes, conceptions of self, grades in school, or other relevant variables). While much research has focused on these substantive problems, research which demonstrates a positive effect for counseling remains the exception rather than the rule. Eysenck's (1952) criticism

has still not been effectively muted, nor, more recently, Astin's (1961) warning concerning the reification of counseling as functionally autonomous from reality.

Bergin (1963), in writing for a symposium of effects of psychotherapy, chose the title "Negative Results Revisited." In this article, a rather striking conclusion was presented; there was almost no research about the differences *within* a group of counselees. When counseled groups were examined, it was shown that some clients improved substantially while others actually deteriorated—that treatment "made" clients worse. A more adequate starting point for research in counseling may be a close examination of differences within groups of counselees.

#### *Format for the Conference:*

The conference was in session for three days, with one working day being devoted to each of the three topics. Two major papers were prepared on each topic by national leaders in research on their chosen area. The purpose of the major papers was to provide a provocative and searching structure for the topics in counseling research under consideration. They were intended to suggest new frames of reference for research, and to raise special issues and problems in methodology.

Immediately following each of the major papers were critiques by two distinguished discussants. The purpose of the discussants was to provide a systematic, scholarly analysis of the major papers. The discussants could also choose, as part of their critique, to extend further certain new avenues for research as suggested in the major papers.

Following the major papers and discussants, the conference participants formed six task groups to make specific recommendations for future research. Their charge was to identify:

- (1) the salient issues raised by the two speakers and the four discussants on a topic;
- (2) the major points, if any, which the task group members believe were not raised.

The final and most important charge of each task group was to provide specific recommendations for both types of research and concrete research projects which should be conducted as a result of the reevaluation and refocus provided by the papers, discussions, and preliminary task group work.

At the conclusion of the conference, one member from each task group was requested to draft a comprehensive task group report. Each report was requested to include (1) the aspects of the papers and discussions deemed most salient and important, (2) an enumeration of areas not covered by the papers and discussions which your task group believes are critical to the topic, and (3) a list of specific research projects which should be undertaken to translate the reevaluation and refocus of the literature into empirical terms.



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stand sensitively and accurately the clients' inner experience;" (2) unconditional positive regard, or nonpossessive warmth and acceptance of the client; (3) self-congruence, or genuineness and transparency (authenticity) in the counseling relationship; and (4) concreteness or specificity of expression. Whether these dimensions can be applied to applicants prior to training is an empirical question of high priority in Patterson's estimation, and must be subject to longitudinal studies of the predictive relationship.

Both Bohn and Patterson stress the importance of the counseling relationship in functioning as an effective counselor. Patterson hypothesized that an important predictor of counselor effectiveness might well be the quality of human relationships an applicant would be able to establish and display prior to beginning training. While Patterson claimed to personally doubt this, since he believes that given appropriate training, the aspects of the therapeutic relationship can be developed in counseling students, it is still possible in his estimation that those deemed best at the beginning would be best at the conclusion of training.

Mosher raised a similar concern with the effects of training in regard to his consideration of cognitive flexibility as a dimension in counselor effectiveness. Briefly stated, the flexible counselor would be expected to respond easily to both the content of what the client said in their communication and to client feelings. The counselor can "ask or answer questions as necessary and yet keep the counseling dialogue open for additional exploration by the client. Put another way, flexibility would imply a general avoidance of either excessive structuring in the counseling situation or the complete ambiguity of non-direction."

After developing the rationale for cognitive flexibility as dimensions of counseling and teaching effectiveness, Mosher raised the question of whether those students most flexible at the beginning would be most flexible at the end, or whether flexibility was a behavior which could be learned. This is very close to the research priority question established by Patterson, both having a common denominator of the impact of training on applicant conditions prior to beginning graduate training.

The impact of training and supervision as it relates to the selection process represents an area of recommended concentration for future researchers, instead of the attempt to find specific traits which will differentiate counselors from people in other occupations, or successful from unsuccessful counselors.

Robinson noted the difficulty in attempting to do research on counselor selection when it is not clear what is meant by counseling. In other words, it is critical for future counseling research to specify what is meant by counseling as part of the selection process. Robinson noted five difficulties which must be remedied in future selection work. First, our predictive measures in the past have been validated against contaminated criteria. Administrators, for example, rate counselors in terms of absence of trouble, clients rate counselors in terms

of their liking for them, and college professors rate in part on brightness and grades in other courses. Second, the kind of counseling which a particular researcher had in mind in doing his selection work was not necessarily always specified, such as client-centered therapy or vocational guidance. Third, a further source of problem of definition has been the pressure under which high school counselors have worked to mold pupil behavior and decisions to conform to parent plans and hopes. Fourth, the term counseling and therefore its inclusion in validation studies of instruments for counselor selection have been adopted by numerous people from fields completely unrelated to therapeutic counseling. This has meant that it was not always possible to tell from study to study what the counselor was expected to do. Finally, Robinson noted that the changing purposes of counseling along with the discovery of new approaches to counseling work have combined to provide a source of confusion. To remedy this, he recommended that studies in the future be defined in terms of different types of counselors rather than using the generic term alone.

He feels that different types of counselors will be necessary in the future; the predictive studies must be tied to these sub-groups of counselors. In other words, there would be a specific but different problem in predicting vocational counselors as distinct from therapeutic counselors, or counselors who would be experts in psychometric techniques.

Related to the Mosher recommendation to shift the focus from what the counselor is to what he is to produce was the stated need for the development of a system for reporting what the counselor *does*. Such a system would have to be general enough to rate a variety of counseling approaches (or for rating by research report writers of what they did in counseling as an adjunct for submission to journals), yet specific enough to allow both the replication of the study and the production of the same *effects* by other counselors on a specific group of clients.

A difficulty with terms like client-centered counseling when used in the context of the "clients received ten sessions of client-centered counseling" is that it leaves it up to the reader to project onto the term "client-centered counseling" what he particularly feels it to be. What is necessary is the development of a mutually agreed upon set of standards for reporting what constituted counseling.

This need for specification has been studied in the past in psychotherapy (Fiedler, 1950a, 1950b, 1951; Sundland and Barker, 1962; Wallach and Strupp, 1964; McNair and Lorr, 1964; Strupp, 1962). These studies have by and large tended to look at therapeutic similarities and differences. Analysis of them may provide useful suggestions for use in reporting what goes on in counseling.

Mosher discussed the analogous research on the problem of process specification in teaching. Interaction analysis as developed by Flanders (1964) was a method for quantifying selective qualitative aspects of verbal communication



between teacher and student. Such a method is obviously needed for counseling. In the Flanders system, seven categories of teacher talk are employed; (1) accepting student feelings; (2) giving praise; (3) accepting, clarifying, or making use of a student's ideas; (4) asking a question; (5) lecturing, giving facts or opinions; (6) giving directions; or (7) giving criticism.

Parallels to counseling could be drawn with categories such as accepting client feelings, giving support, clarifying, or making use of the content of a client's expression, providing interpretation of the relationship between different client behaviors. The purpose of this brief example is to be illustrative of possible approaches to the development of a specific system for communicating what goes on in counseling so that other counselors can employ the same method.

Such an approach is particularly important if it is found that specific counselor strategies are related to specific outcomes with specific kinds of clients. If a client who turns out to have a particular constellation of characteristics comes with a problem which in terms of empirical research is known to be solved with a form of client-centered counseling or behavioral counseling, the counselor simply must know in detail how he is to act in the counseling situation if he is to produce the results previously found to be associated with that approach.

He must know if he is to be an active therapist using interpretation, persuasion, clarification; or if he is to be focusing on un verbalized feelings, simple acceptance, or non-directive leads. It may be that he is to provide structure, approval, encouragement, or merely provide information or reassurance, and if these different possible approaches are specified as part of the research study as related to specific outcomes, then the counselor will know with more certainty how to approach a particular client.

Counseling researchers need to report the results of their studies differently. Windle (1952) did a comparative study of psychological tests in relation to response to psychotherapy. As part of his tabulation he listed tests as well as the counseling method employed. Regrettably, he was forced to have as a major entry the notation NG, which stood for "not given." Therapists simply were not spelling out the nature of their counseling intervention. This must be done in detail, and done in a way which is communicable to a wide variety of counselors.

### Assessment of Counseling Outcomes

There was substantial agreement within the Conference on the importance of the outcome problem to the future of counseling research. Patterson raised the question of whether a definition of counseling should not specify the

changes which would constitute the outcome criteria based on the counseling. He noted the difficulty inherent in such an attempt:

Goals of counseling have been variously defined, including such things as self-acceptance, self-understanding, insight, self-actualization, self-enhancement, adjustment, maturity, independence, responsibility, the solving of a specific problem or making a specific decision, learning how to solve problems or make decisions, and the elimination or the development of specific behaviors. There are those who feel that the goal or goals of counseling should be identical for all clients, while others, such as the behaviorists (Krumboltz, 1966a, 1966b, 1966c), believe that the goals should be specific for each client. The behaviorists see general goals as vague, indefinable, and unmeasurable. Some would see many of the specific goals of the behaviorists as trivial, partial, or limited in significance or meaning.

If Patterson has outlined correctly these specific problems for us, a future direction for counseling researchers would be an attempt to develop ways of taking the measurable and definable goals of the behaviorists, and relating them systematically to higher order but more general goals such as self-enhancement or maturity.

Krumboltz offered three general propositions for research in counseling which could provide a first step toward bridging the gap which Patterson and others identified. Krumboltz recommended that future research should have three characteristics. First, it should be designed to discover improved ways of helping clients. Second, the research should be designed so that different possible outcomes lead to different counseling practices. In this context, he presented the *test of relevance*, which asks what counselors would do differently if the results of the proposed projects came out one way or another. Thirdly, Krumboltz argues that counseling outcome criteria should be tailored to what the client and the counselor involved regard as desired behavioral changes.

The central focus of this outcome procedure would be observable behavior changes. By specifying goals with the client, they can assume major importance and meaning with him for his life. While the goals would be different for each client, they could well be higher order goals and be salient to the problems which brought the clients to counseling originally.

Krumboltz and Truax presented different opinions on the usefulness of gross criterion measures as counseling outcomes. Using grade point average as an example, Krumboltz said it seems like a desirable criterion measure "since almost everyone would like to have a higher GPA." He outlined three major disadvantages in using such a gross criterion measure. It is dependent upon the innumerable factors beyond the control of the treatment procedures when grades are assigned "on the curve." Any improvement in one person's



GPA means that someone else's GPA is probably going to decline. Furthermore, the time required for the experimental counseling treatment subtracts from the time available for regular instruction or study.

In order for counseling to show any effect, it must be shown to be more valuable than an equal amount of time spent with the teacher doing the work which contributes directly to the grade point average. Thus we are in effect expecting teachers to give higher grades to students who have been removed from their classes than for students who have remained in their classes and done the work assigned at the time it was expected. Under these circumstances, then, it should not be surprising to find that the so-called no-treatment control group might very well show the greatest improvement in grade point average.

Krumboltz goes on to criticize other gross criterion measures such as annual average income, rating by employer, and self-rating of job satisfaction, on the grounds that all are dependent upon such a multitude of other factors that we should not "be disappointed to find that the few hours we spend with a client fail to effect these measures years later." His basic point is that "progress will be faster if we avoid using criterion measures of such a gross nature."

Truax proposes multiple measures of outcome as the appropriate direction for counseling research to proceed. He feels that it would be difficult to argue against counseling benefit "if groups of clients show average improvement across a variety of socially-valued measures, and equally impossible to argue against the harm of counseling if groups of clients showed average deterioration on the same measures." He did not feel that grade point average, a socially meaningful measure, is an unrealistic measure on which to expect change with underachievers.

Truax goes on to say that if grade point average was found to be unaffected by counseling, then society might not wish to "pay" the price of a procedure that leads only to changes in self-concepts without changes in socially-valued behaviors. He pursues the same logic with earned income and work productivity, as they are essential ingredients of happiness for adult members of society, and, therefore, meaningful criteria for counseling. Citing several studies (Truax, 1966; Truax and Carkhuff, 1967), he stated that hard and fast socially-valued measures such as grade point average, and time out of the hospital are more likely to give positive findings in research than psychological test measures.

Another direction for future counseling research in regard to counseling outcome was provided by Truax in his distinction between client improvement based on multiple measures of outcome and client benefit. He defined client benefit as the difference between the expected improvement found in spontaneous remission research, and the actual improvement indicated by the

multiple measures of outcome. Researchers should ask the question "to what extent will effective counseling add to (or subtract from) the degree of improvement the given type of client would otherwise show?"

Referring to Truax and Carkhuff (1967), he indicated that some patients tend to show improvement while others show no change and still others show deterioration regardless of whether or not they receive any therapy. The random positive and negative experiences of daily living which effect change would be partialled out by the benefit measure approach, allowing prediction of which patients will profit from counseling.

The procedure by Truax in his research has been to compute the degree of expected improvement based on the multiple criteria predictors, average them, and subtract the "average predicted improvement" from the actual observed therapeutic improvement. This, Truax feels, is a relatively "clean measure of counseling benefit."

Another concern of Truax relevant to planning for the future was his feeling that the profession as a whole has considerably more information about effective counseling procedures than is currently being translated into the training of counselors, and therefore into the practice of counseling. He sees a central task to be the identification of the most effective procedures for translating research knowledge into effective training programs that demonstrably enhance the effectiveness of counseling in practice.

Wellman raised four problems which he felt to be of major importance in outcome research. Future efforts in the counseling research area will have to take cognizance of each of these problems if the results are going to be any more effective. Wellman cited Patterson's (1966) statement that "a major defect in most studies of counseling or psychotherapy has been lack of control or specification of the independent or treatment variable, that is, the nature of the counseling or psychotherapy."

Wellman indicated that the assumption that counseling is counseling regardless of where it is found or by whom it is performed, is not a sufficient basis for meaningful outcome research. It is obvious that future research should specify in greater detail the nature of the counseling intervention. It is not possible to study outcome unless the crucial independent variables are meticulously defined and described.

Wellman cited Kiesler's (1966) presentation of issues in patient variability as a second major area for research investigation. Unless account is taken of patient variability, it is not possible to obtain the evidence needed for "meaningful conclusions concerning the effectiveness of therapy for different types of patients."

Kiesler (1966) noted that the assumption of homogeneity among patients is untenable since "heterogeneity can be demonstrated using practically any set of characteristics describing the background, personality, or abilities of patients." Wellman reasons that while client and situational variables are in



essence independent variables not readily amenable to the experimental manipulation, they are describable, and if they are sufficiently described from study to study, "controls can be imposed through statistical and sampling procedures that will permit generalizations that are not possible from a randomly selected sample."

A third problem which Wellman raised was the importance of the specification of appropriate, adequate, and manageable criteria for outcome research. This topic was the subject at one time or another of every task group, and permeated the discussions of the Conference. Volsky *et al.* (1965) were quoted by Wellman to the effect that "more past failures to determine, unequivocally the effects of therapy can be traced to the lack of agreement on desired outcomes than to any other cause . . . unless the intended objectives of treatment are made explicit and the counselors at least conditionally accept these objectives, there is little point in doing an outcome study at all" (p. 14). Wellman raised again the relative merits of internal global type criteria as opposed to external behaviors which can be observed and reported more objectively.

The fourth problem Wellman raised concerned the development of "an adequate research paradigm within the framework of the existing theory." Quoting Kiesler (1966), Wellman drew the conclusion that at present no one theory is "sufficiently comprehensive to structure acceptable outcome research due to inadequacies in specifying both the dependent and independent variables, as well as methodological consideration of confounding variables within the research area." Wellman stressed the importance of relating theory to research practice. This argument was seconded by Cottle, who criticized current research for being piecemeal, lacking a necessary interrelation of theory and practice.

Wellman's final point in this connection was that methodological problems of research design, instrumentation, controls, sampling, and analysis have received major attention where focus should have been on the four major problems he discussed above. Had they been solved, methodological considerations would not have been such an issue. Wellman feels that adequate methodology will emerge as a "requisite part of the total structure" when the "relationships and interactions of these (four) variables have been built into a comprehensive paradigm . . ."

Where Wellman approached the problem from the view point of theory, Magoon provided an alternate model, the reverse of the Wellman approach. The Magoon model says:

Why not concentrate on (a) observable, specifiable behaviors, and (b) for those which have served as outcomes, goals or objectives in counseling of particular clients, concentrate on the criterion measure-

ment task *first*; the particular counselor behaviors suggested for bringing about such changes *second*; and the conceptualization of what emerges *third and last*.

What Magoon is proposing as a first step has been attempted by Krumboltz (1966a) and Pascal and Zak (1956).

Krumboltz specified a range of outcome measures could be used as observable behavior change. The following are illustrative behavioral goals concerned with altering maladaptive behavior:

- Increasing socially assertive responses
- Decreasing socially assertive responses
- Increasing social skills necessary in meeting new people
- Decreasing fear responses to examinations
- Increasing ability to concentrate for longer periods of time on school work
- Decreasing the frequency of stealing (p. 155)

Pascal and Zak (1956) took a somewhat different approach in that they made specific predictions for each client and specified *before* counseling began what an outcome measure would be in terms of their clients' problems. They then evaluated the effectiveness or lack of effectiveness of counseling by whether their goal was achieved and whether what was achieved was in the predicted direction. Several examples of the Pascal and Zak approach are as follows:

<i>File No.</i>	<i>Behavior to be changed</i>	<i>Change</i>
380	1. Acute alcoholic episode where he was continually drunk 2. Unable to work	1. Sobered up 2. Working steadily for 2 years
895	1. Indecision over impending engagement 2. Dreams and nightmares 3. Had broken engagements in past and avoided becoming serious with boys	1. Became engaged 2. These ceased 3. Got married
110	1. Attacks of nausea and depression 2. Left school and was indecisive about future	1. Ceased for about 3½ years 2. Returned to medical school (pp. 167, 169, 170)



Again, what is important about this method is the specification of what was to be changed—and also what the criterion for change (outcome assessment) was to be in terms of observable human action.

A clear recommendation from the Conference was that the approaches following both the Wellman and the Magoon-Krumboltz models be pursued at this point. With both approaches, an important direction for counseling researchers in the future is to provide more specifiable outcome measures, including operational steps for their implementation. Related to this is the problem of taking the developed observable measures of changed human action and relating them to broader criterion for change such as those mentioned by Patterson and Truax.

### Concluding Observations

The bulk of this chapter has been devoted to a consideration of what counseling researchers should do differently as a result of the evaluation and refocus provided by the Invitational Conference on Research Problems in Counseling. The different directions which should be pursued in the selection of clients, the selection of counselors, and the assessment of counseling outcomes were considered in turn.

Perhaps the most important conclusion of the Conference was that research designs should allow a simultaneous consideration of client characteristics which seem to be associated with specific measures of outcome when a given counselor strategy is employed. By definition, research so constructed would meet Krumboltz's test of relevance in that counselors would behave differently depending on the findings of the research.

The advantage of a simultaneous consideration of client characteristics, counseling strategy, and outcome measures is that research so conceptualized will ultimately result in an experience table which can facilitate the selection of the potentially most successful counselor strategy. The practicing counselor can decide *before* counseling begins, on the basis of the characteristics of his client, and the client's stated goals for counseling, what approach the counselor should use and the probability for success.

If this comprehensive experience table is to be ultimately developed, it will be necessary for professional journals, and other means of communication within the profession, to adopt a practice of reporting in greater detail the research methodology employed, the characteristics of the clients and the interventions, and the outcome measures.

In the previous section on client characteristics, several possible systems for conceptualizing individual differences in clients were elaborated. To facilitate research retrieval and communication, the details of each of these methods

for reflecting individual differences could be given a code. This code would allow a ready comparison from study to study on the basis of client characteristics.

The second feature in this comparison structure would be an evaluation of what the counselor actually *did* in the counseling intervention. By shifting the focus to observable counselor behavior, and by specifying those aspects of a counseling intervention which can be described in detail, it will be possible to develop a code for counseling strategies as well.

As outlined in the section on counselors, such a taxonomy of counselor strategies should include both aspects of the structure of the counseling such as frequency, duration, and length of session, as well as aspects of the counselor's verbal and non-verbal behavior within the counseling session. Examples of this would be the use of reflection of feeling, interpretation, or restructuring.

Along with the codes for clients and counselor strategies, the nature of the outcome measure in terms of observable human change and the method by which such measures were translated into meaningful criteria become the final aspect of counseling research which needs to be coded. The code, when linked simultaneously to client characteristics and counselor strategy, may assist in bridging the gap between the specific goals of counseling presented by those with a behavioral orientation, and those of a more non-directive persuasion which tend to be more global in nature. The emphasis in any case will be on the relation of the outcome measure to the total design.

The codes will provide a method for systematically comparing counseling studies, as well as developing a set of relatively standard methods for describing clients, counseling strategies, and outcome measures. The common language communicated through the code can prove an important addition to reporting in the professional literature.

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*Appendix*



## *Supplement*

The Central Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory and Washington University were hosts for an Invitational Conference on Research Problems in Counseling on January 10, 11, and 12, 1967. Forty-five national and regional leaders in counseling and counseling research were invited to Bromwoods, the Washington University Conference Center, to evaluate and refocus the research literature on three problems of critical importance to the profession: selection of clients, selection of counselors, and assessment of the counseling outcome.

The conference convened because there is a lack of sufficient theoretical and empirical knowledge about counseling. This knowledge is vitally needed and must come from research. Yet, Brayfield (1964) in a recent review found little that was impressive in counseling research.

To call for more research clearly was not the answer. Research which is not well formulated is more than worthless since it becomes deceptive as well. A prior step was necessary: the formulation of an explicit conceptual and research framework including a reexamination of the theoretical and operational ideas developed with regard to counseling.

### *Significance to the Profession*

Therefore, the efforts of the conference were directed to three substantive areas of research in counseling which are crucial to the advancement of the profession. In the following sections, the rationale for each area of the conference will be developed.

#### *A. Research on Counselor Effectiveness and Characteristics of the Counselor*

A traditional area for counseling research has been the study of counselor characteristics or traits. The assumptions are explicit. Personality traits such as sociability or friendliness are conceptualized as relevant indicators or appropriate dimensions within the personality organization of the individual counselor. There are even a few graduate training facilities which use some of these so-called trait measurements as part of their selection procedures. The assumptions of this approach are at least problematic and certainly the research evidence is equivocal. Cottle (1953), has reviewed the work of Bailey (1940), Baas (1950), Brown (1946), DiMichael (1949), Wrenn (1952), and others. He notes that, "In the



light of the above data it seems obvious that most of the attempts to evaluate the personal characteristics of counselors are sporadic and unrelated" (1953, p. 450).

There is little in this research that attempts to relate a specific rationale for particular traits to a theory of counseling except in the most general sense, for example, if counseling includes working with people then the counselor ought to score high on a trait of "liking" people. Cox (1945) attempted research along similar lines in her examination of counselor characteristics through a case study technique. She lists 24 traits ranging from fairness and sincerity to health and a sense of mission. Other descriptions of the counselor as a person range from qualities such as "belief in each individual" and "commitment to individual human values" (ASCA 1964) to the counselor "as a woman" (Farson, 1954).

It seems rather fruitless to continue this line of inquiry. Certain human qualities may indeed be relevant to counseling. The extent to which these qualities are really important and differentiating, however, remains an open and certainly an empirical question.

#### *B. Characteristics of the Client: Implications for Selection and Method of Treatment*

It is becoming increasingly important to be able to predict before counseling begins who may respond to short-term treatment and who may need long-term counseling or other forms of professional assistance. Yet, research has been directed away from this critical area.

It is time to consider the value of a careful assessment and appraisal of each client in advance of counseling. In fact, it is also time to consider which method of treatment may be more appropriate in a particular series of cases. If we are to stop proliferating the number of counseling research studies with indeterminant results, we need an array of procedures for particular client concerns. Research is needed which examines and appraises the array of methods used to effect change; for example, individual counseling( group procedures, social modeling, the systematic presentation of information (teaching) and even reinforcement procedures.

Tiedeman (1960) notes that it may be important for the counselor to specify for each client what he can and cannot accomplish. The counseling profession is in need of a basis not only for such decisions but also for the selection of most appropriate counseling procedures for the individual client.

#### *C. Assessment of Outcome: Evaluation of the Interaction of Client and Counselor*

Most counseling research projects have followed a classic research design. After treatment, a counseled group is compared to a control group on a series of variables. There are obvious problems of finding (1) A "real" control group (similar in all respects to the experimental group save counseling) and (2) "genuine" criteria which measure expected outcome (change in attitudes, conceptions of self, grades in school, or other relevant variables). While much research has focused on these substantive problems, research which demonstrates a positive effect for counseling remains the exception rather than the rule. Eysenck's (1952) criticism

has still not been effectively muted, nor, more recently, Astin's (1961) warning concerning the reification of counseling as functionally autonomous from reality.

Bergin (1963), in writing for a symposium of effects of psychotherapy, chose the title "Negative Results Revisited." In this article, a rather striking conclusion was presented; there was almost no research about the differences *within* a group of counselees. When counseled groups were examined, it was shown that some clients improved substantially while others actually deteriorated—that treatment "made" clients worse. A more adequate starting point for research in counseling may be a close examination of differences within groups of counselees.

#### *Format for the Conference:*

The conference was in session for three days, with one working day being devoted to each of the three topics. Two major papers were prepared on each topic by national leaders in research on their chosen area. The purpose of the major papers was to provide a provocative and searching structure for the topics in counseling research under consideration. They were intended to suggest new frames of reference for research, and to raise special issues and problems in methodology.

Immediately following each of the major papers were critiques by two distinguished discussants. The purpose of the discussants was to provide a systematic, scholarly analysis of the major papers. The discussants could also choose, as part of their critique, to extend further certain new avenues for research as suggested in the major papers.

Following the major papers and discussants, the conference participants formed six task groups to make specific recommendations for future research. Their charge was to identify:

- (1) the salient issues raised by the two speakers and the four discussants on a topic;
- (2) the major points, if any, which the task group members believe were not raised.

The final and most important charge of each task group was to provide specific recommendations for both types of research and concrete research projects which should be conducted as a result of the reevaluation and refocus provided by the papers, discussions, and preliminary task group work.

At the conclusion of the conference, one member from each task group was requested to draft a comprehensive task group report. Each report was requested to include (1) the aspects of the papers and discussions deemed most salient and important, (2) an enumeration of areas not covered by the papers and discussions which your task group believes are critical to the topic, and (3) a list of specific research projects which should be undertaken to translate the reevaluation and refocus of the literature into empirical terms.



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