DEVELOPING PSYCHOLOGICAL SKILLS

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After reading this chapter, you would be able to:

- understand the need to develop skills among psychologists,
- describe the basic aspects of observational skills,
- know the significance of developing communication skills,
- understand the importance of psychological testing skills in individual assessment, and
- explain the nature and process of counselling.

CONTENTS

Introduction

As you have already studied in the previous class, psychology began as an application-oriented discipline. Psychological testing stands as a prime example of psychology in action. Psychology touches on many questions related to our lives. For example, what kind of personality make-up is required to become a successful human being? Or what would be the right vocation for a student studying in Class XII ? Similarly, there are other questions and curiosities about human beings which psychologists are asked to answer.

Psychology has two kinds of application-related images: first, as a service-oriented discipline and second, as a scientific method-driven research discipline. Both of these are interrelated and inseparable. It would be important to learn that there are certain factors which contribute in making psychology application-oriented. First, psychologists have found, both in the past and present, that solutions to many problems faced by the individuals, groups, organisations and societies require an understanding of psychological principles. As problems encountered by individuals as well as societies have become more evident and acute, psychologists have responded with concrete solutions. For instance, rapid increase in depressive tendencies and suicidal rates among adolescents is one such area, where psychological knowledge dedicated to the issues of adolescent development is utilised for getting a clearer understanding of the occurrence of these phenomena, and certain intervention models are developed to assist the youth experiencing such problems early in their lives. The other reason is that expertise of psychologists has been highly valued in the marketplace. Over the past few years, there is a growing acceptability and demand of psychology as a profession. Various sections of society have developed a keen interest towards integrating the knowledge of psychology within their core activities. It can be seen particularly in the army or in the field of education, where in some states it has become mandatory for the schools to have a trained counsellor, in the field of management, which seeks help of psychologists to combat problems related to recruitment and assessment, employee behaviour, workplace stress, etc., in management of health-related problems and more recently even in sports. These are not the only areas. Almost all areas of life are calling for help from psychologists.

One aspect common to all the applied areas within psychology is a universal agreement on the basic assumptions about human nature and the role of a psychologist in different settings. It is generally assumed that psychologists have interest in people, their abilities and temperaments. A psychologist from any field is required to have interest in other people and exhibits a willingness to provide help by using her/his knowledge of the discipline. One can find active involvement of a psychologist in obtaining the client's history, her/his socio-cultural environment, assessment of her/his personality and also on other important

dimensions. One might think that client is a special term, which is mostly used in a clinical or counselling set-up. In psychology, a client may refer to an individual/group/organisation who on her/his own seeks help, guidance or intervention from a psychologist with respect to any problem faced by her/him.

The term '**skill**' may be defined as *proficiency, facility or dexterity that is acquired or developed through training and experience. The Webster dictionary* defines it as *"possession of the qualities required to do something or get something done"*.

American Psychological Association (1973) in their task force constituted with the objective to identify skills essential for professional psychologists recommended at least three sets of skills. These are: *assessment of individual differences*, *behaviour modification skills*, and *counselling and guidance skills*. Recognition and application of these skills and competencies have strengthened the foundation and practices of applied psychology in a positive way. How can one develop into a professional psychologist?

Developing as an Effective Psychologist

Most people think that they are some kind of psychologists. We, at times, talk about intelligence, inferiority complex, identity crisis, mental blocks, attitude, stress, communication barriers and so many other terms. Generally people pick up such terms from popular writings and media. There are a lot of common sense notions about human behaviour that one develops in the course of their lives. Some regularity in human behaviour is frequently observed by us to warrant generalisation. This kind of everyday amateur psychology often misfires, sometimes even proves disastrous. *There still remains a question of how to differentiate between a pseudo-psychologist from a real psychologist.*

An answer can be constructed by asking such questions like professional training, educational background, institutional affiliation, and her/his experience in providing service. However, what is critical is training as a researcher and internalisation of certain professional values. It is now recognised that the knowledge of tools used by psychologists, their methods and theories are required to develop psychological expertise. For example, a professional psychologist addresses the problem at the scientific level. They take their problem to the laboratory or study it in field settings to answer various problems. S/he tries to find the answer in terms of mathematical probability. Only then does s/he arrive at psychological principles or laws that can be depended upon.

Here, another distinction should be made. Some psychologists carry out research to propound or investigate theoretical formulations while others are concerned with our daily life activities and behaviour. We need both types of psychologists. We need some scientists to develop theories and others to find solutions to human problems. It is important to know about the conditions and competencies that are necessary besides research skills for a psychologist. There are conditions and competencies for psychologists which have come to be recognised internationally.

They cover a range of knowledge that a psychologist should possess when entering the profession after completing their education and training. These apply to practitioners, academicians, and researchers whose roles involve consulting with students, business, industry, and broader community. It is recognised that it is difficult to develop, implement and

measure competencies required in a subject like psychology as the criteria for specification, identification and evaluation are not yet fully agreed upon.

The basic skills or competencies which psychologists have identified for becoming an effective psychologist fall into three broad sections, namely, (a) **General Skills**, (b) **Observational Skills**, and (c) **Specific Skills**. These are discussed in detail here.

General Skills

These skills are generic in nature and are needed by all psychologists irrespective of their field of specialisation. These skills are essential for all professional psychologists, whether they are working in the field of clinical and health psychology, industrial/organisational, social, educational, or in environmental settings, or are acting as consultants. These skills include personal as well as intellectual skills. It is expected that it will not be proper to provide any form of professional training (in clinical or organisational fields) to students who do not possess these skills. Once a student has these skills, subsequent training in her/his area of specialisation would only refine and further hone these skills required by a professional within her/his field of specialisation. Some examples of such skills are given in Box 9.1.

Observational Skills

A great deal of what psychologists as researchers and practitioners do in the field is to pay attention, watch and listen carefully. They use all the senses, noticing

Box 9.1

Intellectual and Personal Skills

1. Interpersonal Skills: ability to listen and be empathic, to develop respect for/interest in others' cultures, experiences, values, points of view, goals and desires, fears, openness to receive feedback, etc. These skills are expressed verbally and/or non-verbally.
2. Cognitive Skills: ability to solve problems, engage in critical thinking and organised reasoning, and having intellectual curiosity and flexibility.
3. Affective Skills: emotional control and balance, tolerance/understanding of interpersonal conflict, tolerance of ambiguity and uncertainty.
4. Personality/Attitude: desire to help others, openness to new ideas, honesty/integrity/value ethical behaviour, personal courage.
5. Expressive Skills: ability to communicate one's ideas, feelings and information in verbal, non-verbal, and written forms.
6. Reflective Skills: ability to examine and consider one's own motives, attitudes, behaviours and ability to be sensitive to one's own behaviour or others.
7. Personal Skills: personal organisation, personal hygiene, time management, and appropriate dress.

Sensitivity to Diversity : Individual and Cultural Differences

- Knowledge of self (one's own attitudes, values, and related strengths/limitations) as one operates in the professional settings with diverse others.
- Knowledge about the nature and impact of individual and cultural diversity in different situations.
- Ability to work effectively with diverse backgrounds in assessment, treatment, and consultation.
- Ability to respect and appreciate different cultural norms and beliefs.
- Being sensitive to one's preferences and also to one's preference for own group.
- Ability to promote diversity in cultural beliefs and respecting it to promote positive life outcomes.

what is seen, heard, smelt, tasted, or touched. A psychologist, thus, is like an instrument that absorbs all sources of information from the environment. You have already studied about observation in Class XI. We will, therefore, focus more on developing observational skills this year.

A psychologist engages in observing various facets of surroundings including people and varying events. To begin with, a psychologist may begin with carefully scrutinising the physical setting in order to capture its "atmosphere". S/he might look at the colour of the floor/ceiling, size of the window/doors, type of lighting, artefacts/paintings/sculptures, etc. These small, subtle, and irrelevant looking signals influence human behaviour, which is why a psychologist notes such signals in the surroundings. In addition to physical surroundings, a psychologist actively engages in observing people and their actions. This may include the demographic features (age, gender, stature, race, etc.), ways of dealing and relating with others, pattern of behaviours in the presence of others, etc. A psychologist records such details because something of significance may be revealed in the process of observation. The following points are taken into consideration while making an observation:

- Observe patiently;
- Pay close attention to your physical surroundings — who, what, when, where, and how;
- Be aware of people's reactions, emotions, and motivations;
- Ask questions that can be answered while observing;
- Be yourself, give information about yourself, if asked;
- Observe with an optimistic curiosity; and
- Be ethical, you have to respect privacy, norms of people you are observing; take care not to disclose any information to anyone.

You are already familiar with two major approaches to observation, viz. *naturalistic observation* and *participant observation*. Let us now consider developing skills about them.

Naturalistic Observation is one of the primary ways of learning about the way people behave in a given setting. Suppose, you want to learn how people behave in response to a heavy discount provided by a company while visiting a shopping mall. For this, you could visit the shopping mall where the discounted items are showcased and systematically observe what people do and say before and after the purchases have been made. Making comparison of this kind may provide you with useful insights into what is going on.

Participant Observation is the variation of the method of naturalistic observation. Here the observer is actively involved in the process of observing by becoming an active member of the setting where the observation takes place. For instance, for the problem mentioned above, an observer may take a part-time job in a shopping mall showroom to become an insider in order to observe variations in the behaviour of customers. This technique is widely used by anthropologists whose objective is to gain a firsthand perspective of a system from within which otherwise may not be readily available to an outsider.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Observation

- Its major advantage is that it allows behaviour to be seen and studied in its natural setting.
- People from outside, or those already working in a setting, can be trained to use it.
- One disadvantage of it is that events being observed are subject to bias due

to the feelings of the people involved as well as of the observers.

- Generally day-to-day activities in a given setting are fairly routine, which can go unnoticed by the observer.
- Another potential pitfall is that the actual behaviour and responses of others may get influenced by the presence of the observer, thus, defeating the very purpose of observation.

Activity 9.1

Evaluating Your Interpersonal Skills

Write down on a piece of paper how you would describe yourself on the following aspects :

(a) Friendliness
(b) Mood
(c) Sense of humour
(d) Career motivation
(e) Ability to work in teams and groups
(f) Independence
(g) Desire to be accepted by others
(h) Discipline

Now form groups of three to five members. Have each member evaluated by other members in the group as best as you can on the dimensions given above. Each member concludes by analysing the similarities and differences between their self-perceptions on these dimensions and how they are perceived by other members of the groups.

Specific Skills

These skills are core/basic to the field of psychological service. For example, psychologists working in clinical settings need to be trained in various techniques of therapeutic interventions, psychological assessment, and counselling. Similarly, organisational psychologists working in the organisational context need to have skills in assessment, facilitation and consultation, behavioural skills to bring about individual, group, team and organisational development besides research skills, etc. Though, specific skills and competencies are required for a very specialised professional functioning, nonetheless, all skill sets do overlap quite a bit. They are not exclusive to an area. Relevant specific skills and competencies can be classified as follows:

(a) **Communication Skills**
- *Speaking*
- *Active listening*
- *Body language or non-verbal skills*

(b) **Psychological Testing Skills**

(c) **Interviewing Skills**

(d) **Counselling Skills**
- *Empathy*
- *Positive regard*
- *Authenticity*

Communication Skills

The skills we are going to discuss may appear abstract. You will, however, understand them better when you engage in exercises related to them. Let us understand the basics of communication process and see what role it plays in fostering relationships and personal effectiveness. Learning how to be an effective communicator is not just an academic exercise. It is one of the most important skills you will need to succeed in life. Your success in this class may well depend on your ability to communicate. For example, to do well you should be able to ask and answer questions, summarise opinions, distinguish facts from opinions, and interact fruitfully with your peers and teachers. For this, you will also need listening skills in order to comprehend the information presented in class and what others say verbally or non-verbally. You will be required to have good presentation

Box 9.2

Characteristics of Communication

Communication is dynamic because the process is constantly in a state of change. As the expectations, attitudes, feelings, and emotions of the persons who are communicating change, the nature of their communication also changes.

Communication is continuous because it never stops, whether we are asleep or awake we are always processing ideas or thoughts. Our brain remains active.

Communication is irreversible because once we send a message we cannot take it back. Once we have made a slip of tongue, given a meaningful glance, or engaged in an emotional outburst, we cannot erase it. Our apologies or denials can make it light but cannot stamp out what was communicated.

Communication is interactive because we are constantly in contact with other people and with ourselves. Others react to our speech and actions, and we react to our own speech and actions, and then react to those reactions. Thus, a cycle of action and reaction is the basis of our communication.

skills to give briefings or to present reports on projects that are part of classroom assignments. So, what do we mean by communication process. It can be said that *communication is a conscious or unconscious, intentional or unintentional process in which feelings and ideas are expressed as verbal and/or non-verbal messages that are sent, received, and comprehended*. The characteristics of communication are outlined in Box 9.2.

The process of communication can be accidental (having no intent), expressive (resulting from the emotional state of the person), or rhetorical (resulting from the specific goal of the communicator). Human communication occurs on the intra-personal, interpersonal, and public levels. **Intrapersonal communication** involves communicating with yourself. It encompasses such activities as thought processes, personal decision making, and focusing on self. **Interpersonal communication** refers to the communication that takes place between two or more persons who establish a communicative relationship. Forms of interpersonal communication include face-to-face or mediated conversations, interview and small group discussions. **Public communication** is characterised by a speaker sending a message to an audience. It may be direct, such as face-to-face messages delivered by the speaker to an audience, or indirect, such as message relayed over radio or television.

Components of Human Communication

When we communicate, we communicate selectively. That is, from the wide range of repertory of words, actions, etc. available to us, we choose that which we believe is best suited for the idea we wish to express. When we communicate, we **encode** (i.e., take ideas, give them meaning and put them into message forms), and send the idea through a channel. It is composed of our primary signal system based on our senses (i.e., seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching). The message is sent to someone who receives it using her or his primary signal system. S/he **decodes** (i.e., translates message into understandable forms). For example, you may say that you heard a bell or an object feels soft. These are examples of verbal communication which express how you

understand the signals your senses have received. You can also respond at a non-verbal level. You touch a hot stove, your fingers pull away quickly, and your eyes well up with tears. The pulling away of fingers and welling up of eyes with tears will communicate to an onlooker the pain suffered by you.

The model given in Figure 9.1 shows the process of communication involving different stages.

As you can see that in any communication process, the degree to which the communication is effective depends on the communicators' mutual understanding of the signals or codes being used in transmitting a message and in receiving. Suppose you are about to take an examination and suddenly realise that you have not brought your pen to class. You ask your friend, "Do you have an extra pen that you can spare for me?" She says "yes" and gives you the pen. You have just participated in an effective communication transaction. You (communicator A) encoded a message (you need a pen) and used a channel for transmitting it (vocal chords producing sound waves) to your friend (communicator B). Your friend received the message using her sensory agent (ears) and decoded it (understood that you want a pen). Your friend's feedback (the word "yes" and appropriate behaviour of giving a pen to you) indicated that the message was successfully received and decoded. The communication would have been still effective if she had said, "Sorry, I cannot, because I am carrying only one pen."

You may remember that the act of speech itself is not communication. Speech is only a biological act; the utterance of sound, possibly the use of language. Communication is broader; it involves a relationship among two or more people in which they attempt to share meaning so that the intent of message received is the same as the intent of the message sent.

Speaking

One important component of communication is speaking with the use of language. Language involves use of symbols which package meaning within them. To be effective, a communicator must know how to use language appropriately. Because language is

Fig.9.1 : Basic Communication Process

symbolic, it is necessary to be as clear and precise as possible when using words. Communication takes place within a context. So one needs to consider the other's frame of reference, that is, the context used by the sender to say something. Also whether s/he shares your interpretation. If not, it is important to adjust your vocabulary level and choice of words to fit the level of the listener. Remember that slang expressions, words unique to a culture or region, and euphemism can sometimes become obstacles in good communication.

Listening

Listening is an important skill that we use daily. Your academic success, employment achievement, and personal happiness, to a large extent, depend upon your ability to listen effectively. At first, listening may appear to you as a passive behaviour, as it involves silence. But this image of passivity is far from true. Listening requires a person to be attentive. S/he should be patient, non-judgmental and yet have the capacity to analyse and respond.

Hearing and listening are not the same. Hearing is a biological activity that involves reception of a message through sensory channels. It is only a part of listening, a process that involves reception, attention, assignment of meaning, and listener's response to the message presented.

Reception

The initial step in the listening process is the reception of a stimulus or message. A message could be auditory and/or visual. The hearing process is based on a complex set of physical interactions that take place involving the ear and the brain. In addition to using the hearing mechanism, people listen through their visual system. They observe a person's facial expressions, posture, movement, and appearance, which provide important cues that may not be obvious merely by listening to the verbal part of the message.

Attention

Once the stimulus, i.e. the word or visual, or both, is received, it reaches the attention stage of the human processing system. In this phase, the other stimuli recede so that we can concentrate on specific words or visual symbols. Normally your attention is divided between what you are attempting to listen to, and what is happening around you, and what is going on in your mind. Consider, you are watching a movie. The person in front of you is constantly whispering to her/his friend. There is a buzz in the sound system. You are also worried about the forthcoming examination. So your attention is being pulled in different directions. Divided attention makes it difficult for you to receive signals or messages.

Paraphrasing

How would you know that someone has been listening? Ask her/him to restate what you had said. The person in doing this does not repeat your exact words. S/he makes a summary of the ideas just received and provides you with a restatement of what s/he understands. This is called '**paraphrasing**'. It allows you to understand how much s/he understood of what was communicated. If someone cannot repeat or write down a summary of what was said, then s/he probably did not get the whole message or did not understand it. We can keep this in mind when we are listening to our teacher in the class or to others. Try to paraphrase what you heard and if you cannot do so, you should seek immediate clarification, if possible.

Try verbally paraphrasing the next time you are engaged in a demanding conversation, such as when you are receiving directions or when you are in a conflict situation with a friend. Repeat to the speaker what you think she or he had just said in order to check whether you both received and understood the same thing. You will be surprised how many times conflicts result from miscommunication.

Assignment of Meaning

The process of putting the stimulus we have received into some predetermined category develops as we acquire language. We develop mental categories for interpreting the message we receive. For instance, our categorising system for the word *'cheese'* may include such factors as a dairy product, its peculiar taste and colour, all of which help us to relate the word *'cheese'* to the sense in which it is used.

Role of Culture in Listening

Like the brain, the culture in which we have been brought up also influences our listening and learning abilities. Asian cultures, such as India, emphasise on listening by being a silent communicator when receiving messages from seniors or elders. Some cultures focus on controlling attention. Buddhism, for instance, has a notion called 'mindfulness'. This means devoting your complete attention to whatever you are doing. Training in 'mindfulness' which starts in childhood can help to develop longer attention spans and therefore, lead not only to better listening but also to sympathetic listening. However, in many cultures, such listening enhancing concepts are not present. Box 9.3 gives some tips to improve your listening skills.

Body Language

Do you believe that when you communicate with another person, your words communicate the complete meaning of the message? If your answer is yes, then you are mistaken. We all know that it is possible to communicate a great deal even without using verbal language. We are aware that non-verbal acts are symbolic and closely connected to any talk in progress. Such non-verbal acts are part of what is called '**body language**'.

Body language is composed of all those messages that people exchange besides

Box 9.3

Some Tips to Improve Your Listening Skills

- Recognise that both the sender as well as the receiver have equal responsibility in making effective communication.
- Refrain from forming an early judgment about information that is being communicated. Be open to all ideas.
- Be a patient listener. Do not be in a hurry to respond.
- Avoid ego speak. That is, do not talk only about what you want to talk about. Give consideration also to others and to what they say.
- Be careful to the emotional responses which certain words are likely to bring about.
- Be aware that your posture affects your listening.
- Control distractions.
- If in doubt, try to paraphrase. Also check with the sender whether s/he has been correctly understood by you.
- Visualise what is being said. That is, try to translate the message in the form of a concrete action.

words. While reading body language, we must remember that a single non-verbal signal does not carry complete meaning. Factors such as gestures, postures, eye contact, clothing style, and body movement — all of them have to be considered together, that is, in a **cluster**. Also, in verbal communication, non-verbal signs can have many different meanings. For example, crossing arms over the chest may suggest that a person likes to keep aloof. But, crossed arms accompanied by an erect posture, tightened body muscles, a set clenched jaw, and narrowing of the eyes are likely to communicate anger.

A person's background and past patterns of behaviour are also considered when we analyse body language. The consistency between current and past patterns of behaviour, as well as harmony between verbal and non-verbal communication, is termed as **congruency**. When you say to your friend, "you do not look well today", you are basing your statement on an evaluation of the person's appearance today and comparing it with how s/he looked in the past. In other words, something has changed, and you see that difference. If you did not have experience to draw on, you would not have noticed the change. Let us recall how much we use body language to encourage or discourage conversation. For instance, we consciously wave at waiters or friends to catch their attention. Much of the use of body language occurs in conversing with others without conscious realisation.

Activity 9.2

Observing Non-verbal Behaviour in Communication

Carefully observe members of your family. Note their non-verbal behaviour or body language when they are talking to someone. Then focus on your own non-verbal behaviour in a similar way. Do you find any similarities between your non-verbal behaviour or body language and theirs? Share it with the class.

Psychological Testing Skills

The next set of competencies which psychologists require is concerned with the knowledge base of the discipline of psychology. They involve psychological assessment, evaluation and problem solving with individuals and groups, organisation, and the community. Psychologists have always been interested in understanding individual differences from the time of Galton in the late 19th century. Psychological tests have been devised and are primarily used for the determination and analysis of individual differences in general intelligence, differential aptitudes, educational achievement, vocational fitness, personality, social attitudes, and various non-intellectual characteristics. Psychological tests have also been used for studying a variety of psychological studies on groups besides making an assessment of a particular individual. Psychologists study these differences based on factors such as occupation, age, gender, education, culture, etc. While using psychological tests **an attitude of objectivity**, **scientific orientation**, and **standardised interpretation** must be kept in mind.

For example, in organisational and personnel work, in business and industry, where specialised tests are used to select individuals for specific jobs, it is essential to use actual performance records or ratings as a criterion for establishing validity of a test. Suppose, the personnel department wants to know whether a certain psychological test can help it to identify potentially best stenographers, it must be established that the test differentiates among employees of several performance levels. In addition, it should be found that the performance on the job

Box 9.4

Essentials of Psychological Assessment Skills

Psychological assessment is a basic competency required by psychologists. It includes knowledge of comprehensive and integrated assessment of persons based on interviewing, psychological testing, and evaluation of the outcomes of psychological services. The skills needed for psychological assessment are :

- Ability to select and implement multiple methods and means of evaluation in ways that are responsive to, and respectful of diverse individuals, couples, families, and groups.
- Ability to utilise systematic approaches to gather data required for taking decisions.
- Knowledge of psychometric issues and bases of assessment methods.
- Knowledge of issues related to integration of different data sources.
- Ability to integrate assessment data from different sources for diagnostic purposes.
- Ability to formulate and apply diagnoses; to understand strengths and limitations of current diagnostic approaches.
- Capacity for effective use of supervision to implement and enhance skills.

Anyone who uses a psychological test has to be a professionally qualified psychologist trained in psychological testing. Psychological tests are administered strictly based on information given in the test manual. The facts required for this purpose are as follows:

- Purpose of the test, i.e. what it has to be used for?
- Target population for which it can be used.
- Type of validation done on the test, i.e. on what basis it can be said that it measures what it claims to measure?
- The external criteria of validation, i.e. the areas in which it has been found working.
- The reliability indices, i.e. how much error is possible in scores?
- The standardisation sample. That is, when the test was constructed, who were tested, e.g. Indians or Americans, rural/urban, literate/semi-literate, etc.?
- Time taken in the administration of test.
- Scoring patterns, i.e. what is to be scored and what method is to be used?
- Norms. That is, what kinds are available? What is the appropriate group which is to be used for interpretation of scores, e.g. male/female, age groups, etc.?
- Influence of any special factors, e.g. presence of others, stress situations, etc.
- Limitations of the test, i.e. who, and what it cannot assess? Conditions in which it may not give good assessment.

of a newly employed worker selected on the basis of a test indeed matches with her/his test scores. Box 9.4 presents the essentials of psychological assessment skills.

Interviewing Skills

An interview is a purposeful conversation between two or more people that follows a basic question and answer format. Interviewing is more formal than most other conversations because it has a pre-set purpose and uses a focused structure. There are many kinds of interviews. The employment interview is one which most of you are likely to face. Some other formats are information gathering interview, counselling interview, interrogatory interview, radio-television interview, and research interview.

Interview Format

Once the objectives of the interview are established, the interviewer prepares an

interview format. The basic format, regardless of the interview's purpose, is divided into three stages, namely, *opening, the body,* and *the closing.* We would now discuss these three stages briefly.

Opening of the Interview

The opening of interview involves establishing rapport between two communicators. The purpose is to make the interviewee comfortable. Generally, the interviewer starts the conversation and does most of the talking at the outset. This serves two functions, i.e. it establishes the goal of interview, and gives the interviewee time to become comfortable with the situation and the interviewer.

Body of the Interview

The body of the interview is the heart of the process. In this stage, the interviewer asks questions in an attempt to generate information and data that are required for the purpose.

Sequence of Questions

To accomplish the purpose of an interview, the interviewer prepares a set of questions, also called a *schedule*, for different domains, or categories s/he wants to cover. To do this, the interviewer must first decide on the domains/categories under which information is to be generated. For example, in the questions used in job interview given in Box 9.5, the interviewer selected several categories such as nature of the organisation last worked for, satisfaction with the past job, views on product, etc. These categories and the questions within them are framed ranging from easy-to-answer to difficult-to-answer. Questions are also formulated to assess facts as well as subjective assessment.

Box 9.5

Types of Interview Questions

Direct Question: They are explicit and require specific information. For example, "Where did you last work?"

Open-ended Question: They are less direct and specify only the topic. For example, "How happy were you with your job on the whole?"

Close-ended Question: They provide response alternatives, narrowing the response variations. For example, "Do you think knowledge of a product or communication skill is more important for a salesperson?"

Bipolar Question: It is a form of close-ended question. It requires a yes or no response. For example, "Would you like to work for the company?"

Leading Question: It encourages a response in favour of a specific answer. For example, "Wouldn't you say you are in favour of having officer's union in the company?"

Mirror Question: They are intended to get a person to reflect on what she or he had said and expand on it. For example, you said "I work so hard but I am unable to get success." Please explain as to why this happens.

Answering Interview Questions

- If you do not understand the question, ask for clarification.
- Restate the question in your answer.
- Answer one question at a time.
- Try to turn negative questions into positive ones.

Closing the Interview

While closing the interview, the interviewer should summarise what s/he has been able to gather. One should end with a discussion of the next step to be taken. When the interview is ending, the interviewer should give a chance to the interviewee to ask questions or offer comments.

Counselling Skills

Another prerequisite for developing as a psychologist is the competence in the domain of counselling and guidance. In order to develop these competencies, psychologists must undergo proper training and education under guided supervision. The consequences of getting into a wrong vocation are pretty serious. If a person enters a job for which s/he does not have requisite aptitude, s/he can develop serious problems of adjustments, develop negative emotions, suffer from inferiority complex, etc. These difficulties may then come to be projected onto someone else. Contrary to this, if anyone who takes a vocation for which s/he is well adapted, there will be considerable satisfaction in doing the job well. The positive feeling thus generated would have tremendous impact on overall life adjustment. Counselling is also one such domain where a person entering the field is required to engage in self-introspection in order to assess her/his inclination and basic skill set for being effective in her/his vocation.

Meaning and Nature of Counselling

Counselling provides a system for planning the interview, analysing the counsellor's and client's behaviour, and determining the developmental impact on the client. In this section, we will discuss skills, concepts, and methods that are designed to help develop concrete competencies. A counsellor is most often interested in building an understanding of the clients problem by focusing on what understanding the client has of her/his problem and how s/he feels about it. The actual or objective facts of the problems are considered less important, and it is considered more important to work on the feelings and their acknowledgement by the clients. The focus is more on the person and how s/he defines the problem.

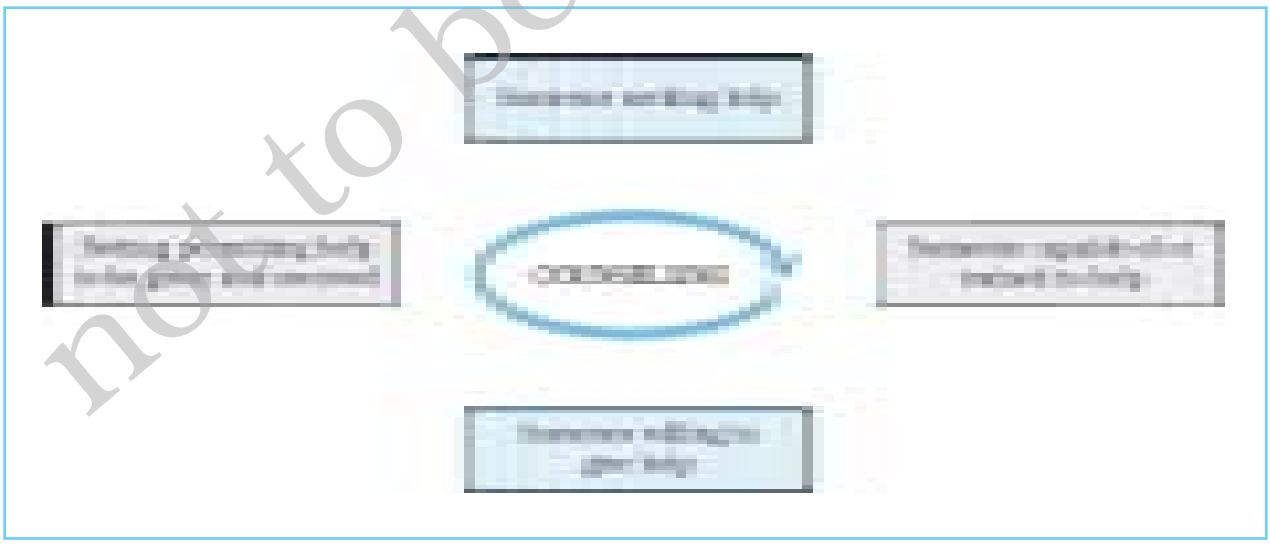

Fig.9.2 : Pre-requisites of Counselling Process

Counselling involves helping relationship, that includes someone seeking help, and someone willing to give help, who is capable of or trained to help in a setting that permits help to be given and received (see Fig.9.2).

The following elements about counselling are common to the major theoretical approaches to counselling :

1. Counselling involves responding to the feelings, thoughts, and actions of the clients.
2. Counselling involves a basic acceptance of the client's perceptions and feelings, without using any evaluative standards.
3. Confidentiality and privacy constitute essential ingredients in the counselling setting. Physical facilities that preserve this quality are important.
4. Counselling is voluntary. It takes place when a client approaches a counsellor. A counsellor never uses any kind of coercion for obtaining information.
5. Counsellors and clients both transmit and receive verbal and non-verbal messages during the process. Therefore, awareness and sensitivity to the nature of the message is an important prerequisite for a counsellor's effectiveness.

Breaking the Myths of Counselling

- Counselling is not merely giving information.
- Counselling is not giving advice.
- Counselling is not selection and placement of individuals onto jobs or for courses.
- Counselling is not the same as interviewing though interviewing may be involved.
- Counselling is not influencing attitudes, beliefs and behaviour by persuading, admonishing, threatening, or compelling.

Developing Effective Relationships

For most people who seek help from a counsellor, effective or satisfying relationships are almost non-existent or infrequent. Since change in behaviour is often created and supported by a network of social support, it is essential for clients to start developing more positive relationships with other persons. The counselling relationship is the initial vehicle through which this begins. Like all of us, counsellors too are not perfect, but they are trained in developing a more healthy and helpful relationship than others.

In brief, counselling usually has an all-inclusive outcome for the clients. Effective behavioural change that takes place in the client is multifaceted. It may show up in the form of a client taking greater responsibility, developing new insight, learning to engage in different behaviours,

Activity 9.3

Listening and Paraphrasing

For this activity, three students are needed, A, B, and C.

A will act as a counsellor, who will practice listening. Her/his role will be to repeat to the client in different words what s/he listened. A will listen not only to what was said but also how it was said (body language) and the feelings behind it.

B will share with A some problems that s/he has been facing in life lately.

C will act as an observer and take notes on how good a listener A is.

A and B will interact for about 10 minutes. After the interaction is over, C will share her/his observations. B may also share her/his observations with A and C about A's communication.

The feedback session may be of 10 minutes. After it is over, switch roles so that all three may get a chance to play the three roles. At the end of the activity, summarise what you have learned.

and making an effort to develop more effective relationships.

Characteristics of Effective Helper

Being a trained helper, the counsellor has the responsibility for ensuring that her/his client is benefited from counselling and its therapeutic effects are achieved. To a large extent, however, the success of a counselling process depends on the skill, knowledge, attitude, personal qualities and behaviour of a counsellor, any or all of which can enhance or diminish the helping process. In this section, we will discuss four qualities that are associated with effective counsellors. These include: (i) *Authenticity*, (ii) *Positive regard for others*, (iii) *Ability to empathise*, and (iv) *Paraphrasing.*

Let us understand these qualities briefly.

(i) **Authenticity** : Your image or perception of yourself makes up your "I". The *self-perceived "I"* is revealed through ideas, words, actions, clothing, and your life-style. All of these communicate your "I" to others. Those who come into close contact with you also build their own image of you for themselves, and they also sometimes communicate this image to you. For example, friends tell you what they like and dislike about you. Your teachers and parents praise and/or criticise you. You are also evaluated by persons you respect. These collective judgments by people you respect, also called 'significant others', develop into a 'me'. This other perceived 'me' is the person that others perceive you to be. This perception may be the same as or different from your own self-perception of 'I'. The degree to which you are aware of these perceptions of others as well as of your own perception of your self indicates that you are self-aware. Authenticity means that your behavioural expressions are consistent with what you value and the way you feel and relate to your inner self-image.

(ii) **Positive Regard for Others**: In a counselling-counsellor relationship, a good relationship allows freedom of expression. It reflects acceptance of the idea that the feelings of both are important. We should remember that when we form a new relationship, we experience feelings of uncertainty and anxiety. Such feelings get minimised when a counsellor extends a positive regard to the client by accepting that it is all right to feel the way the client is feeling. In order to show positive regard to others, the following guidelines may be kept in mind:

(1) When you are speaking, get into the habit of using "I" messages rather than "you" messages. An example of this would be, "I understand" rather than "you should not".

(2) Respond to what the other person has said, after checking with her/him.

(3) Give the other person the freedom to share feelings or anything s/he wants to say. Do not interrupt or cut in.

(4) Do not assume that the other person knows what you are thinking. Express yourself according to the frame of reference, i.e. in the context of the verbal exchange taking place.

(5) Do not label either yourself or the other person (e.g., "you are an introvert", etc.).

(iii) **Empathy**: This is one of the most critical competencies that a counsellor needs to have. You have already read in Chapter 5 that empathy is the ability of a counsellor to understand the feelings of another person from her/his perspective. It is like stepping into someone else's shoes and trying to understand the pain and troubled feelings of the other person. There is a difference between sympathy and

Activity 9.4

Confronting One's Fear

This activity can be carried out in a group situation. Everyone in the group writes her/his worst fears/doubts/anxieties on a piece of paper without disclosing her/his name. After everyone has finished writing their fears, all the slips are collected and thrown in a big basket. Now, everyone in the group picks up one slip from the basket and reads out aloud the fears mentioned on that list. Then the group engages in a discussion about the nature of the fear, the possible reasons for a particular fear to exist, the relevant agencies who are in some form related to instilling that fear, the potential ways to overcome it, etc. The same process is repeated until all the slips in that basket have been read. At the end of this activity, you should check:

- *If this activity helped you in understanding something more about your self.*
- *What elements other than fear would have also contributed in the process of self-awareness?*
- *How did you feel when someone was reading out your fears?*

empathy. In sympathy, you play the saviour. You may think that someone deserves your kindness.

(iv) **Paraphrasing**: This skill has already been discussed in the section on communication earlier. You will recall that this involves the ability of a counsellor to reflect on what the client says and feels using different words.

Ethics of Counselling

In recent years, counsellors have taken important steps to develop their professional identity. A critical criterion for any professional group is the development and implementation of appropriate ethical standards. Social workers, marriage counsellors, family therapists, and psychologists — all have their ethical codes. Awareness of the ethical standards and codes is extremely important, because counselling is a part of the service sector. Not following the ethical standards may have legal implications.

While learning about the competencies of a counsellor, it is important for you to know that the client-counsellor relationship is built on ethical practice. The American Psychological Association (APA) has developed a code of ethical conduct for behaviour and decision-making in actual clinical settings. The practical knowledge of these ethical domains can guide the practice of counselling in achieving its desired purpose. Some of the APA practice guidelines are:

- Knowledge of ethical/professional codes, standards, and guidelines; knowledge of statutes, rules, regulations, and case law relevant to the practice of psychology.
- Recognise and analyse ethical and legal issues across the range of professional activities in the clinical setting.
- Recognise and understand the ethical dimensions/features of her/his own attitudes and practice in the clinical setting.
- Seek appropriate information and consultation when faced with ethical issues.
- Practice appropriate professional assertiveness related to ethical issues.

Key Terms

Applied psychology, Assessment skills, Cognitive skills, Competence, Counselling, Ethical observation, Intrapersonal awareness, Intervention and consultation skills, Objectivity, Open mindedness, Problem solving skills, Psychological assessment, Psychological test, Reflective skills, Self-awareness, Sensitivity, Trustworthiness.

Summary

- *The general and specific skills form the core competencies essential for a psychologist to act in a more responsive and ethical manner. Before entering any professional arena, it, therefore, becomes pertinent for a psychologist to equip herself/himself with these indispensable competencies.*
- *General skills include personal as well as intellectual skills. These skills are essential for all professional psychologists, whether they are working in the field of clinical and health psychology, industrial/organisational, social, educational, or in environmental settings or are acting as consultants.*
- *Specific skills are core/basic to the field of psychological service. For example, psychologists working in clinical settings need to be trained in various techniques of therapeutic interventions, psychological assessment, and counselling.*
- *In order to become an effective psychologist, one needs to have certain characteristics such as competence, integrity, professional and scientific responsibility, respect for people's rights and dignity, etc.*
- *Observational skills are basic skills and are used by psychologists as a starting point for providing insights into behaviour. The two major approaches to observation are naturalistic observation and participant observation.*
- *Communication is a process that helps in transmitting meaning from one person to another. Speaking and listening are central to interpersonal communication.*
- *Language is important for communication. Its use should be done according to the characteristics of audience. Non-verbal cues such as gestures, postures, hand movements, etc. are also used to communicate ideas.*
- *Creating a proper message, tackling environmental noise, and providing feedback are ways of reducing distortions and making effective communication.*
- *Interviewing is a process of face-to-face communication. It proceeds through three stages which include the warm up (opening stage), the question and answer (the body), and the closing stage.*
- *Developing the skills of psychological testing is important since tests are important tools used for the assessment of individuals for various purposes. Proper training is required for administration, scoring and interpretation of tests.*
- *Counselling involves helping relationship, that includes someone seeking help, and someone willing to give help. The qualities that are associated with effective counsellors are (i) Authenticity, (ii) Positive regard for others, (iii) Ability to empathise, and (iv) Paraphrasing.*

Review Questions

1. What competencies are required for becoming an effective psychologist?
2. What are the generic skills needed by all psychologists?
3. Define communication. Which component of the communication process is most important? Justify your answer with relevant examples.
4. Describe the set of competencies that must be kept in mind while administering a psychological test.
5. What is the typical format of a counselling interview?
6. What do you understand by the term counselling? Explain the characteristics of an effective counsellor.
7. To be an effective counsellor, it is mandatory that s/he undergoes professional training. Do you agree with this statement? Give reasons in support of your arguments.
8. What are the ethical considerations in client-counsellor relationships?
9. Identify an aspect of your friend's personal life that s/he wants to change. As a student of psychology, think of specific ways in which you can devise a programme to help your friend modify or solve her/his problem.

Project Ideas

1. Identify 3–4 separate fields of psychology. For instance, you can choose a clinical psychologist, a counsellor, and an educational psychologist. Obtain information about the type of work they do and the skills that are used by these psychologists in their unique setting. You can either develop a questionnaire or conduct personal interviews with all of them to identify the competencies related to the kind of work that these psychologists undertake. Prepare a report and discuss in the class.
2. Choose any one skill from the list of competencies for a psychologist. Gather information about the theoretical and practical aspects of that particular skill. On the basis of the obtained information suggest some steps to enhance that skill. Make a presentation in the class.

Weblinks

www.allpsych.com
www.library.unisa.edu.au/resources/subject/counsel.asp

Pedagogical Hints

1. Students could be asked to share their views on the increasing applications of psychology in different areas of life.
2. Students can also be asked to brainstorm on the possible skills and competencies needed by psychologists working in different areas.
3. Use of innovative methods such as narration of case vignette and role-play to demonstrate communication skills, effective listening, paraphrasing, etc. would be particularly helpful.

GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICALS IN PSYCHOLOGY

Psychological tools and techniques help to uncover the latent aspects of an individual's behaviour. Thus they aid in understanding, predicting, and controlling the human behaviour, which is the fundamental aim of psychology. Practicals in psychology are intended to provide students with requisite knowledge and skills in psychological tools and techniques to gain an understanding of human behaviour. They attempt to provide hands-on experience to the students with both quantitative tools of measurement, such as standardised psychological tests and qualitative tools, such as interview and observation. Practicals are based on the principle of learning by doing and thus they provide an opportunity to the students to put into practice whatever psychological principles and theories they have learnt in the classroom.

Before undertaking practical work, it is important to ensure that the students have knowledge about various methods of research in psychology and their merits and demerits, the behavioural characteristics being assessed, the nature and uses of psychological tests, and the ethical guidelines so as to avoid their misuse. Keeping in view the syllabus of psychology for Class XII, the students would undertake practicals in psychological testing which would involve using standardised psychological tests in different domains, i.e. intelligence, personality, aptitude, adjustment, attitude, self-concept, and anxiety. They would also prepare one case profile which will include developmental history of the individual *(case)*, using both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

I. PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING

Practical work in use of psychological tests must be carried out under the guidance and supervision of the teacher. As you have already studied in Class XI, a psychological test is essentially an objective and standardised measure of a sample of behaviour. In Class XII, you will be learning about the concepts of intelligence and aptitude (Chapter 1), personality and self-concept (Chapter 2), adjustment and anxiety (Chapter 3), and attitude (Chapter 6). You are also required to undertake practical training in order to develop the ability to conduct, score and interpret data generated by the administration of the psychological tests in these areas. In other words, practical training would help you in assessing various dimensions of human behaviour, such as intellectual ability, overall personality profile, specific aptitudes, potential for adjustment, attitudinal profile, self-concept, and level of anxiety.

Test Administration

The accuracy of psychological testing comes from standardisation of testing conditions, materials, procedures, and norms which form an integral part of test development, its administration and interpretation. In this process, it is expected that students will develop skills to establish rapport with the test takers to make them comfortable in a relatively new and different context. **Establishing Rapport** involves the test administrator's efforts to arouse the test takers' interest in the test, elicit their cooperation, and encourage them to respond in a manner appropriate to the objectives of the test. The main objective of establishing rapport is to *motivate* the respondents to follow the instructions as fully and meticulously as they can. It may be noted that the nature of the test (e.g., individual or group, verbal or non-verbal, etc.), and the age and other characteristics of the test takers determine the use of specific techniques for the establishment of rapport. For example, while testing children from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, the test

administrator cannot assume that they will be motivated to do well on academic tasks, therefore, in such conditions, the test administrator makes special efforts to establish rapport to motivate them.

When establishing rapport, the test administrator also informs the test takers about the confidentiality of test data. The test taker is informed about the purpose of the test, and how the test results will be used. The test taker is assured that such results would be kept strictly confidential and be made available to a third person (the other two being test administrator and test taker) only after knowledge and consent of the test taker.

The test administration, therefore, is the task of a professionally trained and skilful person under controlled conditions. The following points may be kept in mind while using a test :

- *Uniform testing conditions* : Basically, the function of psychological tests is to measure differences between individuals or between the responses of the same individual on different occasions. If the scores obtained by different individuals are to be compared, testing conditions must obviously be the same for all. Attention should be given to the selection of a suitable testing room, which should be free from undue noise and distraction. This room should provide adequate lighting, ventilation, seating facilities, etc. for test takers.
- *Standardised instructions* : In order to secure uniformity of testing conditions, the test constructor provides detailed directions for administering the test. Standardised instructions include the exact materials used, time limit (if any), oral instructions to subjects, preliminary demonstrations, ways of handling queries from subjects, and other possible details of the testing situation.
- *Training of test administrator* : The test administrator is the person who administers and scores the test. The importance of a trained test administrator is evident. For instance, if the test administrator is not adequately qualified, incorrect or inaccurate scoring may render the test scores worthless.

Any standardised test is accompanied by a **manual** which includes the psychometric properties of the test, norms, and references. This gives a clear indication regarding the procedures of the test administration, the scoring methods, and time limits, if any, of the test. The manual also includes instructions to be given to the test takers.

A thorough understanding of the test, the test taker, and the testing conditions is essential for the proper interpretation of test scores. Some information about the test given in the manual like its reliability, validity, norms, etc. are relevant in interpreting any test score. Similarly, some background data about the individual being tested (test taker) are also essential. For example, the same score may be obtained by different individuals for different reasons. Therefore, the conclusions to be drawn from such scores may not be similar. Finally, some consideration must also be given to special factors that may have influenced a particular score, such as unusual testing conditions, temporary emotional or physical state of the subject, the extent of the test taker's previous experience with tests, etc.

The test administrator also provides test takers with appropriate and understandable explanations of test results and of any recommendations stemming from them. It may be noted here that even when a test has been accurately administered, scored, and interpreted, providing merely specific numerical scores (e.g., IQ score, aptitude score, etc.) without the opportunity to discuss it further may be harmful to the test taker.

Procedure for Test Administration

A psychological test can be administered only by a professionally qualified person. A student of psychology at +2 level would not have reached the stage of a professionally qualified person. Therefore, s/he is not fully equipped to interpret the scores of a psychological test

for any conclusive purpose, e.g. selection, prediction, diagnosis, etc. For this purpose, the test administration may be broken into small components/activities. The emphasis should be on learning skills for understanding the concepts on which the test is based, developing rapport with the participant, administration of the test including giving instructions, maintaining optimum testing conditions, taking precautions, and doing scoring of the test.

The following steps and guidelines are suggested to carry out practical work in psychological testing :

1. The teacher would introduce the test to the students along with the manual and the scoring key. The teacher would demonstrate the test to her/his class laying stress upon rapport building, imparting instructions, and the precautions that need to be taken care of. The test may then be taken by the entire class.
2. The students may be instructed not to write their names or to use fictitious names on the response/scoring sheets. The response sheets of the students may be collected by the teacher. In order to maintain confidentiality, it is desirable that the response sheets are reshuffled and/or fictitious numbers are given to each response sheet.
3. One response sheet each may then be given back by the teacher to students in the class for scoring. As per the instructions given in the manual, the students would be guided to do the scoring.
4. The response/scoring sheets should be kept with the teacher to be used later as hypothetical data for providing hands-on experience in interpretation of test scores.
5. The students will then be required to conduct the same test on the selected participants with the teacher examining their rapport building skills, instruction imparting skills, etc.
6. The teacher may use the scores of the hypothetical data and demonstrate how to use the manual to interpret the raw scores with the help of norms.
7. The students are also told how to draw conclusions based on the analysis of data.
8. Based on the above guidelines, the students will be required to prepare a report of the testing undertaken.

Suggested Format for Writing a Psychological Testing Report

1. *Problem/Title of the Study* (e.g., to study the level of adjustment/personality/ aptitude of Class X students).
2. *Introduction*
   - Basic Concepts
   - Variables
3. *Method*
   - Subject
   - Name
   - Age
   - Gender
   - Class

   (Note : As the data is to be kept confidential, the details of the subject may be given under a fictitious number.)

   - Material
   - Brief description of the test (name of the test, author, year, psychometric properties, etc.).
   - Other materials (e.g., stop watch, screen, etc.).
   - Procedure
   - Process of test administration, such as rapport formation, instructions, precautions, actual conduct of test, etc.
   - Scoring of the test
   - Preparation of graph, psychogram, etc. (if required).
4. *Results and Conclusions*
   - Describing subject's scores in terms of norms and drawing conclusions.
5. *References*
   - List the books, manuals and materials consulted on the topic.

II. CASE PROFILE

Developing a case profile would primarily involve the use of qualitative techniques, such as observation, interview, survey, etc. During the course of preparing a case profile, the students would gain a first-hand experience in the use of these qualitative techniques. The main objective of preparing a case profile is to understand the individual in totality. This would further help in establishing the cause and effect relationship more accurately. The students may prepare a case profile of an individual who has excelled in areas like sports, academics, music, etc. or having special needs like learning disability, autism, Down's syndrome, etc. or those with interpersonal social problems, i.e. poor body image, obesity, temper tantrums, substance abuse, not getting along with peers, withdrawn, etc. They may be encouraged to find out the background information and developmental history of the individual. The students are required to identify the method of inquiry, i.e. interview or observation that they would like to undertake to get complete information of the case. A case profile may be prepared based on the suggested format. The students may be encouraged to reflect on the causes to draw some preliminary conclusions.

Suggested Format for Preparing a Case Profile

A format for case presentation covering broad aspects is given below. It is suggested that the case be developed in a narrative format along the following points:

1. *Introduction*
   - A brief introduction of about one or two pages presenting the nature of the problem, its incidence, likely causes, and possible counselling outcomes.
   - A half page (brief) summary of the case.
2. *Identification of Data*
   - Name (may be fictitious)
   - Diagnosed Problem
   - Voluntary or Referral (i.e., by whom referred — such as teacher, parent, sibling, etc.)
3. *Case History*
   - A paragraph giving age, gender, school attended, class (grade) presently enrolled in, etc.
   - Information about socio-economic status (SES) consisting of information about mother's/father's education and occupation, family income, house type, number of members in the family— brothers, sisters and their birth order, adjustment in the family, etc.
   - Information about physical health, physical characteristics (e.g., height and weight), any disability/illness (in the past and present), etc.
   - Any professional help taken (past and present), giving a brief history of the problem, attitude towards counselling (indicating the motivation to seek help, etc.).
   - Recording signs (i.e., what is observed in terms of facial expressions, mannerisms, etc.) and symptoms (i.e., what the subject reports, for example, fears, worry, tension, sleeplessness, etc.).
4. *Concluding Comments*

GLOSSARY

Actor-observer effect: The tendency to make different attributions for one's own experience or behaviour (actor), and for the same experience or behaviour in the case of another person (observer).

Adaptation: Structural or functional change that enhances the organism's survival value.

Aggression: An overt behaviour intended to hurt someone, either physically or verbally.

Air pollution: Degraded quality of air is air pollution.

Alarm reaction: The first stage of the general adaptation syndrome characterised by an emergency reaction involving the mobilisation of energy through adrenal and sympathetic activity.

Alienation: The feeling of not being part of society or a group.

Anal stage: The second of Freud's psychosexual stages, which occurs during the child's second year. Pleasure is focused on the anus and on retention and expulsion of faeces.

Anorexia nervosa: Disorder involving severe loss of body weight, accompanied by an intense fear of gaining weight or becoming "fat".

Antisocial personality: A behavioural disorder characterised by truancy, delinquency, promiscuity, theft, vandalism, fighting, violation of common social rules, poor work record, impulsiveness, irrationality, aggressiveness, reckless behaviour, and inability to plan ahead. The particular pattern of behaviour varies from individual to individual.

Anxiety: A state of psychic distress characterised by fear, apprehension, and physiological arousal.

Anxiety disorders: Disorders in which anxiety is a central symptom. The disorder is characterised by feelings of vulnerability, apprehension, or fear.

Applied psychology : The practical application of what is known about the mind, brain, and behaviour as a result of theoretical and experimental psychology.

Aptitude: A combination of characteristics indicative of individual's potential to acquire some specific skills with training.

Aptitude tests: Tests meant to measure individual's potential to predict future performance.

Archetypes: Jung's term for the contents of the collective unconscious; images or symbols expressing the inherited patterns for the organisation of experience.

Arousal: The tension experienced at the thought of others being present, and/or performance being evaluated.

Attitudes: States of the mind, thoughts or ideas regarding a topic, containing a cognitive, affective and behavioural component.

Attitude object: The target of an attitude.

Attribution: Explaining our own or others' behaviour by pointing out the cause(s).

Authority: The rights inherent in a position (e.g., managerial) to give orders and to expect the orders to be obeyed,

Autism: Pervasive developmental disorder beginning in infancy and involving a wide range of abnormalities, including deficits in language, perceptual, and motor development, defective reality testing, and social withdrawal.

Balance: The state of an attitude system in which the attitudes between a person (P) and another individual (O), the person (P) and the attitude object (X), and between the other individual (O) and the attitude object (X) are in the same direction, or logically consistent with each other.

Behaviour therapy: Therapy based on the principles of behaviouristic learning theories in order to change the maladaptive behaviour.

Beliefs: The cognitive component of the thoughts or ideas regarding a topic.

Cardinal trait: According to Allport, a single trait that dominates an individual's entire personality.

Case study: An intensive study of an individual or a situation to develop general principles about behaviour.

Central traits: The major trait considered in forming an impression of others.

Centrality of attitude: The extent to which a specific attitude affects the entire attitude system.

Client-centred (Rogerian) therapy: The therapeutic approach developed by Carl Rogers in which therapist helps clients to clarify their true feelings and come to value who they are.

Coaction: A situation in which many people are performing the same task individually in the presence of others.

Cognition: The process of knowing. The mental activities associated with thought, decision-making, language, and other higher mental processes.

Cognitive assessment system: A battery of tests designed to measure the four basic PASS (Planning-Attention-Simultaneous-Successive) processes.

Cognitive consistency: A state in which thoughts or ideas are logically in line with each other.

Cognitive dissonance: The state of an attitude system in which two cognitive elements are logically contradictory, or inconsistent.

Cognitive therapies: Forms of therapy focused on changing distorted and maladaptive patterns of thought.

Cohesiveness: All forces (factors) that cause group members to remain in the group.

Collective unconscious: Inherited portion of the unconscious, as postulated by Carl Jung. The unconscious shared by all human beings.

Communicable disease: An illness due to specific infectious agent capable of being directly or indirectly transmitted from man to man, animal to animal, or from the environment to man or animal.

Competition: Mutual striving between two individuals or groups for the same objective.

Competition tolerance: The ability to put up with a situation in which individuals would have to compete with many others for even basic resources, including physical space.

Compliance: A form of social influence in which one or more persons, not holding authority, accepts direct requests from one or more others.

Componential intelligence: In Sternberg's triarchic theory, it refers to ability to think critically and analytically.

Conflict: A state of disturbance or tension resulting from opposing motives, drives, needs or goals.

Conformity: A type of social influence in which individuals change their attitudes or behaviour in order to adhere to existing social norms.

Congruent attitude change: Attitude change in the same direction as that of the existing attitude.

Contextual intelligence: In Sternberg's triarchic theory, it is the practical intelligence used in solving everyday problems.

Coping: The process of trying to manage demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding one's resources.

Counselling: A broad name for a wide variety of procedures for helping individuals achieve adjustment, such as the giving of advice, therapeutic discussion, the administration and interpretation of tests, and vocational assistance.

Counselling interview: An interview whose purpose is counselling or providing guidance in the area of personality, vocational choice, etc.

Creativity: The ability to produce ideas, objects, and problem solutions that are novel and appropriate.

Crowding: A psychological feeling of too little space; perception of crampedness.

Crowding tolerance: The ability to mentally deal with a high density or crowded environment, such as a crowded residence.

Culture-fair test: A test that does not discriminate examinees on the basis of their cultural experiences.

Defence mechanisms: According to Freud, ways in which the ego unconsciously tries to cope with unacceptable id impulses, as in repression, projection, reaction formation, sublimation, rationalisation, etc.

Deinstitutionalisation: The transfer of former mental patients from institutions into the community.

Delusions: Irrational beliefs that are held despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary.

Depersonalisation disorder: Dissociative disorder in which there is a loss of the sense of self.

Diathesis-stress model: A view that the interaction of factors such as biological predisposition combined with life stress may cause a specific disorder.

Diffusion of responsibility: The thought that when others are present, one person alone will not be held responsible for doing, or not doing, something; other members are also responsible and will therefore do the task.

Disaster: A disaster is an unforeseen and often sudden event that disrupts the normal conditions within a society and causes widespread damage, destruction, and human suffering.

Discrimination: Behaviour that shows a distinction being made between two or more persons, often on the basis of the person's (or persons') membership of a particular group.

Displacement: Redirecting an impulse towards a less threatening or safer target; a key concept in psychoanalytic theory; a defence mechanism.

Dissociation: A split in consciousness whereby certain thoughts, feelings, and behaviour operate independently from others.

Ecology: That branch of biology which deals with the relations of organisms to their environment.

Ego: The part of the personality that provides a buffer between the id and the outside world.

Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT): Commonly called "shock treatment". A biological treatment for unipolar depression in which electrodes attached to a patient's head send an electric current through the brain, causing a convulsion. It is effective in the treatment of cases of several depression that fail to respond to drug therapy.

Emotional intelligence: A cluster of traits or abilities relating to the emotional side of life — abilities such as recognising and managing one's own emotions, being able to motivate oneself and restrain one's impulses, recognising and managing others' emotions, and handling interpersonal relationships in an effective manner. It is expressed in the form of an emotional quotient (EQ) score.

Empathy: Reacting to another's feelings with an emotional response that is similar to the other's feelings.

Environment: Totality, or any aspect of physical and social set-up that surround and affect an individual organism.

Environmental psychology: The branch of psychology that concentrates on the interaction between the physical world and human behaviour.

Evaluation apprehension: The fear of being evaluated negatively by others who are present (an audience).

Exhaustion: State in which energy resources have been used up and responsiveness is reduced to a minimum.

Exorcism: Religiously inspired treatment procedure designed to drive out evil spirits or forces from a "possessed" person.

Experiential intelligence: In Sternberg's triarchic theory, it is the ability to use past experiences creatively to solve novel problems.

Extraversion: One of the dimensions of personality in which interests are directed outwards to nature and other people rather than inwards to the thoughts and feelings of self (introvert).

Extremeness of attitude: Refers to how far an attitude is from the neutral point.

Factor analysis: Mathematical procedure, involving correlations, for sorting trait terms or test responses into clusters or factors; used in the development of tests designed to discover basic personality traits. It identifies items that are homogeneous or internally consistent and independent of others.

Fluid intelligence: Ability to perceive complex relationships, reason abstractly, and solve problems.

Free association: A psychodynamic technique in which the patient describes verbally any thought, feeling, or image that comes to mind, even if it seems unimportant.

Fundamental attribution error: The tendency to attribute internal causes more than external causes for behaviour.

General adaptation syndrome (GAS): It consists of three phases : an alarm phase which promotes sympathetic nervous system activity, a resistance phase during which the organism makes efforts to cope with the threat, and an exhaustion phase which occurs if the organism fails to overcome the threat and depletes its physiological resources.

Genetics: The study of how the qualities of living things are passed on in their genes.

Gestalt therapy: An approach to therapy that attempts to integrate a client's thoughts, feelings, and behaviour into a unified whole.

g-factor: General intelligence factor referring to a basic intellectual capacity underlying all manifestations of intelligence.

Group: Two or more persons who interact with one another, have shared goals, are interdependent, and consider themselves as members of group.

Group test: A test designed to be administered to more than one individual at the same time, in contrast to individual test.

Groupthink: A mode of thinking in which the desire to reach unanimous agreement over-rides the wish to adopt proper, rational, decision-making procedures; an example of group polarisation.

Hallucination: A false perception which has a compulsive sense of the reality of objects although relevant and adequate stimuli for such perception is lacking. It is an abnormal phenomenon.

Halo effect: The tendency to link positive qualities with other positive qualities about which information is not available.

Hardiness: It is a set of beliefs about oneself, the world, and how they interact. It has three characteristics, i.e. commitment, control, and challenge.

Homeostasis: A state of physiological balance within the body.

Humanistic approach: The theory that people are basically good and tend to grow to higher levels of functioning.

Humanistic therapy: A therapy in which the underlying assumption is that people have control over their behaviour, can make choices about their lives, and are essentially responsible for solving their own problems.

Hypochondriasis: A psychological disorder in which the individual is dominated by preoccupation with bodily processes and fear of presumed diseases despite reassurance from doctors that no physical illness exists.

Id: According to Freud, the impulsive and unconscious part of the psyche that operates through the pleasure principle toward the gratification of instinctual drives. The id is conceived as the true unconscious, or the deepest part of the psyche.

Ideal self: The kind of person we would like to be. Also called ego-ideal/idealised self-image.

Identification: The process of feeling one with another person, usually resulting from liking or extreme regard for the other person.

Identity: The distinguishing character of the individual: who each of us is, what our roles are, and what we are capable of.

Incongruent attitude change: Attitude change in a direction opposite to that of the existing attitude.

Individual differences: Distinctiveness and unique variations among people's characteristics and behaviour patterns.

Individual test: A test that must be given to a single individual at a time, typically by a specially trained person. The Binet and Wechsler intelligence tests are examples of individual tests.

Industrial/organisational psychology: A sub-field of psychology that focuses on relationship between people and work. In the contemporary context, the emphasis has

shifted from industrial psychology to organisational psychology, which includes industrial and all other organisations.

Inferiority complex: According to Adler, a complex developed by adults who have not been able to overcome the feelings of inferiority they developed as children, when they were small and limited in their knowledge about the world.

Ingroup: The social group to which an individual perceives herself or himself as belonging ("us"). The group with which one identifies. The other groups are outgroups.

Instrumental perspective: The approach that suggests that the physical environment exists mainly for use by human beings for their comfort and well-being.

Intellectual disability: Sub-average intellectual functioning combined with varying degrees of deficits in adaptive behaviour.

Intellectual giftedness: Exceptional general intellectual efficiency shown in superior performance in a wide range of tasks.

Intelligence: The capacity to understand the world, to think rationally, and to use resources effectively when faced with challenges.

Intelligence quotient (IQ): An index derived from standardised intelligence tests indicating a ratio of mental age to chronological age.

Intelligence tests: Tests designed to measure person's level of intelligence.

Interest: An individual's preference for one or more specific activities.

Interview: Verbal interaction between a respondent and a researcher to gather information about the respondent.

Introversion: One of the dimensions of personality in which interests are directed inwards rather than outwards (extravert).

Kernel of truth: The small element of truth that may be perceived in overgeneralised clusters of beliefs about groups (stereotypes).

Latency period: In Freud's theory of psychosexual stages, the period between the phallic stage and the mature genital stage (period from age 4 or 5 to about 12) during which interest in sex is sublimated.

Libido: Freud introduced this term. In Freud's treatment, libido was quite simply a direct or indirect sexual expression.

Life skills: Abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the environment.

Lifestyle: In the context of health psychology, the overall pattern of decisions and behaviours that determine health and quality of life.

Meditation: A technique of turning one's concentration inward and achieving an altered state of consciousness.

Mental age (MA): A measure of intellectual functioning expressed in terms of age.

Metaneeds: In the hierarchy of needs, those at the top, such as self-actualisation, self-esteem, aesthetic needs, and the like, which can only be satisfied when lower order needs are satisfied.

Modelling: A process of learning in which an individual acquires responses by observing and imitating others.

Mood disorder: Disorder affecting one's emotional state, including depression and bipolar disorder.

Neurotransmitter: Chemicals that carry messages across the synapse to the dendrite (and sometimes the cell body) of a receiver neuron.

Noise: An unwanted sound, one that brings about a negative affective response.

Normal probability curve: A symmetrical, bell-shaped frequency distribution. Most scores are found near the middle, and fewer and fewer occur towards the extremes. Many psychological characteristics are distributed in this manner.

Norms: Standards of test performance that permit the comparison of one person's score on the test to the scores of others who have taken the same test.

Obedience: Confirming behaviour in reaction to the commands of others.

Observational method: A method in which researcher observes a phenomenon that occurs naturally without being able to manipulate any of the factors.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder: A disorder characterised by obsessions or compulsions.

Oedipus complex: The Freudian concept in which the young child develops an intense desire to replace the parent of the same sex and enjoy that affection of the opposite sex parent.

Optimism: The tendency to seek out, remember, and expect pleasurable experiences.

Outgroup: Any group of which an individual is not a member.

Peace: It is the absence of hostility and an expression of harmony with fellow human beings and the environment.

Performance test: A test in which the role of language is minimised, the task requiring overt motor responses other than verbal.

Personal identity: Awareness of oneself as a separate, distinct being.

Personal space: The small area around an individual considered belonging to her/him whose invasion is experienced as threatening or unpleasant.

Persuasibility: The degree to which people can be made to change their attitudes.

Phallic stage: Third of Freud's psychosexual stages (at about age five) when pleasure is focused on the genitals and both males and females experience the "Oedipus complex".

Phobia: A strong, persistent, and irrational fear of some specific object or situation that presents little or no actual danger to a person.

Physical environment: It is the nature that includes climate, air, water, temperature, flora and fauna.

Planning: In Das's PASS model of intelligence, it involves goal setting, strategy selection, and monitoring of goal-orientation.

Positive health: It includes a healthy body, good interpersonal relationships, a sense of purpose in life, and resilience to stress, trauma and change.

Post-traumatic stress disorder: Patterns of symptoms involving anxiety reactions, tensions, nightmares, and depression following a disaster such as an earthquake or a flood.

Poverty: Poverty is the economic deprivation. It is associated with low income, hunger, low caste and class status, illiteracy, poor housing, overcrowding, lack of public amenities, mal- and under-nutrition, and increased susceptibility to diseases.

Poverty alleviation: Measures/programmes taken up to reduce poverty.

Prejudice: A prejudgment, usually a negative attitude that is unverified, and is often towards a group.

Primacy effect: The stronger role of information that comes first.

Primary group: Group in which each member is personally known to each of the other member, and in which the members, at least on occasion, meet face-to-face.

Problem solving behaviour: The activity and mental processes involved in overcoming the obstacles, physical or conceptual, which lie between an animal and its goal.

Pro-environmental behaviour: Willingness and activities of human beings to protect the environment are pro-environmental behaviour.

Projection: A defence mechanism; the process of unwittingly attributing one's own traits, attitudes, or subjective processes to others.

Projective techniques: The utilisation of vague, ambiguous, unstructured stimulus objects or situations in order to elicit the individual's characteristic modes of perceiving her/his world or of behaving in it.

Pro-social behaviour: Behaviour that does good to another person, is done without any pressure from outside, and without any expectation of a reward or return.

Prototype: A schema in the form of a category representing all the possible qualities of an object or a person.

Proximity: The principle of Gestalt psychology that stimuli close together tend to be perceived as a group.

Psychodynamic approach: Approach that strives for explanation of behaviour in terms of motives, or drives.

Psychodynamic therapy: First suggested by Freud; therapy based on the premise that the primary sources of abnormal behaviour are unresolved past conflicts and the possibility

that unacceptable unconscious impulses will enter consciousness.

Psychological test: An objective and standardised instrument for measuring an individual's mental and behavioural traits; used by psychologists to help people make decisions about their lives and understand more about themselves.

Psychoneuroimmunology: Interactions among behavioural, neuroendocrine, and immunological processes of adaptation.

Psychotherapy: The use of any psychological technique in the treatment of mental/psychological disorder or maladjustment.

Rational emotive therapy (RET): A therapeutic system developed by Albert Ellis. It seeks to replace irrational, problem-provoking outlooks with more realistic ones.

Rationalisation: A defence mechanism that occurs when one attempts to explain failure or shortcomings by attributing them to more acceptable causes.

Reaction formation: A defence mechanism in which a person denies a disapproved motive through giving strong expression to its opposite.

Recency effect: The stronger role of information that comes last.

Regression: A defence mechanism that involves a return to behaviours characteristic of an earlier stage in life. The term is also used in statistics, in which with the help of correlation prediction is made.

Rehabilitation: Restoring an individual to normal, or as satisfactory a state as possible, following an illness, criminal episode, etc.

Relaxation training: A procedure in which clients are taught to release all the tension in their bodies.

Repression: A defence mechanism by which people push unacceptable, anxiety-provoking thoughts and impulses into the unconscious to avoid confronting them directly.

Resilience: The maintenance of positive adjustment under challenging life conditions.

Resistance: In psychoanalysis, attempts by the patient to block treatment.

Roles: An important concept in social psychology which refers to the behaviour expected of an individual in accordance with the position s/he holds in a particular society.

Scapegoating: Placing the blame on a group for something that has gone wrong, because the blamed group cannot defend itself.

Schema: A mental structure that guides social (and other) cognition.

Schizophrenia: A group of psychotic reactions characterised by the breakdown of integrated personality functioning, withdrawal from reality, emotional blunting and distortion, and disturbances in thought and behaviour.

Self-actualisation: A state of self-fulfilment in which people realise their highest potential in their own unique way.

Self-awareness: Insight into one's own motives, potential and limitations.

Self-efficacy: Bandura's term for the individual's beliefs about her or his own effectiveness; the expectation that one can master a situation and produce positive outcomes.

Self-esteem: The individual's personal judgment of her or his own worth; one's attitude toward oneself along a positive-negative dimension.

Self-fulfilling prophecy: Behaving in a way that confirms the prediction others make.

Self-regulation: Refers to our ability to organise and monitor our own behaviour.

Sensitivity: Tendency to respond to very low levels of physical stimulation.

Simplicity or complexity (multiplexity) of attitude: Whether the whole attitude consists of a single or very few sub-attitudes (simple), or contains many sub-attitudes (multiplex).

Simultaneous processing: Cognitive processing in the PASS model that involves integrating elements of the stimulus situation into composite and meaningful patterns.

Situationism: A principle which states that situations and circumstances outside oneself have the power to influence behaviour.

Social cognition: The processes through which we notice, interpret, remember, and later use social information. It helps in making sense of other people and ourselves.

Social facilitation: The tendency for people's performance to improve in the presence of others, or an audience.

Social identity: A person's definition of who she or he is; includes personal attributes (self-concept) along with membership in various groups.

Social influence: The process by which the actions of an individual or group affect the behaviour of others.

Social inhibition: Social restraint on conduct.

Social loafing: In a group, each additional individual puts in less effort, thinking that others will be putting in their effort.

Social support: Information from other people that one is loved and cared for, esteemed and valued, and part of a network of communication and mutual obligation.

Somatoform disorders: Conditions involving physical complaints or disabilities occurring in the absence of any identifiable organic cause.

Spiritual perspective: The perspective that specifies to do activities what are desirable in accordance with the scriptures. It pleads for a harmony between man and nature.

Status: Social rank within a group.

Stereotype: An overgeneralised and unverified prototype about a particular group.

Stress: Our response to events that disrupt or threaten to disrupt our physical and psychological functioning.

Stressors: Events or situations in our environment that cause stress.

Structure: The enduring form and composition of a complex system or phenomenon. Contrast with function, which is a process of a relatively brief duration, arising out of structure.

Substance abuse: The use of any drug or chemical to modify mood or behaviour that results in impairment.

Successive processing: Cognitive processing in the PASS model where elements of the stimulus situation are responded to sequentially.

Superego: According to Freud, the final personality structure to develop; it represents society's standards of right and wrong as handed down by person's parents, teachers, and other important figures.

Surface traits: R.B. Cattell's term for clusters of observable trait elements (responses) that seem to go together. Factor analysis of the correlations reveals source traits.

Syndrome: Group or pattern of symptoms that occur together in a disorder and represent the typical picture of the disorder.

Systematic desensitisation: A form of behavioural therapy in which phobic client learns to induce a relaxed state and then exposed to stimuli that elicit fear or phobia.

Therapeutic alliance: The special relationship between the client and the therapist; contractual nature of the relationship and limited duration of the therapy are its two major components.

Token economy: Forms of behaviour therapy based on operant conditioning in which hospitalised patients earn tokens they can exchange for valued rewards, when they behave in ways the hospital staff consider to be desirable.

Trait: A relatively persistent and consistent behaviour pattern manifested in a wide range of circumstances.

Trait approach: An approach to personality that seeks to identify the basic traits necessary to describe personality.

Transactional approach: It includes interactions between people and environment. Human beings affect the environment and in turn are affected by the environment.

Transference: Strong positive or negative feelings toward the therapist on the part of individual undergoing psychoanalysis.

Typology: Ways of categorising individuals into discrete categories or types, e.g. Type-A personality.

Unconditional positive regard: An attitude of acceptance and respect on the part of an observer, no matter what the other person says or does.

Unconscious: In psychoanalytic theory, characterising any activity or mental structure which a person is not aware of.

Valence of attitude: Whether an attitude is positive or negative.

Values: Enduring beliefs about ideal modes of behaviour or end-state of existence; attitudes that have a strong evaluative and 'ought' aspect.

Verbal test: Test in which a subject's ability to understand and use words and concepts is important in making the required responses.

SUGGESTED READINGS

For developing further understanding on the topics, you may like to read the following books

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