



Self-Efficacy of Guidance Counselors in the Use of Eclectic Interventions in Counseling

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the perspectives and challenges Registered Guidance Counselors (RGCs) faced with eclectic counseling. Among the CNSC RGCs, there was a wide range of knowledge, attitudes, and practical experiences, often shaped by each counselor's unique background and formal training. RGCs highlighted adaptability and individualized care as key, finding that no single therapeutic model adequately addressed the diversity of client issues. Over time, they shifted from relying on a single approach to integrating techniques tailored to individual needs, enhancing client empowerment and ensuring safety in urgent cases. They cited client engagement as essential to successful counseling and emphasized the counselor's role in maintaining high standards, ongoing education, and ethical conduct. On the other hand, through a review of 10 studies, key trends emerged: flexibility, e-counseling, youth-oriented therapy, integrative evaluation, and the impact of counselor attitudes on intervention choices. These trends underscored a growing shift toward flexible and client-centered eclectic approaches in counseling. Most RGCs felt confident in designing and implementing eclectic methods, with 80% expressing high self-efficacy in tailoring techniques to clients. This self-efficacy positioned RGCs well to address complex client needs in the dynamic mental health environment.

Keywords: Guidance and Counseling, eclectic counseling, self-efficacy, counselors, Camarines Norte State College, Camarines Norte, Philippines

1. Introduction

Eclectic therapy is a very deliberate approach to mental health therapy, even though it is adaptable and draws from various therapeutic modalities based on the needs of the client. Counselors deliberately choose their approaches according to predetermined standards. In situations where a patient is not responding to a specific treatment plan and the counselor and patient would want to explore other options, eclectic therapy can be helpful. An eclectic approach can be used in both individual and group therapy settings (Psychology Today, 2022).

Eclectic therapy stands as a dynamic psychotherapeutic approach, seamlessly blending techniques and methods from diverse therapeutic modalities. This adaptable method empowers therapists to meticulously tailor treatment to the unique requirements of each individual client. Among the array of psychotherapies commonly interwoven into eclectic therapy are Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), which targets negative thought patterns and behaviors, fostering healthier coping mechanisms. Humanistic approaches like person-centered therapy place emphasis on empathy, genuineness, and unconditional positive regard, nurturing self-exploration and personal growth. Psychodynamic therapy delves into the depths of past experiences and unconscious conflicts to illuminate present thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, enriching self-awareness and insight. Existential therapy delves into life's profound questions, exploring the search for meaning, freedom, and responsibility, often confronting existential dilemmas such as death and choice. Gestalt therapy accentuates mindfulness and integration of fragmented aspects of personality, striving for wholeness in the present moment. Family systems therapy meticulously dissects the dynamics and patterns within familial relationships, striving to enhance communication, resolve conflicts, and foster healthier family functioning. Mindfulness-based approaches, including mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) and dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), infuse mindfulness techniques to heighten awareness, acceptance, and emotional regulation. Finally, Solution-focused therapy harnesses clients' strengths and resources to chart a path towards specific goals and solutions to their challenges. This comprehensive integration of diverse psychotherapeutic approaches within eclectic therapy offers a nuanced and personalized approach to addressing the multifaceted needs of clients navigating their mental health journey.

The use of eclectic intervention enhances therapeutic effectiveness by maximizing the likelihood of positive outcomes and overcoming barriers to progress. Each individual's needs, preferences, and circumstances are unique. Eclectic intervention allows therapists to tailor treatment to the specific requirements of each client, drawing from a diverse range of therapeutic techniques and modalities. This personalized approach increases the likelihood of effectiveness and client satisfaction. Furthermore, eclectic intervention acknowledges that human experience is complex and multifaceted. By integrating various therapeutic modalities, therapists can address not only the symptoms but also the underlying causes and contributing factors of mental health issues, promoting holistic healing and growth. Additionally, it promotes inclusivity and cultural competence by accommodating the diverse

backgrounds and experiences of clients. Overall, eclectic intervention in therapy provides therapists with a versatile toolkit to meet the diverse needs of clients and promote holistic healing and growth.

1.1 Research Objectives

This study explored the self-efficacy of RGCs in conducting eclectic counseling. Furthermore, it explored the dynamics and potentialities of the eclectic approach in enhancing contemporary eclectic counseling in Camarines Norte.

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following objectives:

1. To describe the perspectives and challenges experienced by counselors with regard to eclectic counseling
2. To identify the trends in the practice of eclectic approach in counseling
3. To describe the perceived self-efficacy of counselors in conducting eclectic interventions in counseling
4. To introduce the Counselors' Hub: a concept design for an interactive consultancy portal to strengthen the potential of eclectic approach in enhancing contemporary counseling

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study employed the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research was well-suited for exploring the context, processes, and meanings behind behaviors or experiences essential for the study. In the study, the qualitative method was utilized to describe the nature, scope, and relevance of eclectic interventions in counseling, as well as to identify the trends in the practice of the eclectic approach in counseling.

Data Gathering Procedure

Structured interview guide was used to gather the perspectives, challenges, and experiences of RGCs while secondary data was compiled to describe the nature, scope, and relevance of eclectic interventions in counseling, as well as to identify the trends in the practice of the eclectic approach in counseling.

2.2 Respondents and Locale

The respondents of the study included the hired Registered Guidance Counselors (RGCs) in the province of Camarines Norte, wherein one (1) works in the Department of Education (DepEd) school, while the other five (5) work at the Camarines Norte State College (CNSC). These participants were purposefully selected and represent all existing RGCs in Camarines Norte.

Table 1 - Demographic Profile of the Respondents.

	Agency	Frequency	Percentage
Registered Counselors (RGCs)	CNSC	5	83%
	Talabatib National High School (DepEd)	1	17%
<i>Total</i>		<i>N=6</i>	<i>100%</i>

2.3 Data Analysis Technique

Content analysis was used to interpret the qualitative data gathered in the study. The researcher analyzed the presence, meanings, and relationships of words, themes, or concepts based from the interview among the participants. The said analysis technique was also used to examine existing literature and articles pertaining to eclectic intervention.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Perspectives and challenges experienced by counselors with regard to eclectic counseling.

The study found out there was a significant diversity in their knowledge, perspectives, and practical experiences related to conducting eclectic counseling. Having formal training and credentials, the RGCs generally demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of eclectic counseling methodologies, integrating various counseling theories and techniques to address a range of client needs effectively. Their approach reflected a nuanced grasp of the theoretical underpinnings and adaptability required for this integrative style.

The participants recognized several hindering factors impacting a counseling progress. One significant reason is the client's unwillingness to engage in the process; despite the counselor's best efforts, resistance can lead to the necessity of referral or termination of the intervention. Some of the participants also experience countertransference, which hindered the therapeutic relationship and result in mutual unwillingness to continue. Various personal and social factors, such as the client's support system, time availability, and level of engagement, had significantly impacted the effectiveness of counseling, as well. Lastly, even with support from the school, a client's return to a harmful home environment, where their well-being is not prioritized by parents or guardians, posed a significant challenge in achieving positive outcomes.

Based on their experiences, the participants believed that one important enabling factor in effective counseling is acknowledging that counseling not just about the approaches and techniques used; it is about how the counselor perceives and treats the client as a whole person, which includes listening without judgment. They emphasized the importance of being solution-focused in their interventions, favoring approaches that target clients' needs but yield visible progress within a short time-frame. They emphasized that delays in progress could lead to worsening maladjustment. They also acknowledged that their personalities, values, perceptions, skills, knowledge, and accumulated experiences significantly enhanced their effectiveness of the interventions conducted among clients. With time and practice, they found it easier to understand clients' concerns and assess their needs.

The insights gathered from the participants revealed a compelling narrative about the evolving nature of eclectic counseling practices. The RGCs, with their formal training and diverse experiences, emphasized the necessity of adaptability, individualized care, and the active engagement of clients in the therapeutic process. Their recognition of the limitations imposed by rigid methodologies led them to embrace a more integrative approach that valued collaboration with other stakeholders, such as teachers and parents, to support client progress. However, the challenges highlighted, including client resistance and external factors affecting well-being, underscored the complexity of the counseling landscape. Ultimately, the findings pointed to the importance of tailored professional development and ongoing education for counselors, ensuring they were equipped to meet the diverse needs of clients in an ever-changing environment.

3.2 Trends in the practice of eclectic approach in the counseling profession.

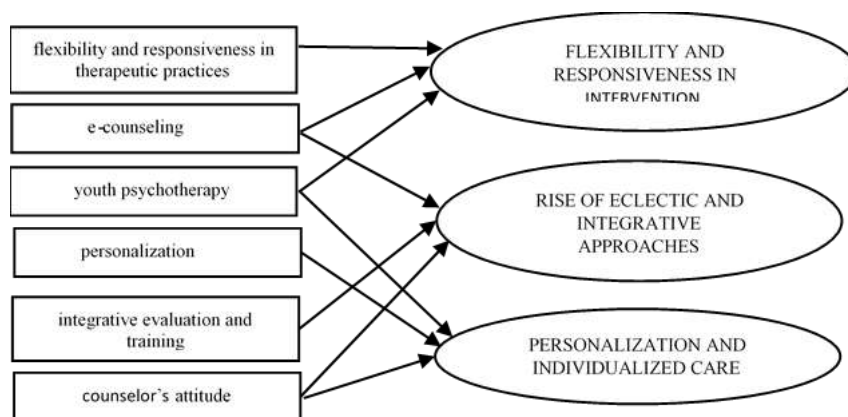


Fig. 1 - The key themes based from the content of 10 analyzed researchers that shape the trends in eclectic counseling.

To identify trends in the practice of eclectic psychotherapy in counseling, 10 existing studies were analyzed. This was conducted by first developing a coding scheme that outlined the categories or themes to analyze, using predefined categories based on the research question or emergent themes identified during the familiarization stage. Next, the content of each study was systematically coded according to this scheme, tagging relevant sections of text to organize and categorize the information for further analysis. Once the data was coded, it was examined to identify patterns, themes, and trends, which involved counting the frequency of specific codes and comparing findings across studies.

After analyzing the 10 researchers, it was observed that the trend in utilizing an eclectic approach in counseling was influenced by several factors categorized into: flexibility and responsiveness in therapeutic practices; e-counseling; youth psychotherapy and personalization; integrative evaluation and training; and therapist attitudes and common factors. From these categories, three themes emerged: (1) flexibility and responsiveness in therapy; (2) the rise of eclectic and integrative approaches; and (3) personalization and individualized care.

The first theme, flexibility and responsiveness in therapy, emphasizes the movement away from strictly following set therapeutic models. Instead, it advocates for a more adaptive approach, where therapists respond to each client's unique needs and dynamics. Prioritizing elements like relationship quality, therapist authenticity, and client motivation is essential for achieving more effective therapeutic outcomes. Jumail et al. (2021) observed a shift among therapists from early-career adherence to rigid models toward more flexible approaches, where the focus shifted to relationship quality, therapist authenticity, and client motivation. Similarly, Deane et al. (2020) critiqued rigid, prescriptive evaluation models, advocating for a more adaptable, integrative approach in real-world settings. They suggested using a theoretically integrative design that combines program theory-driven and utilization-focused evaluations, enhancing therapeutic effectiveness. Wakefield et al. (2020) supported multi-theoretical, integrative clinical interventions and training, cautioning that relying solely on a single therapeutic model can reduce effectiveness and lead to clinical failures.

The second theme, the rise of eclectic and integrative approaches, indicates a trend toward combining different therapeutic techniques within a cohesive framework. Tabatabaeifar et al. (2023) underscored the value of integrative psychotherapy, which combines diverse techniques within a unified framework for a comprehensive and adaptable approach, identifying key areas for integration like personal schemas and emotions, with schema therapy highlighted as particularly effective. Behan (2022) presented an e-counseling model that integrates directive and non-directive methods, creating a balanced and flexible approach. Yota (2022) also discussed the effectiveness of eclectic counseling in improving quality of life among health professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing individualized support and adapting practices to address pandemic-related stressors. Sil (2020) explored analytic eclecticism, showing how it allows therapists to navigate complex situations by integrating different methods pragmatically, blending eclecticism with pragmatism to support flexible, individualized practices.

The third theme, personalization and individualized care, underscores the importance of customizing therapy to fit each client's unique personality, motivations, and life challenges. Such personalized approaches have been shown to enhance client engagement and improve outcomes, especially in specialized areas like youth psychotherapy. Pradhan & Sahoo (2023) focused on youth psychotherapy, describing the evolution of therapies with multidisciplinary roots and evidence-based practices (EBPs) with high efficacy, underscoring the need for personalized, tailored approaches to bridge the gap between research and practice. Cramer et al. (2020) found that therapist attitudes, rather than specific training, often influenced intervention choices, suggesting that therapists' attitudes contribute more to individualized care than rigid adherence to specific models. Yota (2022) further supported the role of personalized counseling for health professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic by emphasizing individualized support for unique stressors over group-based models.

Together, these themes of flexibility, integration, and personalization reveal a significant shift in therapy toward more adaptive, client-centered care, recognizing the importance of tailored interventions for diverse client needs.

3.3 Perceived self-efficacy of counselors in Camarines Norte in conducting eclectic interventions in counselling.

In terms of self-efficacy in eclectic counseling, the respondents could be seen as efficacious due to their experiences, knowledge, skills, and training in various counseling techniques and approaches. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in his or her capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997).

As mentioned earlier, however, there were differences in their approaches. These differences stemmed from their individual backgrounds and levels of formal training, which influenced how they integrated and applied eclectic methodologies in their practice. Despite these variances, their collective expertise contributed to their confidence in adapting counseling strategies to meet the diverse needs of their clients effectively. Ultimately, this self-efficacy reflected their ability to navigate complex counseling scenarios and foster positive outcomes in their therapeutic work.

Regarding the crafting and development of eclectic interventions, 30% of the respondents believed they were highly efficacious, while 70% felt they were efficacious. Concerning their ability to effortlessly select combinations of psychotherapies deemed suitable for designing eclectic interventions, 50% said they were highly efficacious, 33% believed they were efficacious, and 17% claimed she was moderately efficacious. Meanwhile, 83% of the RGCs considered eclectic interventions to be both practical and innovative, particularly when tailored to address specific cases. They expressed confidence in their capacity to formulate eclectic interventions based on their understanding of classical psychotherapies. However, 17% remained somewhat skeptical about their proficiency in the design and development of eclectic interventions.

In terms of implementing eclectic psychotherapy, 83% of the respondents believed they were highly efficacious in utilizing eclectic interventions. The same percentage applied to their understanding of which eclectic interventions were most effective for specific cases, their ability to readily adjust their eclectic approach as necessary, their comfort in employing eclectic interventions, and their confidence in properly implementing these techniques. This indicates that the majority of the RGCs felt highly efficacious in applying eclectic techniques in their counseling practices, while the remaining 17% felt they were efficacious.

This confidence reflects the RGCs ability to navigate complex therapeutic scenarios, showcasing their competence in selecting and tailoring interventions based on classical psychotherapies (as shown in Appendix E). Despite a small percentage expressing skepticism about their proficiency in designing eclectic interventions, the overall data underscores a strong belief among RGCs in their capacity to foster positive outcomes through eclectic counseling practices. Ultimately, this self-efficacy positions them well to respond to the diverse and dynamic needs of their clients in a rapidly evolving mental health landscape.

3.4 The Counselors' Hub: a concept design for an interactive consultancy portal to strengthen the potential of eclectic approach in enhancing contemporary counseling.

Given that RGCs are well-versed in interventions and their application, consultancy emerges as a viable solution to address the shortage of counselors in schools. Some institutions may designate individuals to serve as guidance personnel without formal training, it is important to note that this approach is contradictory with Republic Act 9258, which states that no individual shall engage in the practice of guidance and counseling without a valid Certificate of Registration and a Professional Identification Card or special permit. Nonetheless, RGCs can still provide valuable guidance in other areas related to counseling and share insights on handling specific situations, ensuring that they adhere to both the law and the ethical standards of the profession. Therefore, the establishment of the 'Counselors' Hub' consultancy portal is highly recommended. The portal is specifically tailored for counselor-to-counselor interactions, allowing RGCs to share ideas, discuss cases and interventions, and exchange innovative practices. This collaborative platform not only fosters professional development but also strengthens the support network for guidance personnel, ultimately enhancing the quality of services provided to students.

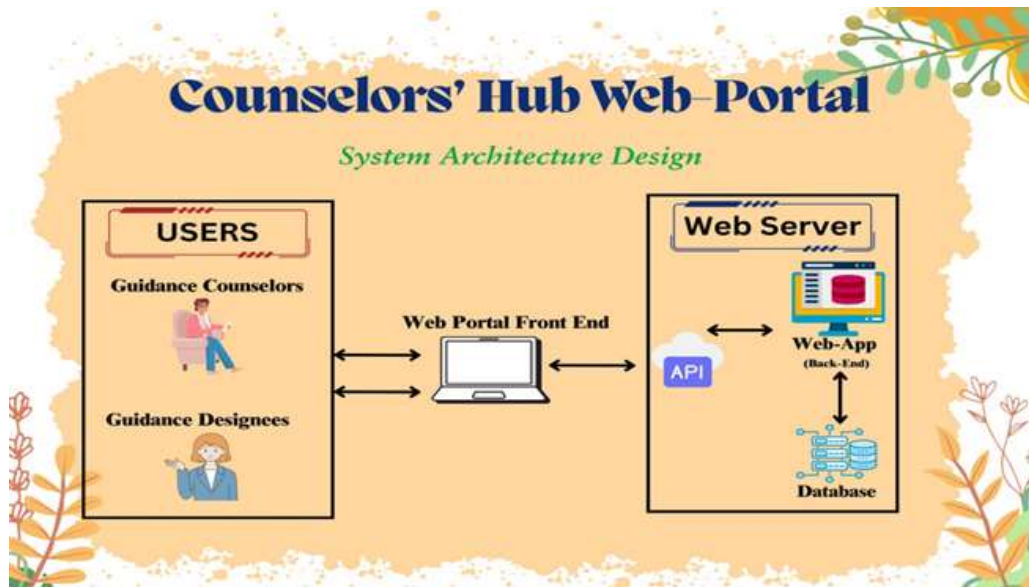


Fig. 2 - The System Architecture design of the proposed Counselors' Hub.

Through the sharing of expertise and ideas, eclectic psychotherapy and integrative approaches could be significantly strengthened. The 'Counselors Hub' serves as a vital resource that empowers counselors to explore their creativity and innovative potential while upholding ethical standards, thereby enhancing the quality of interventions and ultimately leading to better outcomes for clients. By encouraging collaboration and knowledge sharing, the hub not only enriches the professional development of its users but also supports a more responsive and effective approach to counseling in diverse educational contexts.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study revealed that RGCs displayed varying degrees of expertise, perspectives, and experiences in eclectic counseling, demonstrating an adaptable, integrative approach to addressing diverse client needs. They emphasized the importance of individualized care and found that as their experience grew, they moved from single-method counseling toward eclectic approaches to enhance therapeutic effectiveness. While some RGCs felt highly efficacious in designing eclectic interventions, a few expressed reservations about their proficiency, though the majority were confident in selecting and implementing eclectic strategies based on classical psychotherapies. They viewed flexibility and responsiveness as essential for effective counseling and saw solution-focused approaches as beneficial, especially when collaborating with teachers and parents. However, RGCs also faced challenges, such as client resistance, social factors, and returning clients to unsupportive environments, which sometimes hindered progress. Overall, their training, adaptability, and ethical commitment helped them navigate complex cases, indicating a high level of self-efficacy in eclectic counseling.

To face the challenges in counseling and support the continued development of eclectic counseling skills, professional development programs should include training on integrative techniques and flexibility within therapy, focusing on tailoring interventions to client-specific needs. Given that eclectic counseling aligns with global trends in the field, accessible resources are essential to help RGCs and designated personnel navigate the legal and ethical complexities of this approach, ensuring all interventions align with RA 9258 and professional guidelines. To foster continuous improvement, RGCs should engage in periodic self-efficacy assessments to identify growth areas and strengthen confidence in their eclectic counseling skills. Additionally, further research is needed to better understand and validate the benefits of eclectic counseling, as studies on this approach remain limited.

To enhance counselors' self-efficacy in designing and implementing eclectic interventions, creating a dedicated portal—such as the Counselors Hub—would be invaluable. This platform would facilitate counselor-to-counselor exchanges on advanced methodologies while providing ethical, legally

compliant guidance for all. By making the hub accessible to counselors, it maximizes reach, encouraging widespread adoption and consistent usage. The portal would foster a collaborative spirit, embodying the principle that "sharing is caring" to inspire collective learning and support. Counselors would benefit from actively participating, tapping into the hub's resources to refine practices and elevate the field together

Acknowledgment

The author would like to thank the Camarines Norte State College (CNSC) for funding and supporting this research.

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