

A Pilot Study of Client's Changes Instrument in Self-Perception, Perception towards Others, Personality and Behaviour

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Abstract: A successful counselling session are usually measured either based on the academic changes or behaviour changes of the clients. But, there is the need to see what are the changes take place in clients' mind or called 'insight'. To measure the insight of the clients, the researcher developed instrument called Client's Changes Instrument. Client's Changes Instrument is constructed based Carl Rogers' book, "Client-Centered Therapy" that outlined the client changes after counselling sessions. The instrument has 4 constructs that are Changes in Self-Perception, Changes in Perception towards Others, Changes in Personality and Changes in Behaviour. The instruments is administered to 32 participants of secondary school students aged 13 to 16 in a selected Malaysia secondary school. Cronbach alpha is used in determining the reliability if the instrument. The result shows that this instrument has high reliability as the value of Cronbach alpha is $\alpha=.957$. The reliability of each construct also indicated high reliability as Changes in Self-Perception ($\alpha=.928$), Changes in Perception towards Others ($\alpha=.847$), Changes in Personality ($\alpha=.839$) and Changes in Behaviour ($\alpha=.850$). With the outcome of this instrument, it is an instrument with high reliability and can be used by counsellors to check their effectiveness in their services.

Keywords: counselling, Person-Centered Therapy, Carl Rogers, Client's Changes, pilot study

I. INTRODUCTION

Counseling is a process to provide systematic help based on the principles of professional counseling. This helping relationship is made to bring personal changes to a better and holistic way of life. The counselor acts to help the client explore the issues he or she is in, and then helps the client explore all aspects that can help the client resolve the issue by themselves. This exploration will raise awareness of the situation, and the choices it has, and subsequently help the client make the decision to resolve the issue (Abdullah & Mohd Tamin, 2003; Sharf, 2000; Tang, 1989).

The effectiveness of Guidance and Counseling services is often measured from the perspective of client satisfaction as well as client changes (Mohd Atan, 2000; Cheruiyot & Orodho, 2015; Zainudin & Yusop, 2018). Clients also noted that there was a difference in their level of satisfaction with the counseling program (Kauthar Baks,

2003). Client change is measured either by academic improvement as reported by Sulaiman (2001) as well as emotional and behavioural change as reported by Jessie Chua (2003) and Abd Ghani (2009).

In choosing a backbone of the study, the Person-Centered Therapy is chosen. The Theory Person-Centered Therapy was introduced by Carl Rogers (1902-1986) in his first book, *Counseling and Psychotherapy*, published in 1942. Rogers has a strong academic background in psychoanalytic practice. Rogers as a practitioner and a psychoanalytic educator finds it difficult to adopt a psychoanalytic approach as it conflicts with his belief that humans are responsible for determining himself rather than being influenced by past experiences.

As a psychoanalyst practitioner, Rogers does not agree that individual behaviour is affected by 'fixation' in the past. Rogers saw that individuals have a desire for perfection and are able to plan their own behaviour. According to the Person-Centered Therapy Theory, individuals are helped to become more mature and able to redesign their actions toward perfection. Clients are also able to solve their problems in a more realistic and rational way (Barrett-Lennard, 1998; Sharf, 2015; Rogers, 1951).

The Person-Centered Therapy sees humans has potential to change. Selection of Person-Centered Therapy Theory as a research guide because this theory has no interpretation or meaning to the client's behaviour compared to the beliefs of Psychoanalysis Theory. This Person-Centered Therapy also has no specific technique for shaping new client behaviours compared to other theories such as Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) and Behaviour Therapy. The Person-Centered Therapy also does not change the client's thinking technically as it does in REBT or Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT). The Person-Centered Therapy focuses only on the client in the process of exploring himself rather than focusing on a planned change. The approach used by the counselor is also not technical, the counselor only needs to meet the core elements of the congruence, unconditionally acceptance, and empathy.

The concept of congruence refers to the self of someone who resembles what he or she experiences. The first attitude that should be present in this therapeutic development is congruence, sincerity or solidarity. This means that, in dealing with clients, the counselor is always free and earnestly aware of his conscious awareness, rather than masking it consciously or not to describe himself. The concept of Unconditional Positive Regards means that everyone wants a meaningful relationship - to be accepted, loved, respected, and trusted. Counselors, when dealing with clients, need to be open-minded about clients, not to evaluate their strength and weaknesses, and value their

relationships with clients. This will allow clients to communicate openly and freely. This acceptance indicates that no positive or negative assessment was judged by the counsellor. It involves accepting all of the client's experiences whether they are sad, fearful, giving up and odd experiences or positive, mature, confident and happy. All of these feelings, including whether or not the client is consistent, are fully welcomed rather than dominated or compliant with the needs of the counsellor. This means that the client is accepted as an individual with the permission to accept his or her feelings and experiences wholeheartedly.

The concept of empathy refers to the ability of the counselor to understand the client and help exactly what the client experienced. The counselor as if experiencing what the client is experiencing, if not emotionally it must be at least cognitively. By properly understanding the client's internal world the counselor will understand what the client is experiencing. The counselor will try to deal with the client's feelings of anger, fear or awkwardness, just as he or she may have, even though he or she has never experienced anger, fear or guilt. When the counselor is very clear to the client and he or she is free to move around in his or her world, the counselor can communicate his or her understanding of what the client is clearly seeing, as well as convey the meaning of the client's experience. By applying these three key elements, counselors can help clients explore themselves in order to make changes in themselves.

In his book Client-Centered Therapy, (Rogers, 1951) he outlined the success of a counseling session based on the internal changes experienced by clients. These changes occur during the process and continue until after the session. These internal changes are important for clients to see and redefine. Among the changes mentioned are:

- i- *Change of perception toward self*
- ii- *Change in manner of perception*
- iii- *Change in personality structure and organization*
- iv- *Change in behaviour*

II. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are:

- 1) To determine the validity of Client's Changes Instrument through content validity
- 2) To determine the reliability of Client's Changes Instrument through Factor Analysis

III. METHODOLOGY

The quantitative study applies survey method using questionnaire. The location is one of the secondary school in Malaysia. A total of 32 students were selected as respondents. The selection criterion is that the respondent who has completed a counselling session. The Person-Centered Therapy Approach was applied in the counselling session.

Client Changes are measured using the Client's Changes Instrument developed by the researcher. This

instrument is based on the theory of Person-Centered Therapy. Client Changes constructed directly from Carl Rogers' book, Client-Centered Therapy. He outlines the Client Changes after the session, which is when clients experience changes (Rogers, 1951).

IV. FINDINGS

Validity of Client's Changes Instrument

There are 58 items in the Client's Changes Instrument. The items in this survey were divided into four constructs namely Changes in Self-Perception, Changes in Perception, Changes in Personality and Behaviour Change. There are 24 items submitted that reflect the client's personal transformation in Changes in Self-Perception. As for the Changes in Perception style, 12 items are specifically designed to look at the changes that occur within clients in their perceptual style.

For the Changes in Personality construct, eight items are provided in this section. This section reviews the client's personality changes that may occur after the counselling process. For the Behavioural Change construct, there were 14 items that measured client behaviour change after counselling.

For validation purpose, this instrument obtains construct validity from experts in counselling field. Items in the Client's Changes Instrument were reviewed by a panel of experts of five lecturers in the Institution of Higher Education. The panel of experts selection are the pioneer in the field of Counseling in Malaysia and three of these panelists are professors at public institutions of higher learning in Malaysia. All panelists have confirmed that each of the item matches with the insight concept in the Theory of Person-Centered Therapy.

TABLE I: THE CONSTRUCT OF CLIENT CHANGES INSTRUMENT

CONSTRUCT	EXCERP	NUMBER OF ITEM
Change in perception of and attitude toward self	There is a tendency for the 'acceptance of self', operationally defined, to increase during therapy. Acceptance of self means that the client tends; 1. to perceive himself as a person of worth, worthy of respect rather than condemnation 2- to perceive his standards as being based upon his own experience, rather than upon the attitudes or desires of others 3- to perceive his own feelings, motives, social and personal experiences, without distortion of the basic sensory data 4- to be comfortable in acting in terms of these perceptions From studies it would appear that the individual in 'successful' therapy tends; 1. to perceive his abilities and characteristics with more objectivity and with greater comfort 2. to perceive all aspects of self and self-in-relationship with less emotion and more objectivity	24

	<p>3- to perceive himself as more independent and more able to cope with life problems</p> <p>4- to perceive himself as more able to be spontaneous and genuine</p> <p>5- to perceive himself as the evaluator of experience, rather than regarding himself as existing in a world where the values are inherent in and attached to the objects of his perception</p> <p>6- to perceive himself as more integrated, less divided</p> <p>The essential elements would appear to be that the individual changes in three general ways;</p> <p>1- he perceives himself as a more adequate person, with more worth and more possibility of meeting life</p> <p>2- he permits more experiential data to enter awareness, and thus achieves a more realistic appraisal of himself, his relationships, and his environment</p> <p>3- he places the basis of standards within himself, reorganizing the "goodness" and the "badness" of any experience or perceptual object is not something inherent in that object, but is a value placed on it by himself.</p>	
Change in the manner of perception	<p>Characteristically the client changes from high-level abstractions to more differentiated perceptions, from wide generalizations to limited generalizations. The client shows positive qualities, at still other times exhibiting negative aggression. He experiences himself as being quite variable in functioning. He finds it is much easier to accept this more differentiated person.</p> <p>He moves from generalizations which have been found unsatisfactory for guiding his life, to an examination of the rich primary experiences upon which, a movement which exposes the falsity of many of his generalizations, and provides a basis for new and more adequate abstractions. Certainly in the most successful therapy he has also internalized the desirability of building more closely on direct experience, particularly when the guides he has been using for his living prove questionable.</p> <p>Using other semantic terminology, one may say that the client gradually reduces the intentional quality of his reactions. This may be defined as the tendency to see things in limited, differentiated terms, to be aware of the time-space anchorage of facts, to be dominated by facts not by concepts, to evaluate in multiple ways, to be aware of different</p>	12

	<p>levels of abstraction, to test his inferences and abstractions by reality.</p>	
Changes in personality structure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. increased unification and integration of personality 2. lessened degree of neurotic tendency 3. decreased amount of anxiety 4. increased in degree of acceptance of self and of emotionally as a part of self 5. increased objectivity in dealing with reality 6. increased in effective mechanisms for dealing with stress-creating situations 7. increased in constructive feeling and attitudes 8. increased in intellectual functioning 	14
Changes in behaviour	<p>We shall present these in sequential order as they verified evidence of behavioural change in the direction of improved adjustment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. During the latter part of therapy the client's conversation includes an increased discussion of plans and behavioural steps to be undertaken, and discussion of the outcomes of these steps. 2. In successful person-centered therapy, an examination of all references to current behaviour indicates that there is a change from relatively immature behaviour to relatively mature behaviour during the course of the interviews. 3. In successful person-centered therapy there is a decrease in psychological tension as evidenced in the client's verbal productions. 4. In successful person-centered therapy there appears to be a decrease in current defensive behaviours which are present. 5. As a result of therapy the client shows an increased tolerance for frustration as objectively measured in physiological terms. 6. One behavioural outcome of person-centered therapy is improved functioning in life tasks; improvement the part of school children, improvement in adjustment to job training and job performance on the part of adults. 	8

For the purpose of validating the Client Changes Instrument, all items reaching a specified validity level (factor loading .30 and above) for each construct are retained as items in the instrument. For items that did not meet the specified validity (below .30 and below) were excluded from the questionnaire. A total of 6 items were removed from the questionnaire for the first time. Hair et al., (2018) defines the validity of the extent to which each statement is capable of measuring the components (variables) that are intended. To measure the validity of the Client Change Instrument after six items were dropped, the researcher performed a factor analysis (Factor Analysis).

This process is important because sometimes the high values of Cronbach Alpha (Alpha value if item is dropped) and Corrected Item-Total Correlation do not mean that the questionnaire has high validity. In this process, items with a loading value of less than 0.3 are dropped from the instrument because they indicate that the question cannot measure what is intended (Wiersma, 2000). Another 3 items were removed which makes and the total number of items removed as 9 items.

TABLE 2: ITEM BEFORE AND AFTER FACTOR ANALYSIS

CONSTRUCT	ITEM BEFORE FACTOR ANALYSIS	ITEM AFTER FACTOR ANALYSIS
Change of perception toward self	26	24
Change in manner of perception	15	12
Change in personality structure and organization	16	14
Change in behaviour	10	8
CLIENT CHANGES INSTRUMENT	67	58

Reliability of Client's Changes Instrument

Based on the analysis factors, all loading factors for each item reached a set value of .30 and above .30 (Hair et al., 2018). As each item achieved a good loading factor, the validity of the questionnaire was strengthened. For the purposes of reliability of the Client Change Instrument, the pilot study showed high reliability and all items received were at a value of .90 alpha cronbach's. This value is high because the alpha cronbach's value for the items in the self-administered questionnaire needs to be at least 0.60 (Hair et al, 2018).

Cronbach alpha is used in determining the reliability of the instrument. The result shows that this instrument has high reliability as the value of Cronbach alpha is $\alpha=.957$. The reliability of each construct also indicated high reliability as in Changes in Self-Perception ($\alpha=.928$), Changes in Perception towards Others ($\alpha=.847$), Changes in Personality ($\alpha=.839$) and Changes in Behaviour ($\alpha=.850$).

TABLE 3: THE ALPHA CRONBACH VALUE OF EACH CONSTRUCT

CONSTRUCT	ALPHA CRONBACH VALUE
Change of perception toward self	$\alpha=.928$
Change in manner of perception	$\alpha=.847$
Change in personality structure and organization	$\alpha=.839$
Change in behaviour	$\alpha=.850$
CLIENT CHANGES INSTRUMENT	$\alpha=.957$

V. CONCLUSION

The Client Changes Instrument was designed to identify the changes that happened in clients during and after counselling session. The instrument has 4 main constructs where each construct has a different number of

items to measure what should be measured. Through the process of constructing the instrument, the items were tested for their validity and reliability. The items were constructed based on Carl Rogers Person-Centered Therapy. The construct validity has been endorsed by panel of experts. A pilot study was conducted to identify the reliability of the items through alpha Cronbach. The items were deleted and confirmed using Factor Analysis. The Client Changes instrument meets the validity and reliability measures and ready to be used.

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