



MENACE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ABUSES AGAINST WOMEN AND THE GIRL-CHILD IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF COUNSELLING IN TRAUMA HEALING

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Abstract

The menace of women and girl-child sexual violence and abuses which has always been a taboo in the past in Nigerian culture and society is becoming alarming these days. There is no single day gone by in the newspapers, social media and television or radio broadcast without having incessant reported cases of women, teenage or the girl-child sexual abuse by strangers or even close family relatives and friends. Sometimes these abusers go the length of murdering their victims after raping them. In most cases, these abused victims go far as committing suicide or develop stereotype attitudes towards men., having had negative impressions towards men. Notwithstanding the environmental challenges facing the country as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, yet, cases of sexual violence against women and the girl-child are still being reported. This situation calls for absolute redress for prevention of sexual violence and abuses against women and the girl-child in Nigeria. When these women, teenagers or girls who have been violated or abused are put through effective counselling programmes, this will aid in healing the psychological trauma and damages inflicted as a result the ugly experiences from the abuse. This paper is therefore, designated to discuss the menace of sexual violence and abuses against women and the girl-child in Nigeria: the role of counselling in trauma healing. The concepts of a woman, girl-child, sexual violence and abuses, counselling and trauma healing were described in the paper. Further discussed in the paper were the various forms sexual violence and abuses against women in Nigeria and the victims' psychological trauma. Consequences of sexual violence and abuses against

women and those of the girl-child were further disclosed in the paper, which finally led to discussions on the role of effective counselling programmes in trauma healing for sexually violated and abused women.

Keywords: *Menace, Sexual violence, Abuses, Women, Girl-Child, Counselling, Trauma healing*

Introduction

The menace of sexual violence and abuses committed against women and the girl-child is on high rampage. Every day one keeps on hearing about women, teenage and adolescent girls being instrument of sexual violence, molestation and rape. This situation which causes so much distress in the society needs absolute remedy and solutions because the women and girls involved in this act, which has always been a ‘taboo’ in the Nigerian society and culture, suffer lot of great trauma which affects them in their lifetime. One means in which these traumatized victims of sexual violence and abuses can consoled and assisted to move on with their lives is through effective counselling service and programmes. In as much as several summits, meetings and international conventions have been organized or conducted concerning women at the various regions and countries throughout the globe; and the Nigerian government also in collaborations with other international agencies have established several institutional mechanisms such as the National Institute for Cultural Orientation (NICO), National Institutions for the Advancement of Women, International Alliance of Women, Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), U.N. Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women (OSAGI), UNESCO, UNICEF, Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), among others, to fight for various women empowerment, gender inequality, victimization, discrimination, violence and abuses against women (Krook 110-113); there is still need for effective counselling programmes as therapy for healing the traumatized women and girls who have encountered different sexual violence and abuses. Women and girls are still the subject to men’s sexual violence and abuses both in western society

and African countries, including Nigeria. This problem that seemed specific to only the Nigerian society, instead of decreasing it seems to be expanding more and more. Strangely, it seems more like even a pandemic that is spreading fast around the world. Women seems to be more often victims in a form a domestic violence by woman's intimate partner, sexual exploitation through trafficking and sex trade, in wars by an enemy army as a weapon of attempted 'ethnic cleansing' (Blesiol 3).

Counselling however, offers a great deal of healing for those traumatized by sexual violence and abuses like rape, among others. It is a great therapy for solving the problems of the victims of rape in the society. Counselling is an idea that has existed for a long time in Nigeria, which is most commonly practiced in educational institutions. Effective counselling service or therapy, especially in institutions of learning has now become important. Boys and girls, and young men and women, need to be guided in the relationships between health and the environment, earning abilities, knowledge, and attitudes that lead to success and failure in life. The need for counselling as a trauma healing therapy has become paramount in order to promote the well-being of women and the girl-child. Effective advice and counselling should help to improve the self-image of young people and facilitate achievement in life tasks. Counselling should empower girls and boys to participate fully in, and benefit from, the economic and social development of the nation (Tita-Nghamun 77). Counselling as further observed by are designed to help an individual student analyze himself/herself by relating their capabilities, achievements, interests and mode of adjustment to what new decision they have to make. The counselling therapy are very critical for the individuals because they need it to solve career, study, personal and social problems they encounter in life. The school for instance, is supposed to provide time, place, and personnel required for skilled assistance of individual students in working out solutions to their personal problems. Counselling is designed to facilitate self-understanding through individual or group relationships. Kyungu cited in Tita-Nghamun, support this by observing that effective guidance and counselling in secondary schools and other learning institutions has become extremely important in guiding students on the relationship between health and the environment, life-earning skills, the knowledge and attitudes that lead to success or failure in life. Effective counselling services or therapy should assist in improving the self-image of the

students and facilitate better achievement in academic performance (81). The aims of counselling services, which are based on a developmental hierarchy, are to provide individuals with opportunities to: develop knowledge and appreciation of themselves and others; develop relationship skills, ethical standards and a sense of responsibilities; acquire skills and attitude necessary to develop educational goals which are suited to their needs, interest and abilities; and acquire information that would enable them to make decisions about life and career opportunities. Today, the counselling service has gained prominence in the Nigerian educational system and many are becoming interested in counselling the youths in making wise educational, vocational and social decisions. Counselling service is one of the recent disciplines introduced into Nigerian educational system. With the current trends in technological development and globalization, coupled with the incessant and menace of sexual violence and abuses in the society, it has become imperative to refocus counselling and widen its scope to meet with the challenges of the modern society (27).

Counselling furthermore, should help a client to attain a self-understanding which will facilitate change of behaviour, change of attitude and identification of special talents and abilities. In the light of this therefore, the role of a counselling provider in an institution is to: help people experiencing difficulty to overcome or cope with it and to understand the environment very well so that she/he can anticipate, circumvent and, if possible, forestall difficulties which may arise in future, therefore preventing students from falling into them. It is also her/his role to help the individuals to plan and derive maximum benefits from educational, social and vocational experiences which will enable them to discover and develop their potential. In order to do this, the counsellor should be a trusted confidant to all learners by showing a positive attitude and disseminating to and receiving appropriate information from counsellee. The information should also be used to help each student to strengthen his own abilities. The counsellor should also work in cooperation with other teachers to identify each student's unique and special mental abilities, aptitudes and creativity then assist her/him to develop a realistic self-image. A counsellor should be one who is knowledgeable on the nature and pattern of problems that students are likely to deal with and the adjustment mechanisms that they use when they are unbalanced or uncomfortable (Tita-Nghamun 82). In addition to

the above, most significantly, the counsellor must follow the necessary counselling process and effectively employ the counselling skills during to make positive progress and impact on the client during the counselling session. From the foregoing explanations, this showcases that counselling is a good therapy which can effectively be used as trauma healing for women and the girl-child who have encountered sexual violence and abuses in the Nigerian society. Counselling services therefore play a great role in curbing the menace of sexual violence and abuses against women and children. The thrust of this paper therefore was to discuss issues related to the menace of sexual violence and abuses against women and the girl-child in Nigeria; the role of counselling in trauma healing. Discussions in the paper were done in several sections in order to look into the description of some key concepts, types of counselling programmes, various forms sexual violence and abuses against women in Nigeria and the victims' psychological trauma, consequences of the sexual violence and abuses against women and the girl-child, and role of effective counselling programmes in trauma healing for sexually violated and abused women and girls. However, several key concepts have been explained in the next section.

Description of Key Concepts

Who is a Woman?

A woman whose plural form is women, as described in this paper is a female adult by birth and gender (that is, sex – meaning reproductive capacity), who has reached the official age of 18 years and above. The individual possesses feminine characteristics which makes her different the masculine characteristics. A woman, seem to be popularly known as the weaker sex than a man, as such, termed vulnerable in the society. According to the *Definitions.net*, a woman is a female person who plays a significant role (wife or mistress or girlfriend) in the life of a particular man. A woman can also be regarded as a female human. The term is usually reserved for an adult female, with the term girl being the usual term for a female child or adolescent. However, the term woman is also sometimes used to identify a female part of the human race, regardless of age (*Definitions.net*). Blesiol describing a woman said that woman came out of man's rib, not from the feet to be trampled upon, not from his head to be superior but from the side to be equal, under the arm to

be protected, next to the heart to beloved (5). Given the descriptions of a woman, women generally possess certain characteristics coupled with other biological and physiological features which makes them special humans that also play great roles in the society. The great difference between a woman and a man is that a woman can give birth to babies and breastfeed them while men do not give birth. Biological features of women show that they produce eggs, while men produce sperm. Women possess only the X chromosome (Meyer 557). The role of women in the Nigerian society are enormous, therefore, can never be overemphasized. Women play significant roles in the family, as mothers and they can also contribute to national development in the society. Women generally participate in the socio-economic, cultural, political and religious activities in the society where they make significant contributions for the development of the society. Women have created significant positive impressions in government, where the demonstrated good and qualities leadership. They are important tools for national consciousness and integration. Thus, the trite statement that; if you train a woman, you are definitely training a whole nation. According to Eze, women can ascend to and excel in leadership roles when in an environment that enables them to do so, as women have the capacity to transform resources into economic power (2). Notwithstanding, women multiple roles as mothers, wives, and breadwinners, their full involvement in business demands creating a need for an enabling environment that encourages their participation in economic development (3). Nigerian working women do more than supplement family income; instead, these women act as providers, necessitating entrance into the labour market and advancement in the workplace (Eze 18). Given the important roles of women in the Nigerian society, they should not be allowed to suffer sexual violence, intimidations and abuses from the men folk. However, the description of the girl-child has equally been provided in the next section.

Who is a Girl-Child?

A girl-child as considered within the context of this paper is one who is a teenager or an adolescent, who is below the age of 18years. Such a person belongs to the female folks. According to the AudioEnglish.org a girl-child has several meaning; it denotes a female child; a youthful female person; a little girl usually attending schooling; and a female person who belongs to the sex that

can have babies. The girl-child can be broadly defined as girls between the ages of 0-17years, who are of school going age. A girl child can be a young female who is a teenager or an adolescence. The girl-child just like the women are important species when they grow up as adult. They can equally make significant contributions to the society. They also suffer sexual abuses and violence just like the older women. Through issues like child labour including domestic labour, child marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting, gender inequality, child prostitution and trafficking, they remain vulnerable to sexual violence and abuses in the society. recognizing the importance of the girl-child in the society, the government have started providing means of protecting the girl-child from various abuses in the society.

The 1995 Beijing Conference was the first of the United Nations World Conferences on Women to include a specific focus on the girl-child. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), together with their Optional Protocols, as well as other conventions and treaties, provide the legal framework for the protection and promotion of the human rights of girls. They prescribe a comprehensive set of measures to ensure the elimination of discrimination against the girl-child. Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as “every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier,” and article 2 clarifies that Convention rights are to be enjoyed by children “without discrimination of any kind,” including on grounds of sex. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women sets out obligations of States parties to ensure the practical realization of the principle of equality of men and women. The treaty bodies monitoring implementation of these Conventions address the situation of the girl-child in their constructive dialogue with States parties, concluding comments, and general recommendations/comments (United Nations 1).

The Commission on the Status of Women continues to address the situation of the girl-child in its work. At its forty-second session in 1998, the Commission considered the issue of the girl-child with emphasis on adolescent girls as a priority theme, and adopted agreed conclusions that proposed actions and initiatives to promote and protect the human rights of the girl-child; provide education and empowerment; improve the health needs of girls; protect girls in

armed conflict, and prevent trafficking and exploitative labour conditions. At its fifty-first session in 2007, the Commission focused on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl-child and adopted agreed conclusions. With the specific chapter in the Beijing Platform for Action on the girl-child, Governments highlighted the importance of addressing discrimination against women at the earliest stages of their lives. The Platform for Action set out nine strategic objectives. i. Eliminate of all forms of discrimination against the girl-child. ii. Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls. iii. Promote and protect the rights of the girl-child and increase awareness of her needs and potential. iv. Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training. v. Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition. vi. Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labour and protect young girls at work. vii. Eradicate violence against the girl-child. viii. Promote the girl-child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life. ix. Strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl-child (United Nations 1). In 2005 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution on the girl-child in which Member States expressed deep concern about: "discrimination against the girl-child and the violation of the rights of the girl-child, which often result in less access for girls to education, nutrition and physical and mental health care and in girls enjoying fewer of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence than boys and often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and to violence and harmful practices, such as female infanticide, rape, incest, early marriage, forced marriage, prenatal sex selection and female genital mutilation". The resolution reiterates the commitments to undertake legal reforms to ensure the rights of girls, to provide for equal access to basic social services (such as education, nutrition, vaccination, and health care, including sexual and reproductive health care), to enact and enforce legislation against all forms of violence and exploitation and to protect girls affected by armed conflict (United Nations 2). However, the persistent reports of sexual harassment and violence of girls in schools and society has prompted study and action in numerous countries like Nigeria. Hence, the essence of describing the concept of sexual violence and abuses.

Concept of Sexual Violence and Abuses

Sexual [violence and abuses against women](#), which is on the rampage and increase, occurring within the families, among relatives, religious sector or in communities, has a long history and is primarily committed or perpetrated by men. Sexual abuse which is same as sexual violence refers to any action that pressures or coerces someone to do something sexually, they do not want to do. It can also refer to behaviour that impacts a person's ability to control their sexual activity or the circumstances in which sexual activity occurs, including oral sex, rape or restricting access to birth control and condoms (loveisrespect.org 1). Sexual violence and abuses against women are a punishable offence, although most times women and girls do not report the cases as a result of several reasons. There are several reasons why women and girls do not report sexual violence and abuse and they include; inadequate support systems; shame; fear or risk of retaliation; fear or risk of being blamed; fear or risk of not being believed; fear of losing their loved ones; fear or risk of being mistreated and/or socially ostracized, etc (World Health Organization 1). The World Health Organization (WHO) gave several definitions of sexual violence or abuse as sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work. Coercion can however encompass: • varying degrees of force; • psychological intimidation; • blackmail; or • threats (of physical harm or of not obtaining a job/grade etc.). In addition, sexual violence may also take place when someone is not able to give consent – for instance, while intoxicated, drugged, asleep or mentally incapacitated (2). Sexual violence according to WHO is also acts that range from verbal harassment to forced penetration, and an array of types of coercion, from social pressure and intimidation to physical force (1). Sexual violence abuses are limited to those acts that involve force or the threat of physical violence. The WHO multi-country study defined sexual violence as acts through which a woman: i. was physically forced to have sexual intercourse when she did not want to; ii. had sexual intercourse when she did not want to, because she was afraid of what her partner might do; or iii. was forced to do something sexual that she found degrading or humiliating (WHO 2). Quite a number of cases reported across nations to the authorities and through the social

media has shown that sexual violence and abuses are highly on the rampage. The World Health Organization gave an assertion that sexual violence, including sexual harassment, frequently occurs in institutions assumed to be 'safe', such as schools, where perpetrators include peers and teachers.

In studies from around the world, including Africa, south Asia, and Latin America, studies have documented that substantial proportions of girls' report experiencing sexual harassment and abuse on the way to and from school, as well as on school and university premises, including classrooms lavatories and dormitories, by peers and by teachers (4). For example, in a study among primary schools in the Machinga district of Malawi, primary school girls reported experiencing various types of sexual harassment and abuse at school, including sexual comments (7.8%), sexual touch (13.5%), 'rape' (2.3%), and 'coerced or unwanted' sex (1.3%) (4). That same study found that teachers at 32 out of 40 schools reported knowing a male teacher at their school who had propositioned a student for sexual intercourse; while teachers at 26 out of 40 schools reported that a male teacher at their school had got a student pregnant. As an example, from a high-income setting, a national representative (online) study of students in US middle and high schools found that out of 1002 female respondents, a majority of girls reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment at school during the 2010–2011 school year (5). Research on sexual harassment in the workplace is in its infancy, but initial studies indicate that it is widespread, especially as more women enter the workforce. Surveys have found that 40–50% of women in the European Union report some form of sexual harassment or unwanted sexual behaviour in the workplace (WHO 4-5). Just like in the United States, several cases of sexual abuses, molestations and violence against women and the girl-child are being reported daily on the social media platforms, newspapers and news broadcast which seems to have become a menace to the Nigerian society. Moreover, men who engage in sexual violence and abuses against women seem to give several reasons and excuses such as; belonging to gang membership; use of harmful or illicit use of alcohol or drugs; antisocial personality; their exposure to intra-parental violence as a child; having history of physical or sexual abuse as a child; limited education; acceptance of violence (e.g. belief that it is acceptable to beat one's wife or girlfriend); multiple partners/infidelity; and gender-inequitable views. Sexual

violence and abuses take various forms and have been outlined in the next section.

Various Forms Sexual Violence and Abuses Against Women in Nigeria and the Victims' Psychological Trauma

Sexual violence against women can take various forms to include, but not limited to the following as indicated by the World Health Organization (WHO):

- i. rape within marriage or dating relationships;
- ii. rape by strangers or acquaintances;
- iii. unwanted sexual advances or sexual harassment (at school, work etc.);
- iv. systematic rape, sexual slavery and other forms of violence, which are particularly common in armed conflicts (e.g. forced impregnation);
- v. sexual abuse of mentally or physically disabled people;
- vi. rape and sexual abuse of children; and
- vii. 'customary' forms of sexual violence, such as forced marriage or cohabitation and wife inheritance (1).

Others include abuses such as;

- i. Unwanted kissing or touching.
- ii. Unwanted rough or violent sexual activity.
- iii. Rape or attempted rape.
- iv. Refusing to use condoms or restricting someone's access to birth control.
- v. Keeping someone from protecting themselves from sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- vi. Sexual contact with someone who is very drunk, drugged, unconscious or otherwise unable to give a clear and informed "yes" or "no."
- vii. Threatening or pressuring someone into unwanted sexual activity (loveisrespect.org 1)

All these sexual violence and abuses are serious punishable acts or offences by the Court of Law, when committed. When any of the above-mentioned sexual violence and abuse occur, the victim usually suffers from psychological trauma in form of mental disorder, fear, depression, feeling low integrity, rejection of oneself, lack of self-confidence, lack of focus and attention, among others. However, sexual violence and abuses against women and the girl-child has great

consequences on both women and girls which has been discussed in the next section.

Consequences of the Sexual Violence and Abuses Against Women and the Girl-Child

Omede and Agahiu argued that one of the consequences of sexual violence and abuse against women and the girl-child is hindrances to their education. This also hampers the girls from going to school due to this fear of sexual violence, and most parents deny their girl-children access to school (3). Sexual violence and abuses hamper the victims' health and relationship with other groups and individuals in the society. The World Health Organization identified the consequences of sexual violence and abuses, and this have equally been represented in the table (7).

Table 1: Consequences of Sexual Violence and Abuses Against Women and the Girl-Child

Reproductive Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gynaecological trauma• Unintended pregnancy• Unsafe abortion• Sexual dysfunction• Sexually transmitted infections including HIV• Traumatic fistulae
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Depression• Post-traumatic stress disorder• Anxiety• Sleep difficulties• Somatic complaints• Suicidal behaviour• Panic disorder
Behavioural	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High-risk behaviour (e.g. unprotected sexual intercourse, early consensual sexual initiation, multiple partners, alcohol and drug abuse)• Higher risk of perpetrating (for men) or of experiencing subsequent sexual violence (for women)
Fatal Outcomes	Death from:

- suicide
- pregnancy complications
- unsafe abortion
- AIDS
- murder during rape or for ‘honour’
- infanticide of a child born of rape

Concept of Counselling

Counselling is known as a therapy used to solve different educational, social, personality and environmental problems. Counselling is an idea that has existed for a long time in Nigeria, which is most commonly practiced in educational institutions. Initially, when the guidance and counselling programme was introduced in secondary schools, the role of the appointed counsellor was limited to giving information on career/vocational choices. With time however, it was noted that students had other problems other than just educational. In the 1980s and 1990s, a counselling element was added to the original guidance programme. The Koech Report cited in Tita-Nghamun, recommended that a counselling element be added to guidance in order to help students overcome their personal problems (Tita-Nghamun, 81). Anyamene, Nwokolo, and Anyachebelu, defined counselling as a form of education, which the clients receive from their counsellors. In the school, counselling involves an educational process used in solving problems of the learner (221). The Lovely Professional University described counselling as a one-to-one relationship between an individual troubled by problems with which he cannot cope alone and a professional worker whose training and experience have qualified him to help others reach solutions to various types of personal difficulties. It is also a learning-oriented process carried in a simple one to one social environment in which the counsellor, professionally competent in relevant psychological skills and knowledge seeks to assist the client by methods appropriate to the latter’s needs and within the context of the total personnel programme, to learn how to put such understanding into effect in relation to more clearly perceived, condition (123). In short, a helping profession like counselling involves specialized knowledge, trained skills and the desire to provide comfort to others. Counseling aims at helping the clients understand and accept themselves “as they are”, such that they are able to work towards realizing their potential. Often

this requires modification of attitudes, outlook and behaviour. The nature of the counselling process depends on the setting or the situation. The counsellor accepts his clients and has unconditional regard for their personality or self or self-worth. Naturally, counselling involves the feelings of clients. It is in its essence a 'helping relationship' (Lovely Professional University 123).

Several definitions of counselling were provided by in the works of Ebizie, Enajedu and Egenti, as they included that counselling involves a number of procedures in assisting an individual to solve his problems. Counselling is more involved emotionally in the affective realm personalized learning, that is, emotions and feelings, values, attitudes. It is an interaction or relationship between two or few individuals, the client counsellor relationship of trust. Counselling is a learning process in which a counsellor helps an individual or individuals learn, understand themselves and their environment and be in a position to choose the right type of behaviours that will help them develop, grow, progress, ascend, mature and step up, educationally, vocationally and socio personally. In other words, counselling is a transformative process of helping people to learn all that are to be learnt both in and outside the school. Counselling is a person-to-person process in which one person is helped by another to develop, increase in understanding and ability to solve his or her problems. Sometimes it could involve a group of two or more persons (38-39). From the above definitions, it can be deduced that counselling sought to help individuals solve their social, emotional, personal, educational and vocational problems. The benefits of counselling however include preparing individuals for the challenges of the 21st century through academic, career, and personal / social development. Relating educational programme to future success. Facilitating career exploration and development. Developing decision-making and problem-solving skills of individuals. Assisting individuals in acquiring knowledge of self and others. Enhancing personal development of individuals. Assists in developing individuals' effective interpersonal relationship skills. Broadening knowledge of our changing world. Providing advocacy for individuals. Encouraging facilitative, co-operative peer interactions. Fostering resiliency factors for students and assuring equitable access to educational opportunities (Ebizie, Enajedu and Egenti 39). The aims of counseling service in other words are to assist the individual in fulfilling his/her basic physiological needs, understanding themselves and developing associations with peers,

balancing between permissiveness and controls in the school setting, realizing successful achievement, and providing opportunities to gain independence. Counselling provides for the realization of student potentialities, help children with developing problems, contribute to the development of the school's curriculum, provide teachers with technical assistance in school, contribute to the mutual adjustment of students and the school, and helps to promote students' academic achievements (Ebizie, Enajedu and Egenti 40). The goal of counselling as further identified by the Lovely Professional University is to help individuals overcome their immediate problems and also to equip them to meet future problems. Rapid social change in the society brought about by industrialization and urbanization has led to several perplexing problems. The pace of this change is ever on the increase, thus making adjustment a continuous process of grappling with new situations. Therefore, for counselling, to become meaningful, it has to be specific for each client since it involves his or her unique problems and expectations (126).

Other attributes of counselling entails that, it is personal and intimate, affective in nature involving mild to strong emotional relationships, involves the integrity of the helper and the helped and is sustained voluntarily, involves the mutual consent of the counsellor and the counsellee either explicitly stated or implicitly to be inferred, and counselling takes place because the individual in need of help is aware of his own limitations and inadequacies. Counselling involves confidence reposed in the helper, it often achieved and maintained through communication and interaction; it involves give and take, that is, it is not a one-way process, involves a certain amount of 'structure'. The situation is either vaguely or clearly defined, and is marked by the desire for change in the existing condition of the client, that is, it is concerned with the improvement of the client (Lovely Professional University 124-125). Given all the goals and attributes of counselling, counselling with the assistance of a counselling help the counsellor to become self-actualizing, attain self-realization and become a fully-functioning person or individual (Lovely Professional University 132). Hence, the different types of counselling programmes.

Types of Counselling Programmes

The Lovely Professional University also identified the types of counselling programmes which can be utilized to address people's problems and they

include; career or vocational counselling, educational counselling and social or personal counselling. Career counselling according to Oye, Obi, Mohd and Bernice, is very fundamental to individuals' successful and meaningful living. Every student desire to be identified with a good profession, but this could only be achieved through effective counselling on the choices of career to maximize their potential. Career, though crucial to mankind, occupies almost all entire human life. This is due to the fact that career contribute enormously to all human activities, building individuals high self-esteem, satisfaction and adjusting to healthy life (27). It equally assists individuals or clients to discover their innate potentials and acquire the needed knowledge for building lifelong profession. The word - career, refers to the activities and position involved in vocation, occupation, and jobs as well as to related activities associated with an individual's life time of work. In view of this, adequate utilization of career counselling is required in Nigeria if the nation's goals are to be attained. In vocational counselling, the individual should be provided with detailed up-to-date useful information about different careers. The information should be centred on careful planning for a career, getting and retaining the career and adjusting effectively to it. The reason for all these is to let the individual consider the various areas in harmony with their potentials and consequently choose the best career (Oye, Obi, Mohd and Bernice 28). Educational counselling helps people in choosing their career path. They conduct seminars and orientations or private sessions where they discuss the interest of their client and offer solutions accordingly. A student who is fresh out of school or college is often clueless as to which career to choose. This is completely normal for kids of that age to feel like that. Furthermore, sometimes even working individuals feel like that in the midst of their careers. This is nothing to worry about (Khan, 1). Personal or social counselling deals with the problems of personal adjustment indifferent spheres of life. Mainly it works for the individual's adjustment to his social and emotional problems. Jones cited in the works of the Lovely Professional University has put the following aims of personal or social counselling as: (i) to assist the individual gradually to develop his life goals that are socially desirable and individually satisfying. (ii) to help him to plan his life so that these goals may be attained. (iii) to help him grow consistently in ability to adjust himself creatively to his developing life goals. (iv) to assist the individual to grow consistently in ability to live with others so

effectively that he may promote their development and his own worthy purposes. (v) to help him grow in self-directive ability. Thus, the goal of personal guidance is self-directive and self-realization (Lovely Professional University 7).

Other types of counselling as indicated by the Lovely Professional University (144) and Vicky (1) are the directive counselling, non-directive counselling, eclectic counselling and cooperative counselling. Under directive counselling the counsellor issues certain instructions to the counsellee or he is directed to do certain things e.g.: he is asked to behave in a particular manner, asked to abstain from alcohol or drug, asked to respect his colleagues and superiors. Under non-directive counselling, the counsellor does not issue directions but observe the behaviour and attitude of the counsellee towards his work and his colleagues and superiors and subordinates. If he errs then counsellor comes to his rescue and corrects him realizing him that he was wrong. He will not issue him any instructions or will not direct him. Eclectic counselling is a generic service of individual's personal work having a wide range of activities and includes faculty advising, counselling in psychological clinics, mental hygiene and other specialized types of counselling. It is a body of techniques which helps young individuals to grow up normally through guided learning. Eclectic counselling is defined as the synthesis and combination of directive and non-directive counseling. It represents a middle status between the two extremes represented by the 'non-directive' technique on one hand and the 'directive' technique on the other. In eclectic counseling, the counsellor is neither too active as in the directive counselling nor too passive as in the non-directive counselling. He just follows the middle path between these two. In eclectic counselling, the needs of a person and his personality are studied by the counselor. After this the counsellor selects those techniques, which will be useful for the person. The main techniques used are reassurance giving information, case history, testing etc. In eclectic counselling the counselor first takes into consideration the personality and need of the counsellee. He selects the directive or non-directive technique that seems to serve the purpose best. The counsellor may start with the directive technique. When the situation demands, he may switch over to the non-directive counseling and vice-versa. This counselling has proved to be very useful for the development of an individual. Colleges and universities, industries and business establishments are

becoming increasingly interested in this counselling and its potential for improving interpersonal relationships. The cooperative counselling is a kind of counselling that can be done through extending full cooperation to the counsellee and makes him realize his mistakes relating to his behaviour and attitudes so that he himself will be back on the track and improve himself. It is winning the heart of the counsellee through cooperation. His confidence will be won by the counsellee and he in turn will extend his cooperation and become self-disciplined. Several skills or techniques however are required by counsellors in order to attend to individual needs and problems and they involve the use of active attending or listening, reflection of content and feeling, questioning, paraphrasing and clarification, interpretation, repeating, summarizing, confrontation, respecting, structuring or prioritizing, deciding plan of action and conclusion (Lovely Professional University, 139-141). The Counsellor roles therefore involves; counselling the individual and providing group education and vocational guidance. Assisting individual with personal problems; social, emotional etc. Assisting with personal development. Advising on study techniques. Advising on job applications and interviews. May engage in psychological testing and other testing. May refer students to other agencies. May co-ordinate a school system of pastoral care. Is responsible for the compilation and availability of occupational information. Enjoying freedom and flexibility in the organization of counselling activities according to the needs of the school or organization and institution (Ebizie, Enajedu and Egenti 39).

Concept of Trauma Healing

The word trauma refers to an experience or event; nevertheless, people use the term interchangeably to refer to either a traumatic experience or event, the resulting injury or stress, or the longer-term impacts and consequences (National Registry of Evidence-Based Program Practices – NREBPP 1). As a result of the sexual violence and abuses, the victims suffer a lot of emotional imbalance, mental health disturbance or disorder and psychological trauma. Behavioural health professionals cited in National Registry of Evidence-Based Program Practices (NREBPP), more broadly define trauma as resulting from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has

lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being. This is sometimes referred to as "psychological trauma" to distinguish it from other types of trauma. Studies involving neuroimaging—such as magnetic resonance imaging, diffusion tensor imaging, and positron emission tomography—have revealed that traumatic stress can have lasting structural and functional effects on the parts of the brain implicated in the stress response (National Registry of Evidence-Based Program Practices – NREBPP 3). [Onderko](#) describes trauma as **the response to a deeply distressing or disturbing event that overwhelms an individual's ability to cope, causes feelings of helplessness, diminishes their sense of self and their ability to feel the full range of emotions and experiences (1)**. [Onderko](#) further observed that the responses to psychological trauma may include such emotional signs like sadness, anger, denial, fear and shame. These signs might lead to nightmares, insomnia, difficulty with relationships and emotional outbursts; which may lead to common physical symptoms such as: nausea, dizziness, altered sleep patterns, changes in appetite, headaches, and gastrointestinal problems; and psychological disorder such as: post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), Acute Stress Disorder (ASD), depression, anxiety, dissociative disorders and substance abuse problems (1). Further explained by [Onderko](#), trauma can be of various types. Broadly described, they can be classified as large 'T' traumas and small 't' traumas. Small 't' traumas are circumstances where one's bodily safety or life is not threatened, but cause symptoms of trauma nonetheless. These events set one off-kilter and disrupt normal functioning in the world. They certainly don't seem small at all when they occur, but most will have an easier time recovering from them than a large 'T' trauma. On the other hand, small 't' traumas are sometimes disregarded since they seem surmountable. This can be perilous as the cumulative effect of an unprocessed trauma or traumas may trail a person relentlessly. Examples are: life changes like a new job or moving; relationship events like divorce, infidelity, or an upsetting personal conflict; life stressors like financial troubles, work stress or conflict, or legal battles (1). Large 'T' traumas are extraordinary experiences that bring about severe distress and helplessness. They may be one-time events like acts of terrorism, natural catastrophes, and sexual assault or sexual abuse. Or, they may be prolonged stressors like war, child abuse, neglect or violence. They are much more

difficult or even impossible to overlook, yet they are often actively avoided. For instance, people may steer clear of triggers like personal reminders, certain locations, or situations like crowded or even deserted places. And they may resist confronting the memory of the event. As a coping mechanism, this only works for so long. Prolonging access to support and treatment prolongs healing ([Onderko 1](#)). Healing on the other hand can be described as cure from any alignment. Healing is an intensely personal, subjective experience involving a reconciliation of the meaning an individual ascribes to distressing events with his or her perception of wholeness as a person. Healing may be operationally defined as the personal experience of the transcendence of suffering. According to Firth, Smith, Sakallari, Bellanti, Crawford and Avant, the word healing comes from the Old-English term “haelen”, meaning “wholeness” and often refers to the process of moving toward a desired wholeness or achievement of cohesion. Healing is an intervention, an outcome, and a process, and at times, all three. It also describes an ability or power, energy, and cleansing of grief, trouble, or evil. The concept is relevant in a wide range of disciplines, including medicine, nursing, psychology, public health, education, religion, and spirituality. Healing occurs in multiple dimensions—physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, familial, social, communal, and environmental. Healing occurs at multiple levels from the micro level, as in cellular wound healing, to the macro level, as in national and global healing. Healing originates from within the individual and from external sources (eg, human healers and God) or substances (eg, herbs and medicines) (46). The process of healing is transformative; it changes the individual in expected and unexpected ways, creating a new entity. The individual transcends dis-tress, suffering, and the disease state and becomes a different person. People are transformed from the old to the new. Some describe both the healer and healee transforming in a positive direction. Healing involves repair and recovery in multiple dimensions—mind, body, and spirit. We are all bro-ken in some way and in need of healing. The healing process engages the individual’s innate ability to repair damage and recover function. Repair means to fix or mend and to recover is to return to a previous state. In healing, repair and recovery may occur at the micro level of cells and tissue, the orderly series of cellular processes that restore tissue integrity. Healing also involves repair and recovery at the emotional, psychological, social, and spiritual levels, such as when an assault

victim overcomes intense anxiety and moral distress (46). From the above definitions, trauma healing can be described as an intervention programme or a transformative process from distress or any traumatic experience such as sexual violence or abuse. Trauma healing is designed to help women begin to recover from the effects of trauma, discover ways to thrive, to enjoy healthier relationships and happier lives. Brahm asserted that those who have experienced hardship and suffering often experience lasting trauma from the experience. Traumatic events can fundamentally change not only victims' way of life, but also their psychological outlook. As such, they need trauma healing.

Women are often in particular need of trauma healing. They may themselves be victims of traumatic experiences such as rape or incest. However, they are also more likely to be left behind after husbands and children are killed in conflict. Women are often [humiliated](#), feeling that they could do nothing to stop the violence. Children also face particularly difficult trauma. They lack the emotional development and life experience to make sense of the trauma, even more so than adults. Jarman cited in Brahm observed in Chechnya that traumatic events often produce rage in teenagers due to the fact that their lives have been turned upside-down; they have essentially been robbed of their youth. Children are also susceptible to picking up attitudes from adults in their lives, thereby providing the opportunity for trauma to be transmitted across generations. For this reason, it is particularly important to focus on children in the healing process. Brahm furthermore, equally identified three stages that trauma victims move through as part of the healing process: safety, acknowledgement, and reconnection. These processes have guided the creation of many trauma healing programmes, in which counselling is part and parcel of. The first step for most programmes is to provide a [safe space](#). A feeling of safety will encourage victims to open up and reveal details of their ordeal. Retelling the details of one's [story](#) can be therapeutic and allows those memories to be incorporated into the victim's life story. When the story is told in the presence of the other, it can lead to acknowledgement, apology, forgiveness, and reconnection. Julia Chaitin cited by Brahm described several such processes in detail in her essay in this knowledge base on [Narratives and Story Telling](#). Gutlove and Thompson also cited by Brahm discussed another such project: The Health Bridges for Peace Project. That process begins by involving trauma sufferers in "constructive communication," in which they tell their stories and the rest of the

group listens attentively, respectfully, and compassionately. Many programmes also emphasize the therapeutic value of drawing or writing about their trauma. Then, participants discuss the difference between debate and [dialogue](#) with the goal of realizing the latter. Finally, participants are trained in [active listening](#), which both allows the listener to understand and [empathize with others](#) and to better articulate one's own thoughts and feelings. This process helps facilitate reconnection with one's social environment and allows the victim to restore their place in society. The ethnic conflict that erupted in the 1990s unfortunately provided ample opportunity to develop and refine techniques for trauma healing (Brahm). Counselling programmes and therapy previously discussed in the paper, therefore, serves as trauma healing for sexually violated and abused women and girls. The role of effective counselling programmes in trauma healing for sexually violated and abused women and girls have been further discussed below in the next section.

Role of Effective Counselling Programmes in Trauma Healing for Sexually Violated and Abused Women and girls

The role of counselling programmes in trauma healing for those sexually violated and abused cannot be overemphasized. The different counselling programmes will enable the individual to face the psychological trauma inflicted as a result of the sexual violence and abuse. Such a people will begin to build confidence in herself and abilities again. Therefore, each counselling service or programme utilized during the counselling session or therapy for those sexually violated and abused woman and girls, must adopt the various counselling process and skills or techniques. A wide range of [effective counselling therapies](#) exists and access to them is widespread. Trauma survivors are best served by working with a counsellor or therapist or therapy that is trauma-focused or trauma-informed. Most trauma-informed therapists will employ a combination of therapy modalities. Psychotherapy alternatives include exposure therapies to help with desensitization, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy which helps change thought and behaviour patterns and reprocessing therapies like Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) that allow the survivor to reprocess memories and events. Somatic therapies that use the body to process trauma include Somatic Experiencing and Sensorimotor Psychotherapy. Hypnosis, mindfulness, craniosacral therapy, trauma-sensitive

yoga, art therapy and acupuncture can all also help. And last, many people use medications – primarily antidepressants and anti-anxiety medications – which can make symptoms less intense and more manageable ([Onderko 1](#)). In counselling therapies of the victims of sexual violence and abuses, the counsellors must take cognizance of the various steps in the counselling processes. This should be the main bane during the trauma healing process and therapy. The Lovely Professional University indicated the various steps involved in the counselling process as:

Stage I: The first stage is the awareness of need for help. Most individuals go about their day-to-day lives without much awareness of their situation and they appear to be none the worse for it. Inwardly they may be experiencing suffering, yet they may not seek help. Some individuals experience their problems either because of their severity or because someone close draws attention to the problems. Such individuals are potential clients. They seek psychological assistance because of feelings of distress. They lack the necessary competence and information to deal with them on their own.

Stage II: The second important stage in counselling consists of the development of relationship. This can be viewed as a bridge connecting the counsellee's personality with that of the counsellor's, penetrating through the other defenses. The development of an emotionally warm and understanding relationship is the first step in the Counselling relationship. It is characterized by mutual liking, trust and respect. The counsellor should be aware of the defense strategies likely to be exploited by the client. Usually the defense strategies fall under two basic kinds of manipulative devices: (1) the client may take a helpless attitude and get the counsellor to do what he wants him to do, and (2) the counsellee may arouse sympathy and attention and avoid unpleasant tasks. By adopting either of these devices the client successfully wards off the counselling relationship. He prevents it from breaking through his outer defenses. If, however, the counselor succeeds in establishing this bridge then he can establish optimal rapport which is sustained through the entire counseling process.

Stage III: The third step in counselling is to aid the expression of feelings and clarification of problems. In psychoanalytic terminology this is similar to 'catharsis'. In a sense, it is a ventilation of feelings and the client experiences a feeling of relief consequent to the release of tension. There is an awareness of relief from emotional stress obtained through the communication of problems.

A client may often obtain a certain amount of courage in trying this technique with other feelings as well. In this process, previously tied up emotions are released and can be used constructively. But this process has certain limitations. The client may obtain a false sense of the resolution of conflict—ventilating his feelings may relieve him of tension and he may very well mistake it for a state of resolution of tension.

Stage IV: The next stage comprises the exploration of deeper feelings. The client may mistake ventilation of feelings for resolution of feelings. It is necessary that the counsellor should not be content with a superficial view of the client's feelings. If therapeutic help is the objective, the counsellor must try to explore the deeper feelings and conflicting situations which have not only to be brought to the surface but also satisfactorily resolved without damaging the individual's personality. This step, therefore, involves analysis.

Stage V: The preceding stage logically leads to the next stage, comprising the integration process. A proper appreciation of the feelings and underlying polarities can help diffuse emotional tension and the counselor can help the client see each feeling in its proper perspective without either unduly exhibiting fear or withdrawal or showing lack of concern. This stage, therefore, consists of working in close harmony with the client with due understanding regard and sympathy for the client's innermost feelings. In the course of such a process the counsellor is able to synthesize and integrate counsellee potentialities, needs and aspirations and direct them towards appropriate goals.

Stage VI: The next stage, though not spelt out very clearly, is concerned with the time perspective. Clients usually are confused about their time perspective. They are not able to see the present as logically arising from the past or the present affecting the future. Naturally they appear baffled as they are unable to explain to themselves the 'how' and 'why' of things and usually come to grief.

Stage VII: This stage is one of developing the awareness of the counsellee. A number of counsellors and psychotherapists stress the importance of helping the client gain insight into himself as well as insight into the world around him. This term, 'insight', is usually used synonymously with awareness psychoanalytic therapy, for instance, aims at providing insight into one's conflicts, repressions and inhibitions and when once these are seen in their true perspective, they cease to be painful. London cited in works of Lovely Professional University, is not quite in favour of this view, namely, that

symptoms disappear with self-knowledge, that is, when insight or awareness is obtained. He favours the behavioural approach which stresses the importance of action. However, there is no gainsaying the fact that the developing of awareness is of prime importance. Ellis also cited by the Lovely Professional University uses the terms intellectual and emotional insights. An intellectual insight, that is, a rational understanding, is a prelude or necessary condition for emotional insight. For instance, a person experiences acute fear at the sight of a supposed snake. When he realizes that the object is not a snake but only a rope (intellectual insight) he sees the meaninglessness of his fear. In the psychotherapeutic process the importance of awareness cannot be over-emphasized. There is another sense in which awareness is used. It can refer to the awareness of goals—the direction in which the self is to reach out or move forward.

Stage VIII: This stage is the actual test to determine the success of counselling. If the client is not able to adapt himself to his surroundings, then one can infer that he has not gained much from counselling therapy or service. On the other hand, if the client is able to do so then one knows that the counselling therapy or service has been successful. This stage marks the termination of counseling (137-139). Furthermore, it is important for counsellors while taking cognizance of the various counselling process, should apply several skills and techniques highlighted in the previous section. Detail explanations on the counselling skills and techniques have been outlined by the Lovely Professional University below:

In beginning of counseling session (introduction), as the patient enters the room, greet the person, call the person by name, welcome the client and make her comfortable. Introduce yourself if meeting for the first time and tell the person the purpose of the meeting (to understand the problem and its best management). Encourage the counsellee to talk about themselves, then apply the counselling skills. They include:

I. Active attending or Listening: It is most important skill in counselling because the details provided by the client are based on it. Active listening means listening carefully and paying attention to verbal as well as non-verbal signals. Provide in-depth information to relieve fears and worries of the client. Similarly, counsellor's words, expression and posture/gesture (verbal/non-verbal communication) indicate that

attention is being paid to what is being said. By demonstrating an attending behaviour the counsellor enhances the client's self-respect, establish a safe atmosphere and facilitate free expression of thought by the counsellee. Active listening includes reflection of feelings, questioning, paraphrasing and clarification. Similarly, actions of the counsellee communicate many unexpressed feelings. Some of these nonverbal activities are counsellee entering the room, Voice quality, Breathing, Eyes, Facial expressions, Leg movement & Body posture.

• **Reflection of content and Feeling:** People respond differently to their illness. They may express their feelings as fear, anger, anxiety or sadness about disease. E.g. depression maybe expressed as short temper, Irritable behaviours, less interest in daily routine, inability to sleep, loss of weight and feeling of worthlessness and anxiety. Do not try to stop, let the person express their feelings, do not stop patient/ family members from crying. Do not take anger personally and try to stay calm. The counselor must recognize such feelings in a direct, unemotional way. The focus is kept on the emotions of the client and his/her subjective experiences in coping with the situation. Counsellor reflects the contents and feeling of the other persons by responding back to the client and communicating a message through empathy, questioning or paraphrasing that conveys that counselor is listening and trying to understand counsellee's circumstances.

• **Questioning:** The counsellors should always try to use questions and establish communications so that both the problem and the solutions are clear. Asks questions in order to clarify the situation and make client aware of all the dimensions of the problem and help the clients to understand the core issue underlying his/her fears or concerns. Do not ask too many closed question (closed questions are those questions that can be answered by one word like yes/no). Ask open questions to make communication easier, encourage further discussion and facilitate building of trust and warmth in the relationships. Use questions containing why with caution as it may easily sound judgmental. If you need to use 'why', use it in the middle of a sentence and not in the beginning of a sentence (139).

• **Paraphrasing and Clarification:** Paraphrasing is repetition of the rest of client's feelings by the counsellor in their own words. For example, "You seem to be saying that you are afraid that your family is not going to take care of you". The clients might then agree with the interpretation. If not, the counselor can seek clarification by saying "will you please explain it with more details?" Utilizing this technique, the counselor attempts to give feedback to the client; the essence or content of what the client has just said and clarifies understanding of the client's world. Clarification helps the client to come to understand themselves better. When you ask the client to explain something in more details or in a different way; by doing this, clients not only explore their own feelings further, but will also feel that you are trying hard to understand their situation. In the process, counselors also tell the client about the scientific facts not known to them (140).

II. **Interpretation:** Often people avoid focusing on the real problem and talk around the issue. Interpretation goes beyond what is explicitly expressed by the feelings and implied meanings of the client's statement. Even client is unaware of this. Counsellor redefines the problem from a different point of view to bring out more clarity to the problem and make client aware to the core problem. The counselor also helps client to establish what is relevant, emphasizing the important points – for example, "Of all the things you talked about today, it seems to me you are most concerned about...."

III. **Repeating:** At times of stress and crisis, clients are in a state of denial or feeling overwhelmed. They may not always understand everything they are told. As a counselor, do not hesitate and repeat salient points of the discussion, statements of support or necessary facts. It ensures that the clients clearly understand the problem and requisite action. Client would usually convey that they understand and accept the information.

IV. **Summarizing:** Many people who are stunned by news of the disease may respond by talking quickly and trying to provide more details or ask more questions; than counsellor can absorb or comprehend. It is then helpful for the counselor to interrupt at times and summarize what has been said. This is like paraphrasing and helps to ensure that each understands the other correctly. Summarizing towards the end of the

Counseling provides guidance and direction to both counselor and counselee; to deal with practical matters of the problem and decide plan of action. A summary resembles a combination of reflection of feeling and paraphrasing over a longer period of time. At the end of each session, the counselor should summarize the salient points of the discussion, highlight decisions which have been made and need to be acted on (140).

V. Confrontation: Many a time's clients are so much preoccupied with their fears that cannot see the connection between their behaviour and the responses of the others. Confrontation involves a direct examination of incongruities and discrepancies in the client's thinking, feeling and/or behaviour. The counselor tells the client that how their thoughts affect their action and behaviour, which in turn affect the behaviour of others towards them. E.g. Because of fear of discrimination, people withdraw themselves and do not speak to friends and relatives. Friends and relatives in turn also respond by not talking to them. Establishment of strong relationship and rapport is essential before commenting on such issues. It is a highly intrusive skill hence timing is very important and advice on confrontation must be delivered in an atmosphere of warmth, care and concern (140).

VI. Respecting: As a counsellor, one should try to appreciate that people see their problems in unique personal ways determined by culture, social class and personality. Respect client's views and beliefs and build on them. Show respect, for instance, by asking a client to explain different aspects of the culture or personal beliefs that are strange to you; for example, "you feel strongly about this. I don't know about it. Tell me more about it".

VII. Structuring or Prioritization: Structuring means helping the client to see relationship between facts and feelings. It helps clients to determine the important aspects of their concern that needs immediate attention and other less important aspects that can be put off until later. It is essential part of planning and probably one of the most critical skills in counseling (140).

VIII. Deciding Plan of Action: Based on the scientific knowledge and, socio-economic aspect of the client, help the client to explore all the possible solution for the prioritized aspect and choose the most relevant

option for action. Encourage client to take their own decision and act accordingly (141).

IX. Concluding a Counselling Session: While ending the session summarize the salient points and decision taken, congratulate client for their efforts, wish them luck and fix next visit (141). However, adopting all this counselling process and skills will serve as a viable trauma healing approach or therapy for sexual violence and abuses against women and girls.

Conclusion

Counselling serves as paramount and vital tool for fighting the menace of sexual and abuses against women and the girl-child. Given the important roles of counselling, it serves as an essential therapy for trauma healing of the violated and abused in the society. Providing one-on-one, face-to-face advice through counselling will assist in comforting those that have been traumatized through these sexual abuses. This is so because, if these women and girls violated and abused are ignored and unguided, such problems and dilemmas may distort their characteristics as well as destroy the potentialities of such individuals. With this, effective counselling services, programmes and therapy serves as a succour towards consoling these women and girls traumatized through the sexual violence and abuses. Now is the right time to effectively utilize the counselling service as therapy for women and the girl-child who has been victimized and traumatized through sexual violence and abuses.

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