



International Journal of Psychology and Counselling

Volume 8 Number 10 December 2016

ISSN 2141-2499



ABOUT IJPC

International Journal of Psychology and Counselling (IJPC) will be published monthly (one volume per year) by Academic Journals.

International Journal of Psychology and Counselling (IJPC) is an open access journal that provides rapid publication (monthly) of articles in all areas of the subject counter transference, Clinical psychology, Professional practice of behaviour analysis, Behavioural model etc.

The Journal welcomes the submission of manuscripts that meet the general criteria of significance and scientific excellence. Papers will be published shortly after acceptance. All articles published in IJPC are peer-reviewed.

Contact Us

Editorial Office: ijpc@academicjournals.org

Help Desk: helpdesk@academicjournals.org

Website: <http://www.academicjournals.org/journal/IJPC>

Submit manuscript online <http://ms.academicjournals.me/>

Editors

Prof. Ahmed Awad Amin Mahmoud

*Faculty of Education and Higher Education
An-Najah National University,
Nablus.
Palestine.*

Dr. R. Joseph Ponniah

*Department of Humanities (English)
National Institute of Technology
Trichirappalli, Tamil Nadu
India.*

Dr. Kanwar Dinesh Singh

*# 3, Cecil Quarters,
Chaura Maidan, Shimla:171004 HP
India.*

Dr. S. D. Sindkhedkar

*Head, Department of English,
PSGVP Mandal's Arts, Science & Commerce College,
Shahada: 425409, (Dist. Nandurbar), (M.S.),
India.*

Dr. Marta Manrique Gómez

*Middlebury College
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
Warner Hall, H-15
Middlebury, VT 05753
USA.*

Dr. Yanjiang Teng

*801 Cherry Lane, APT201
East Lansing
Michigan State University
MI 48824
USA.*

Prof. Radhakrishnan Nair

*SCMS-COCHIN
Address Prathap Nagar, Muttom, Aluva-1
India.*

Prof. Lianrui Yang

*School of Foreign Languages, Ocean University of China
Address 23 Hongkong East Road, Qingdao,
Shandong Province, 266071 P
China.*

Editorial Board

Dr. Angeliki Koukoutsaki-Monnier

*University of Haute Alsace
IUT de Mulhouse
dep. SRC
61 rue Albert Camus
F-68093 Mulhouse
France.*

Dr. Martha Christopoulou

*Greek Ministry of National
Education & Religious Affairs
Xanthoudidou 2-4
Athens,
Greece.*

Dr. Zeynep Orhan

*Fatih University Hadımköy 34500 Istanbul
Fatih University Computer Engineering Department
Turkey.*

Dr. Tahar Labassi

*University of Tunis
94 Avenue 9 Avril, Tunis 1007
Tunisia.*

Benson Oduor Ojwang

*Maseno University
P.O.BOX 333, MASENO 40105
Kenya.*

Lydia Criss Mays

*Georgia State University
30 Pryor Street, Suite 550
USA.*

Dr. Daniel Huber

*Université de Rennes 2
63, rue des Vinaigriers, 75010 Paris
France.*

Naomi Nkealah

*University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
English Academy of Southern Africa, P O Box 124, Wits
2050
South Africa.*

Yah Awg Nik

*Centre for Language Studies and Generic Development,
Universiti Malaysia Kelantan,*

ARTICLE

Student volunteers' perspectives on roles/functions of university counseling centers in Taiwan

109

Yii-nii Lin, Yi-Hsing Claire Chiu, Pi-Hui Lai and Yueh-Hua Chen

Review

Student volunteers' perspectives on roles/functions of university counseling centers in Taiwan

Yii-nii Lin¹, Yi-Hsing Claire Chiu², Pi-Hui Lai³ and Yueh-Hua Chen⁴

¹Center for Teacher Education, Institute of Learning Sciences, National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan.

²Department of Applied Psychology, Hsuan Chuang University, Taiwan.

³Department of Early Childhood Educare, Ching Kuo Institute of Management and Health, Taiwan.

⁴Department of Life and Death, Nanhua University, Taiwan.

Received 26 September, 2016; Accepted 11 November, 2016

This study discussed the student volunteers' perspectives on the roles/functions of University Counseling Center (UCC). Fifteen student volunteers of a university in northern Taiwan participated. Phenomenological method was employed to analyze in-depth interviews. Themes emerged including volunteers viewed; roles and functions of UCC as enhancing the quality of mental health on campus, psychological and counseling education beneficial to students for comprehending counseling and UCC, specialized counseling services designed to take the initiative to reach out to students, and direct counseling interventions provided to tailor individual students' needs. Participants suggested that UCPs should help students know more about UCC and the counseling profession. Students will "be familiarized with UCC, trust UCP, and visit UCC." Consequently, they will utilize UCC resources when needed.

Key words: University counseling center, student volunteer, role and function.

INTRODUCTION

Student volunteers' perspectives on roles/functions of university counseling centers in Taiwan

Over the past 30 years, university counseling centers (UCCs) have assumed the responsibilities of promoting mental health and providing counseling services to university communities in Taiwan. The enrollment in higher education has "ballooned" in the last 20 years, from approximately 0.3 million to over 1.2 million (Ministry of Education, 2016). The composition of the student body and the issues institutions encounter have become increasingly diverse and complex (Hsu, 2003; Hsu,

2005). Consequently, it is essential for UCCs to adjust their services to meet the changing needs and characteristics of student bodies. What kind of roles/functions should UCCs adopt? Literature has addressed roles/functions of UCCs from the perspectives of counseling professionals. They have portrayed the roles/functions of UCCs as professional counseling work on campus. Stone and Archer (1990) highlighted that UCC functions include outreach activities and counseling

*Corresponding author. E-mail: ynlin@mx.nthu.edu.tw.

Authors agree that this article remain permanently open access under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

services/treatment, training, development of professionals, research, and administration. Dean and Meadows (1995) pointed out services at UCCs focus on therapeutic counseling, career development, and student affairs. Archer and Cooper (1998) emphasized that university counseling professionals (UCPs) provide the functions of treatment, rehabilitation, and preventive education. The major task of professionals at UCCs is to offer direct counseling interventions to students whose personal problems hinder their ability to function in the academic environment (Sharkin, 2004). Services provided by professionals at UCCs enhance students' personal and academic development (Choi et al., 2010). The increasing diversity of the student population has become crucial for counseling professionals to address in their services at UCCs (Lafollette, 2009). Gallagher (2012) according to statistics by National Survey of College Counseling, claimed that 88% of UCC directors surveyed are reporting an increase in clients asking for services with more serious psychological problems. UCCs has experienced frequent change (Bishop, 2006) due to the increasing diversity and severity of clients' problems and symptoms on university campuses.

On the other hand, student perspective on UCC and its services has been in paucity. The exploration of students' views could be valuable. As potential UCC users, they could provide opinions and suggestions about their expectations of UCC services. Opinions from UCC student volunteers are especially valuable and constructive because they had basic training from UCC and be aware of its services. Thus, this study focused on describing student volunteers' perspectives.

Development of UCC profession and characteristics of UCC services in Taiwan

The university counseling profession in Taiwan has been developing for 41 years. In the 1975 Education Conference, Executive Yuan established counseling offices in schools and defined counseling professionals' roles in students' mental health (Ho, 1990). In 1976, the Ministry of Education stipulated counseling regulations for higher education institutions and established UCCs to promote students' mental health (Two, 1998). In this study, UCC represents the counseling facilities on post-secondary campuses and UCP characterizes related counseling professionals.

The higher education system in Taiwan has changed rapidly in the last two decades. Student population becomes increasingly diverse and complex. Thus, to provide effective services, UCC's roles/functions should accommodate the characteristics of student population, education system, and the changes of campus and society (Lin, 2012b). A regular investigation on students' needs, expectations, and problem types is necessary for UCPs to provide appropriate and effective services.

From professionals' perspectives, services provided by UCCs in Taiwan can be summarized as primary, secondary, and tertiary (Lai, 2003; Li, Yu, & Lin, 2004). The goals of UCCs include educational guidance, counseling and psychotherapy, and research (Wang, 2009). UCPs offer multiple services and ensure a healthy campus environment (Hsu, 2005). Efforts are required to eliminate the stereotypes of UCCs held by students (Hsu, 2003) and realize student needs in the design, planning, performance, and evaluation of counseling services (Lin et al., 2010; Lin, 2012b). UCPs not only have expertise in counseling, supervision, and administration, but also promote their services on campus (Hsiao, 2001; Liu, 2003; Lai, 2003).

A few scholars focused their works on students' perspectives on counseling, counseling profession, UCC and its services. Wang et al. (1995) surveyed 2290 college students and reported that students expected from UCC and UCPs to assist them in dealing with their academic and job planning, study and exam skills, and career exploration.

Hsieh et al. (1996) conducted a survey of students' opinions on UCC services, and identified; the importance of advocacy of UCC services, and UCC student volunteers more actively utilized the UCC services than non-volunteer students. In Lin's (2002) study, university students conceptualized the role of UCPs as directive leaders, guides, and teachers. They characterized counseling as a way of problem-solving to assist people with severe psychological problems and/or psychiatric disorders.

In addition, studies indicated a low utilization rate of UCC among university campuses. Lin (2008) surveyed classes at twelve universities in central Taiwan, and found 4.2% of respondents receiving individual counseling service. Cheng (1989) reported 2.7% of a university student body would seek help from UCC if they experienced severe psychological/emotional issues. Mai et al. (2002) found 6% of the students in a university had sought help from UCPS. In 2006 Shiou and Chen conducted a survey in a university in Taipei. They identified four main reasons for students not seeking help at UCC which were:

1. Not used to talk to counselors they do not know on a personal basis (53%).
2. Not familiar with the contents of UCC service (43%).
3. UCC services not user-friendly enough (20%), not knowing the location of UCC (12%). Additional reasons reported in the literature include: no need of UCC services and UCC services not matching his/her needs (Lin et al., 2010; Mai, 2003).

Taiwanese university students are more willing to seek help at UCC if they believed the services are professional and effective; meanwhile, students may intend to utilize their services if they considered UCC is appealing,

convenient, and trustworthy (Hsia, 2000). They have gradually valued the quality and professional image of UCCs (Hsu, 2003). The core benefits of UCC services were mainly on interpersonal communication and career planning (Liu, 2003). UCPs can provide appropriate services and help establish the public image of UCCs (Hsiao, 2001). In brief, UCPs in Taiwan provide diverse services and form a multi-layered, multi-channeled, and multi-faceted service network. The mission of UCCs is to assist students in achieving personal, academic, and career goals by providing them developmental, preventive, and remedial counseling.

Roles and functions of UCCs and UCPs in Western literature

The roles/functions of UCCs have continued to evolve in response to political, economic, demographic, and technological changes in higher education. They provide services for a broad range of students and issues, including multicultural and gender issues, career and developmental needs, life transitions, stress, violence, and serious psychological problems (Archer and Cooper, 1998). The three UCC traditional models have been identified as vocational and career counseling, mental health counseling, and student personnel counseling (Dean and Meadows, 1995).

Coyne (1987) proposed that UCCs' preventive functions are divided into: primary (aimed at those without problems), secondary (aimed at individuals at risk), and tertiary (aimed at those manifesting problems); these functions can be carried out with a proactive (social-environmental) versus reactive (individual-centered) approach. UCCs also train interns and professionals and implement research and administration (Archer and Cooper, 1998; Stone and Archer, 1990).

Boyd et al. (2003) highlighted three roles of UCPs. The most prominent role is to provide counseling and/or psychotherapy to students who are experiencing personal adjustment, vocational, developmental and/or psychological problems requiring professional attention. The second role is to assist students to identify and learn the skills needed to achieve their educational and life goals.

The third role is to support healthy growth and development of students through consultation and outreach to the university community. Their other involvements include: consultation with faculty and staff, student needs advocacy, program development, teaching, outreach programming, retention activities, and research and evaluation.

UCPs not only involve direct services (counseling and psychotherapy) but also engage in prevention-oriented outreach and consultation activities. Under the impact of rapid educational/social changes and the complexity/diversity of student population and campus

culture, UCPs are required to formulate a range of therapeutic, educational, and supportive services to build stronger structures of campus-community partnerships in promoting campus mental health.

Student volunteers at UCCs in Taiwan

UCCs in Taiwan have volunteer groups of students to assist the implementation of activities, guidance administration, and mental health services on campus. The importance of these volunteer groups has been acknowledged and the training and development of student volunteers have been viewed as an important part of preventive services on campus (Lin, 2012a).

The volunteer group is led by a UCP and recruits new members annually or semi-annually. The lead UCP introduces the UCC services to new members, determines the aspects to which they may contribute, and provides them with pre-service training which focuses on issues such as the attitudes, techniques, and ethics of the helpers, and the beliefs and ethical codes involved in counseling (Lin, 2012a).

They discuss with UCPs on how to assist with counseling work, through the promotion and facilitation of counseling activities, recording data, and performing the administrative tasks of the center. Then, a training program is developed by them and will be executed after received UCPs' approval. Students, who completed the training and passed the evaluation, will serve as service providers on campus, assisting in the promotion and execution of preventive services. UCPs tend to view students receiving the volunteer training as a part of the promotion of mental health on campus. In summary, the responsibilities of volunteers include being on duty to promote mental health services and providing manpower support. They identify with the UCC gradually by participating in services, events, and trainings.

Lin (2011) as a previous leader of a UCC volunteer group, declared the importance of caring student growth and supporting student volunteers to complete services at the centers. In 2005, Liu surveyed 501 UCC student volunteers to explore their characteristics, motivation for participation, and organizational commitment, and the relationships among these factors. She found that volunteers recognized the positive influence of their services on self-growth which motivated them to participate in UCC services, including the pursuit of self-actualization, the desire to help others and the society, the drive to cultivate social responsibility, to seek recognition and reward, and to reflect on the expectations of others. The longer a volunteer served in a UCC, the stronger the commitment they demonstrated toward their volunteer group (Liu, 2005). Motivation for participation is positively correlated with their organizational commitment, while motivation for self-growth and self-actualization is highly predictive of organizational commitment.

METHODOLOGY

A phenomenological study explores the essence of people's perspectives and recognizes the meaning they hold. The findings from a phenomenological study comprised rich descriptions of particular phenomena. This study applied this approach to capture student volunteers' perspectives on UCC. Their viewpoints could be characterized as holistic, complex, multi-layered, context-bound phenomena. The question of this study is, "What are student volunteers' perspectives on roles/functions of the UCC?"

Participants

Participants were 15 student volunteers (eight males and seven females; nine graduate students and six undergraduates) at a UCC in northern Taiwan, serving a population of approximately 12,000 students. Their average age was 25.75 years. The volunteers at this center were invited for three reasons. First, the volunteer group has been established for more than 20 years and has assisted UCPs to conduct services on campus. Second, they have received basic counseling training, and have known counseling profession at a certain degree. Third, they have been familiar with the service content and administration of the center. Consequently, compared to their fellow students who may have little knowledge of UCC and/or counseling profession, student volunteers can provide richer and more valuable opinions on the roles/functions of UCC. Criteria for selecting participants were: (1) more than one year of volunteer experience, (2) willing to share their perceptions of roles/functions actively, and (3) can provide opinions on UCC service content and express their expectations and needs from UCC.

UCC setting

The Student Guidance Center at this university was founded in 1985, under the supervision of the Office of Student Affairs, to be in charge of counseling and guidance services on campus. Renamed the Counseling Center in 1994, it safeguards the mental health of the university community. At the time of this study, the professional staff at this facility consists of one clinical psychologist, three counseling psychologists, four social workers, two part-time psychiatrists, twelve part-time counselors, and two counselor interns. Tertiary, secondary, primary, and other types of service are provided at this facility. From 2005-2015, each year the Center had more than 300 clients and provided over 3000 counseling sessions. The term "counselor" hereafter refers to the variety of counseling professionals.

Interviewer

A research assistant (RA), with a master's degree in counseling, conducted in-depth interviews. Prior to the study, she completed courses in interviewing skills, counseling, qualitative research, and research methodology. She also received training and completed pilot studies to refine her interviewing skills.

Data collection

Using a snowball method, the research assistant invited the first student volunteer and then he/she would recommend the next prospective one to participate this study. Those agreed to participate were scheduled for interviews by phone or email. They were asked to read and sign an informed-consent form before

being interviewed. Each was interviewed once for 90-120 minutes. Fifteen in-depth interviews comprised the principal data. Questions for the interviews included:

1. Please describe as completely, clearly, and concretely as you can, about your perspectives on the UCC, including but not limited to the roles, functions, and services of the UCC.
2. What services should the UCC provide to students? How?
3. What advice and/or suggestions would you provide to UCPs and the UCC leader to improve the services effectively? Finally, taped interviews were transcribed for analysis.

Data analysis

The transcripts were analyzed by the first author using Moustakas (1994) method of qualitative data analysis. First, she described explicitly why she was interested in this topic and completed a personal statement related to it. This ensured the researcher's objectivity (or removal of bias), and raised her consciousness (Leitner, 1999). Second, she described personal experiences with the phenomena under study and developed a list of significant statements (horizontalization of the data). Third, she took the significant statements and then classified them into larger units of information (meaning units or themes). Fourth, she wrote a description of what the participants experience with the phenomena and how the experience happened (structural description). Finally, she wrote a composite description of the phenomena incorporating both the textural and structural descriptions (the essence of the experience).

Several methods were used to increase the validity and reliability of the data analysis. As proposed by Gibbs (2007), the steps of the procedures were first verified and organized into a comprehensive protocol and database. The transcripts are then checked to confirm accuracy during transcription, meticulously comparing data with codes and making notations concerning codes and definitions. The researcher also adopts the validation methods proposed by Creswell and Miller (2000), sustaining prolonged engagement and persistent observation of issues related to roles and functions of UCC. Multiple sources (observations, interviews, field notes) and methods are combined to offer validating evidence in the elucidation of themes or perspectives. Rich, thick descriptions are formed to reveal the participants and settings encountered in the interviews. To enhance the credibility of the results, member checking is adopted, in which participants are invited to examine rough drafts of the study and provide feedback. A peer of the researchers is also recruited to provide an external audit involving an examination of the research process and evaluation of the results.

RESULTS

Roles and functions of UCC as enhancing the quality of mental health on campus

Participants interviewed had "worked" at the Center for 1.5 to 8 years. They were not familiar with the nature of counseling and UCC at the beginning. However, the training and volunteering work helped them understand the essentials of UCC. As a result, they acknowledged the effectiveness of its services to students. They considered that UCC's goals should be to promote mental health of campus members and assist those with problems to solve their issues. They recognized the

importance of counseling profession and agreed that UCPs are able to help students deal with their issues, release stress, reduce negative thought, assist students to achieve their potentials, and enhance their development. They also regarded that:

1. UCC is the provider and executor of campus mental health services
2. UCP plays the roles of counselor, instructor, advocator, and facilitator, and
3. The functions of UCC covers providing counseling, psycho-educational course, and a variety of mental health activities.

Psychological and counseling education beneficial to students for comprehending counseling and UCC

Participants believed that the campus counseling courses were helpful to students in understanding themselves, enhancing self-awareness, strengthening interpersonal relationships, and improving mental stability.

"I had very limited access to counseling-related information, I had no idea what counseling was, I felt having taken a semester of counseling course did help a lot in getting know more about counseling. I suggest that UCP offers more counseling courses under general education curriculum," said Participant C.

They stated that students' involvement in the UCP initiated psychological and counseling courses would help them understand the counseling profession in greater depth. At the same time, it was a good opportunity to know more about UCC and UCP, as well as themselves including their family of origin, academic learning process, career planning, interpersonal communication, intimate relationship, and other psychological issues.

They recognized the online psycho-education and counseling was helpful and convenient. They held positive opinions towards the online newsletters, blogs, and forums as channels to distribute mental health and UCC activity related information. Students could easily raise their questions to UCP through the internet and obtained the needed answers promptly. Participant K commented,

"Students are on the internet all the time, so the best channel to communicate with them will be through the internet. I receive newsletters from UCC all the time, I think that's a great way to reach out to students."

They stated that students preferred to attend interesting psycho-educational activities such as speeches, workshops, and movies. They believed that activities meeting students' needs would appeal to a larger group of participants. For instance, activities related to love, interpersonal communication, academic learning, and

career planning were popular. They also emphasized that UCC should reach out students through multiple channels to promote UCC activities, so they can know the importance of mental health. Participant F attended UCC's activities reflected that,

"I learned from the outreach activity held by UCC that we should care more about our friends and family. It just felt great when I actually did that. I truly think UCC should hold more activities."

Specialized counseling services designed to take the initiative to reach out to students

Participants suggested that UCC should take the initiative to contact students, engage in outreach services, and encourage students to better utilize the UCC resources. They recognized the specialized counseling services offered by UCC, including departmental UCP system, student special interest club ad hoc service, and the formation and training of volunteer groups. They thought that a dedicated UCP will form a long-term relationship with departments, and thus, will build a certain degree of familiarity and trust between both parties. As a result, when students encountered difficulties, they will know whom to ask for help; at the same time, faculty members can make recommendations to students about which UCP to consult. Students in Taiwan are less likely to reveal personal issues to strangers, thus, a participant suggested it would be more effective if a dedicated UCP was assigned to each department. According to Participant O,

"With dedicated departmental UCP, we would know who to talk to when needed. The information of that dedicated UCP is published on the departmental website, then it's only natural to talk to the UCP when we encounter problems in life."

Participants believed that UCP's visit of each department, giving speech, and facilitating activities on topics, such as interpersonal relationship, career planning, and intimate relationship, would improve students' mental hygiene. Consequently, it enhances students' understanding on UCP and UCC. In addition, they recognized UCC had granted student groups (e.g., labs, special interest clubs, and dormitory) to apply for ad hoc mental health related activities so that UCP could provide "tailored" services to each group. Participant M expressed,

"My special interest club once invited a UCP to give a training course on interpersonal communication. The club could decide on a subject and invite UCP to give a lecture or facilitate an activity accordingly."

Participants also acknowledged that, through the UCC volunteer group, they could expand their horizons, enrich

their life, and deepen their self-understanding and interpersonal relationships.

Direct counseling intervention provided to tailor individual students' needs

Participants considered that UCC has nice and cozy environment and it is a perfect place for students to relax, rest, read, and share with fellow students. They suggested that students needed help could visit UCC directly for assistance. Participant D said,

"I did not know UCC had such a great environment for us to hang out. It's a really cozy place to relax in. We could chat, read, surf on the internet, have some tea, take a rest, or even study there. It's a shame that not many students know the location of UCC or what it does."

Visitors could seek counseling/consultation, read related books/magazines, or share their thoughts with volunteers. If students are better utilizing UCC resources, they can expand their horizons, improve self-understanding, and enhance their own development.

Expectations and suggestions to UCC from student volunteers

Participants believed that UCC should offer more psychological or counseling courses in general education curriculum. Students can take the courses and be informed about counseling basics, and hopefully, they will have a better understanding about the profession, and also improved their self-understanding. UCP should also encourage students to take a UCC tour and make attempts to utilize UCC resources.

They wished that UCP will reach out to students proactively and participate frequently in student activities to advocate mental health and UCC services. UCP should get in touch with student leaders of departments, special interest clubs, and dormitories to establish communication channels or sponsor mental health activities.

The close relationship of counselors and faculty members/students will greatly enhance UCC's professional image. Participant G expressed,

"Not many people know about UCC or the counseling profession, let alone its functions. I think it's important to introduce UCC to students so that they could utilize its services when needed."

Participants felt that students not only had to know more about UCC, but it was necessary to understand UCC in great depth and build trust in UCP, so that they would be more likely to utilize UCC resources.

"Students have to trust UCP enough to step in UCC and

talk heart to heart to a UCP. It's really difficult and fearful to speak out to total strangers in unfamiliar environment," said Participant M.

If students have first-hand experience with UCC resources, they will generate ideas and eliminate prejudice or stereotype about counseling. Participant J reflected,

"In the past I might think UCC only deals with very severe problems. Now I realized that I could talk to UCPs about my daily issues such as career planning, etc."

They emphasized that UCC's services should meet students' needs and be able to respond to students' problems. Convenient and practical service channels should be established. For instance, strengthening the internet mental health service as students preferred to communicate online. With online service, students would be able to raise questions to UCP for better interaction with UCC. Meanwhile, the online information should be designed in a way that students would be able to read and digest the mental health information rapidly. According to Participant H,

"Students accustom to surf on the internet, so it's good that UCC offers online discussion and consultation, plus blogs, forum, newsletter, and website. I suggest that the newsletter to be brief and to the point, the headline has to be creative so that it appeals to students to click on the article."

Participants also suggested that UCC activities should meet the student event schedule and locations. The theme and format of the UCC initiated activities should address students' frequently encountered issues, psychosocial characteristics, development needs, and sub-culture. Those activities should be lively, novel, and creative, and should be able to touch on the campus events and current social affairs. It is essential for those events to be incorporated with activities of campus, residential community, or other schools to attract students, and consequently, improve the service effectiveness of UCC.

DISCUSSION

The student volunteers participated in this study centered their views of UCP as psycho-education instructor, direct service counselor/therapist, outreach initiator, and event facilitator. This finding mirrored previous literature. UCPs played other roles aside from the counseling/therapeutic roles; additional functions of UCC included prevention, promotion, and psycho-education (Archer and Cooper, 1998; Boyd et al., 2003; Hsu, 2005; Lin et al., 2015). Participants believed that most students have little knowledge about the counseling profession, so they

seldom utilized UCC services. One of the reasons for university students in Taiwan not willing to seek help from UCC is the lack of understanding about it (Hsia, 2000; Lin et al., 2010; Wu, 1995). They mentioned that students often require “understanding and trust” of UCC and the counseling profession before taking action to utilize its resources. Students who utilized UCC services often recognize UCPs’ performance in services and activities (Lin et al., 2010), and more willing to utilize them again (Wu, 1995). When students realize the UCC services are professional and effective, they are more willing to seek help at UCC (Hsia, 2000). This suggests that UCPs should strengthen the promotion and marketing of UCC about the counseling profession, the location, nature, and services of UCC and establish its professional image (Lai, 2003; Liu, 2003).

Culturally, students in Taiwan preferred to seek help from family and friends, and were less likely to talk to strangers (Lin, 2001, 2002). If the UCC services are recommended by people they know and trust, students will be more at ease; otherwise, they will be unlikely to talk “heart to heart” with a strange UCP. As suggested by participants UCPs should take the initiative to engage in campus-wide events, get in touch with students, work closely with faculty members (Mai, 2003; Widseth et al., 1997), and through promotional education and outreach services to advocate the importance of counseling services and promote proactively the mental health quality of students (Fukuyama, 2001; Lai, 2003). By so doing, the stereotypes and prejudice students had towards UCC can be diminished. As their fear or hesitation about UCC is reduced, they might take actions to utilize UCC resources when needed.

The finding supports Lin (2001) and Lai (2003) suggestions that UCPs should provide practical and accessible services to meet students’ needs, encouraging students to utilize UCC services. Participants felt that UCPs should provide courses in general education curriculum; more students could take counseling or psychology-related courses. Students recognized the practicality and effectiveness of psychology-related courses (Lin et al., 2010).

Meanwhile, those courses should be designed to be diversified, lively, and interesting to appeal to students, and help them know more about the counseling profession and UCC services.

Furthermore, participants recommended online consultation, blogs, and newsletters to be integrated with the overall campus mental health prevention and promotional activities.

They believed that online mental health service are important and convenient, as students are “heavy” users of internet (Wang, 2003; Yang, 1998), the online channel would be critical in establishing connection and delivering information to students. This could allow UCC to provide the needed services in an effective and timely manner. With regard to practice, UCP should proactively reach out

to students, promote and market UCC, distribute activity information through multiple channels, and provide the general psycho-educational services, as well as “tailored” mental services for individuals or groups. UCC should integrate its outreach services with other campus activities. As students understand the purpose of UCC, and eventually trust the counseling profession, they will utilize its resources.

Through diversified contents and multiple channels of promotion, UCPs will help students understand UCC services. Students in various groups and from different backgrounds will be able to access UCC resources appropriately and effectively.

During counselor training, strengthen UCP’s psycho-education and outreach abilities is essential. UCPs should be capable of planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating psycho-education courses and activities. Counselor trainees should acquire skills in advocating, marketing, service delivery, integrating resources both on and off campus, and establishing a mental health system. In terms of research, UCPs should survey students regularly about their problem types, psychosocial needs, expected services styles, and communication methods, as well as utilization rate, satisfaction level, and short-term and long-term effectiveness of various services.

CONCLUSIONS

The volunteers interviewed recognized the professionalism, service quality, and service effectiveness of UCC. They believed UCC’s goals are:

1. Promoting the mental health and quality of life of campus members, and improving the harmony and friendliness of the campus as a whole, and
2. Help members handling psychosocial issues, releasing stress, and reducing emotional disturbances.

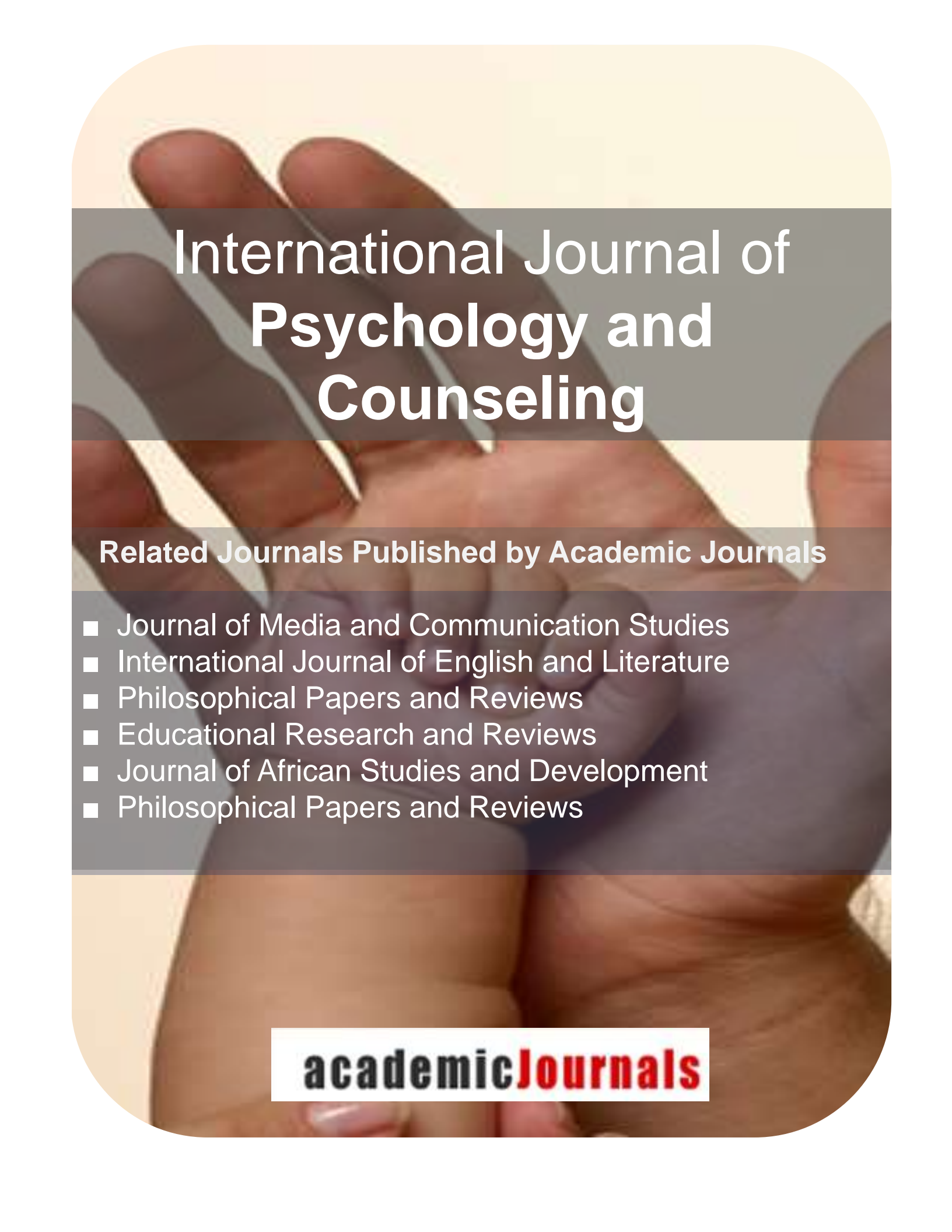
They believed that UCP should advocate the counseling profession, encourage more students to utilize UCC resources, deal with problems in a timely manner, and promote better development. They emphasized that most students had little knowledge about counseling profession, or the goals, roles, and services of UCC. To benefit more students, UCC should make effort to promote campus-wide psychological and counseling education, specialized counseling services, and direct counseling intervention. They also suggested that UCPs should proactively advocate and promote their services to help students know more about UCC and the counseling profession, “be familiarized with UCC, trust UCP, and visit UCC.”

Conflict of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

REFERENCES

- Archer JA, Cooper SE (1998). Counseling and mental health services on campus: Handbook of contemporary challenges and variables. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.
- Bishop JB (2006). College and university counseling centers: Questions in search of answers. *J. Coll. Couns.* 9:6-19.
- Boyd V, Hattauer E, Brandel IW, Buckles N, Davidshofer C, Deakin S, et al. (2003). Accreditation standards for university and college counseling centers. *J. Counsel. Dev.* 81:168-177.
- Cheng LL (1989). Problems, perceptions, attribution, coping and psychological help-seeking of university students. *J. Law Comm.* 23:277-321.
- Choi K-H, Buskey W, Johnson B (2010). Evaluation of counseling outcomes at a university counseling center: The impact of clinically significant change on problem resolution and academic functioning. *J. Counsel. Psychol.* 57:297-303.
- Coyne R (1987). Primary preventive counseling: Empowering people and systems. Muncie, IN: Accelerated development.
- Creswell JW, Miller D (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory Pract.* 39(3):124-130.
- Dean LA, Meadows ME (1995). College counseling: Union and intersection. *J. Counsel. Dev.* 74:139-142.
- Fukuyama MA (2001). Counseling in colleges and universities. In DC Locke, JE Myers, EL Herr (Eds.), *The handbook of counseling* 319-342. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Gallagher RP (2012). National survey of college counseling. Alexandria, VA: International Association of Counseling Services.
- Gibbs G (2008). Analyzing qualitative data. London: Sage Publications.
- Ho FT (1990). Systems of university counseling and guidance. Student Affairs Committee, Ministry of Educ. Taipei, Taiwan.
- Hsia M (2000). The study of college students' perceptions of counseling service and the elements of help-seeking. Unpublished master's thesis, National Chung Hua University, Chung Hua, Taiwan. Retrieved from <http://ndttd.ncl.edu.tw/cgi-bin/g32/gswweb.cgi/ccd=MKkXpq/record?r1=1&h1=2>
- Hsiao W (2001). Educational Counseling System on University Campus in Taiwan. Conference paper in psychological adjustment of university students in north Taiwan, HsinChu, Taiwan.
- Hsieh JY, Huang SJ, Hsu HL (1996). A survey study of students' understanding and usage of university counseling center services. *Mentoring* 14:137-157.
- Hsu SL (2003). Defining university counseling centre from reviewing their titles in Taiwan. *Guidance Quarterly* 39(1):1-11.
- Hsu YC (2005). Counseling and Guidance services at university in a changing society. *Counsel. Guidance* 237:2-7.
- Lafollette A (2009). The evolution of university counseling: From educational guidance to multicultural competence, severe mental illnesses, and crisis planning. *Graduate J. Counsel. Psychol.* 1(2): Article 11.
- Lai NH (2003). The influence of Psychologist Act on university counseling centers. *Stud. Guidance.* 85:34-45.
- Leitner LM (1999) Levels of awareness in experiential personal construct psychotherapy. *J. Construct. Psychol.* 12:239-252.
- Li CA, Yu RH, Lin LF (2004). An exploration of the impact of the Psychologist Act on university counseling centers. *Guidance Quarterly* 40(2):67-73.
- Lin CS (2002). Challenges and development of counseling profession in Taiwan. *Guidance J.* 44(3):99-102.
- Lin TY (2011). Experiences of leading student volunteer group at university counseling center. Retrieved from E-journal of Student Guidance, Ministry of Education website: http://guidepaper.edu.tw/?menu=5&subject_sn=168
- Lin WH (2008). A study of the factors affecting college students' intentions to use college counseling services in central Taiwan. Unpublished master's thesis, National Chung Hua University, Chung Hua, Taiwan. Retrieved from <http://ndttd.ncl.edu.tw/cgi-bin/g32/gswweb.cgi/ccd=MKkXpq/record?r1=1&h1=1>
- Lin Y (2001). Taiwanese university students' conceptions of counseling. *J. Contemp. Psychol.* 31(3):199-211.
- Lin Y (2002). Taiwanese university students' perspectives on helping. *Counsel. Psychol Quarterly.* 15(1):47-58.
- Lin Y (2012a). Learning and development experiences of student volunteers at university counseling centers. Research report, National Tsing Hua University, Hsin Chu, Taiwan.
- Lin Y (2012b). Female veteran counselors regarding student characteristics and resultant service strategies in Taiwan. *Coll. Stud. J.* 46(4):730-747.
- Lin Y, Chiu YHC, Hsieh HH, Chen YH, Lai PH (2015). Development of university counseling profession in Taiwan. *Coll. Stud. J.* 49(1):137-145.
- Lin Y, Liu C, Hsieh H (2010). A services survey study of a university counseling center in Taiwan. *Coll. Stud. J.* 44(4):1021-1039.
- Liu CN (2003). What kind of university counseling centers do students need? *Counsel. Guidance.* 209:2.
- Liu TF (2005). The research on the motivation of campus voluntary service and organization commitment — A quantitative approach on the students in the student counseling and guidance center of universities and colleges. Unpublished master's thesis, Soochow University, Taipei, Taiwan. Retrieved from: <http://ndttd.ncl.edu.tw/cgi-bin/g32/gswweb.cgi/ccd=MKkXpq/record?r1=1&h1=0>
- Mai LJ, Wang DW, Chang YL (2002). A survey study of university students evaluating counseling and guidance services and help-seeking attitude at Yuan Ze University. Paper presented at the annual meeting of Chinese Guidance Association, Taipei, Taiwan.
- Mai LJ (2003). Finding a way for university counseling services with an emphasis of centering counseling professionals. *Guidance Quarterly.* 39(1):12-18.
- Ministry of Education. (2016). Statistics. Retrieved March 20, 2016, from <http://140.111.34.54/statistics/index.aspx>
- Moustakas C (1994). Phenomenological research methods. NY: Sage.
- Sharkin BS (2004). College counseling and student retention: Research findings and implications for counseling centers. *J. Coll. Counsel.* 7:99-108.
- Shiou HL, Chen CF (2006). Need assessment of work content for counselors at National Chengchi University. Taipei, Taiwan.
- Stone GL, Archer J (1990). College and university counseling centers in the 1990s: Challenges and limits. *The Counsel. Psychol.* 18:539-607.
- Two CT (1998). Administration of university counseling centers. *Educ. Res.* 6:41-52.
- Wang CH (2003). Internet counselling, learning and supervision: a new trend of school counsellors. *Stud. Guid.* 86:120-131.
- Wang HY (2009). The study of the fundamental indicators construction and the assessment of counseling service quality in university counseling centers. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, National Cheng Chi University, Taipei, Taiwan. Retrieved from <http://ndttd.ncl.edu.tw/cgi-bin/g32/gswweb.cgi/ccd=MKkXpq/record?r1=1&h1=6>
- Wang PS, Lee CS, Tzeng MP, Lee CN (1995). Assessment of Chen-shiou Junior College students' perceptions of counseling service, counseling needs and help-seeking attitude toward school counseling center. *J. Cheng Shiou Univ.* 8:159-169.
- Widseth JC, Webb RE, John KB (1997). The question of outsourcing: The roles and function of college counseling services. *J. Coll. Stud. Psychother.* 11(4):3-22.
- Wu J (1995). The effect of clients' gender and types of problem on college students' attitude toward the clients. Unpublished master's thesis, National Chung Hua University, ChungHua, Taiwan. Retrieved from <http://ndttd.ncl.edu.tw/cgi-bin/g32/gswweb.cgi/ccd=MKkXpq/record?r1=1&h1=4>
- Yang ML (1998). Issues of Individual counseling online. *Stud. Guid.* 56:100-109.



International Journal of Psychology and Counseling

Related Journals Published by Academic Journals

- Journal of Media and Communication Studies
- International Journal of English and Literature
- Philosophical Papers and Reviews
- Educational Research and Reviews
- Journal of African Studies and Development
- Philosophical Papers and Reviews

academicJournals