

Counseling Persons with Hearing Speech Impairment for National Security Safety: Implication for Counseling

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Abstract:

Counseling persons with hearing and speech impairments plays a crucial role in enhancing national security by fostering inclusion and mitigating marginalization. These individuals often face significant communication barriers, leading to social isolation, unemployment, and underrepresentation in decision-making processes. Such marginalization can contribute to feelings of frustration, disillusionment, and, in extreme cases, vulnerability to radicalization or criminal behavior. Counseling, therefore, becomes a vital tool in addressing these issues by empowering individuals with hearing and speech impairments, helping them to integrate into society effectively. This paper explores the implications of counseling for national security by emphasizing the need for specialized counseling approaches tailored to the unique needs of these individuals. By providing them with the necessary support, counselors can help reduce the psychological distress and social exclusion that often accompany hearing and speech impairments. This, in turn, can lead to better social integration, improved mental health, and a reduced risk of involvement in activities that threaten national security. Furthermore, the paper highlights the importance of training counselors to effectively communicate with and understand the challenges faced by individuals with hearing and speech impairments. By doing so, counseling can contribute to a more inclusive society where all citizens, regardless of their abilities, can contribute positively to national security. The implications for counseling are profound, necessitating a reevaluation of current practices and the development of more inclusive strategies to ensure the well-being and security of all individuals within the nation.

Keywords: Counseling, counselors, deaf persons, national security, safety, implications

Introduction

Counseling individuals who are deaf typically involves using a combination of sign language, writing, and other visual communication methods. It's important to be respectful of their preferred communication style to ensure they have access to qualified interpreters if needed. Additionally, being aware of the deaf community's unique cultural social experiences can be beneficial in providing effective counseling services. Building a strong rapport using empathetic listening skills are key components of counseling individuals who are deaf, as with any other client. Be sure to offer support in identifying goals, addressing challenges, promoting strategies for personal growth well-being. Due to their impairments, the persons with hearing speech impairment, during emergencies do not get to know what is happening until they see casualties, or see the scenario by themselves. They cannot hear others when they talk run around, they only get to see people running around, not until a person who understands them or can communicate in sign language informs them. With this, the persons with hearing impairment are always or almost always left out in times of not physical hazardous emergencies; this keeps them some times as victims of emergencies.

This paper integrates various theoretical perspectives to provide a comprehensive understanding of the roles and responsibilities of counselors in supporting persons with hearing and speech impairment, especially on the issue of national security and safety.

This model emphasizes that disability is caused by the way society is organized, rather than by a person's impairment. It focuses on removing societal barriers to promote inclusivity. Counselors can advocate for changes in emergency protocols and communication systems to accommodate individuals with hearing and speech impairments. The responses given to the security and safety of the persons with Hearing and speech impairment, aids in their feeling of safety (Albert and

Nnatuanya, 2024). The behavior of individuals are prominently influenced by two factors nature and nurture; nature has to do with the natural/ parental influence, which is a direct biological and genetic influence, then nurture is the influence of the environment on the individual, here are some theories that the researcher examined in the paper to aid foster the formation of human behaviors:

Ecological Systems Theory

Proposed by Urie Bronfenbrenner, (1979) this theory posits that human development is influenced by different types of environmental systems. It highlights the importance of understanding the complex interactions between individuals and their various environments. Counselors can consider the multiple layers of influence on individuals with hearing and speech impairments, including family, community, and societal systems, to provide holistic support

Advocacy and Social Justice Theory

This theory underscores the role of counselors as advocates for social change, emphasizing the importance of addressing systemic inequalities and promoting social justice. Counselors can work to advocate for policy changes and raise awareness about the needs of individuals with hearing and speech impairments in national security contexts (Ratts, 2017).

Health Belief Model (HBM)

The HBM is a psychological model that explains and predicts health behaviors by focusing on the attitudes and beliefs of individuals. Counselors can use the HBM to understand and influence the safety behaviors of individuals with hearing and speech impairments, encouraging proactive measures in emergency preparedness (Glanz, Rimer, and Viswanath 2008).

Integration of Theories

Integrating this model, counselors can focus on identifying and advocating for the removal of barriers in emergency communication and safety protocols to ensure inclusivity. Utilizing TIC principles, counselors can create a safe and supportive environment that acknowledges the potential trauma experienced by individuals with hearing and speech impairments during emergencies (SAMHSA, 2014). By considering the ecological systems impacting individuals, counselors can address the broader environmental factors that influence the safety and well-being of clients with hearing and speech impairments. Counselors can leverage this theory to advocate for systemic changes, ensuring that the needs of individuals with hearing and speech impairments are included in national security and safety policies (Ratts, 2017). Applying the HBM, counselors can encourage individuals to adopt proactive safety measures by addressing their beliefs and attitudes towards emergency preparedness.

To enable the easy flow of counseling the persons with hearing and speech impairment is a very crucial but could be-difficult work for counselors, apart from just talking to them, there are things that need to be put in place for them to understand situations and to take actions during emergency and in times of any danger, these factors should come as product or outcome of the suggestions and recommendations made in this paper, they are as follows

Communication Accessibility

Ensuring that emergency communications are accessible through visual alerts, text-based notifications, and sign language interpreters is crucial. This helps individuals with hearing and speech impairments receive critical information promptly during emergencies.

Psychological Support

Providing trauma-informed care to address the heightened anxiety and stress these individuals may experience during emergencies. Counseling services should be tailored to acknowledge and mitigate the psychological impact of feeling isolated or overlooked (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014).

Inclusive Emergency Preparedness

Developing emergency protocols that include the participation of individuals with hearing and speech impairments in safety drills and planning. This inclusion ensures that their specific needs are addressed and enhances their preparedness and confidence in crisis situations (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2020).

Advocacy and Policy Development

Counselors play a vital role in advocating for policies that mandate accessibility in emergency communication and preparedness. Working with lawmakers and advocacy groups, counselors can help create a more inclusive society that prioritizes the safety and security of all its members (National Association of Social Workers, 2018).

Counseling individuals with hearing and speech impairments on national security and safety involves a comprehensive approach to communication, psychological support, preparedness, and advocacy. This ensures these individuals are not only safe but also empowered and included in all aspects of emergency planning and response.

Conclusion

Counselors working with individuals with hearing speech impairments in national security settings must prioritize accessibility, empowerment, inclusivity in their practices. By utilizing tailored communication strategies, promoting self-advocacy, addressing emergency

preparedness, providing culturally competent support, counselors can effectively meet the unique needs challenges of this population contribute to their safety, well-being, and inclusion in national security contexts.

Counseling individuals with hearing and speech impairments in the context of national security and safety requires a multifaceted approach. It demands improvements in communication accessibility, the adoption of trauma-informed care practices, inclusive emergency preparedness, robust advocacy, and a holistic understanding of each individual's unique circumstances. As counselors, we have a responsibility to advocate for and support these individuals, ensuring their voices are heard and their needs are met. This work is not only about enhancing safety and security but also about affirming the dignity and worth of every person, regardless of their abilities. Above all, counseling on national safety security for deaf individuals is essential for promoting their well-being, ensuring their equal access to critical information, empowering them to be active participants in their safety planning, fostering a more inclusive approach to emergency preparedness at a societal level.

Recommendations

To enhance counseling practices for individuals with hearing speech impairments, specifically addressing their safety security needs, the following recommendations are made.

- i. Accessibility Communication
- ii. Language Access Services
- iii. Empowerment Advocacy
- iv. Self-Advocacy Skills Training
- v. Legal Rights Education
- vi. Inclusive Culturally Competent Practices

- vii. Intersectional Approach
- viii. Trauma-Informed Care
- ix. Collaboration Advocacy
- x. Interdisciplinary Collaboration
- xi. Policy Advocacy

Suggestions

In order to for improve communication access, promoting inclusivity in emergency response planning, strengthening mental health support services for the persons with hearing and speech impairment, the following suggestions are made

- i.** There should be promotion the use of accessible communication technologies such as text-to-speech apps, video relay services, real-time captioning to facilitate effective communication during emergencies
- ii.** Training should be provided for emergency responders on communicating with individuals who have hearing speech impairments, including basic sign language awareness of assistive communication
- iii.** Community outreach programs should be conducted to educate individuals with hearing speech impairments about available communication resources emergency communication protocols
- iv.** Emergency response plans that are inclusive of individuals with hearing speech impairments should be developed and implement, including provisions for accessible alerts, evacuation procedures, communication support.

- v.** Representatives from the deaf hard-of-hearing communities should be involved in the development review of emergency plans to ensure they address the specific needs concerns of this population, probably and interpreter or instructor of Sign Language.
- vi.** Provision should be made for emergency preparedness information in accessible formats, including sign language videos, visual graphics, written materials in plain language, to ensure that individuals with hearing speech impairments can access and understand critical information
- vii.** Mental health support services should be made available and accessible to individuals with hearing speech impairments by offering services in sign language, providing communication support, offering remote counseling options via video conferencing
- viii.** Mental health professionals should be trained in cultural competency sensitivity to the unique needs experiences of individuals with hearing speech impairments, including understing the impact of communication barriers on mental health
- ix.** Peer support groups specifically tailored to individuals with hearing speech impairments to provide a safe supportive space for sharing experiences should be facilitated to enhance coping strategies, mutual support.

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