



# The Study of Emotional Expression in Counselling within a Chinese Cultural Context

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## Abstract

Emotional expression is always a significant area of study in counselling. During a counselling process, the emotions expressed within the client-counsellor dyad is dynamically and mutually influencing to each other. Chinese is comparatively less emotionally expressive. Not much previous research study the emotional dynamics between the client and the counselor within the Chinese culture. This paper is to fill up this research gap by studying the emotional dynamics in counselling by comparing different clienteles worked with different counsellors in various level of experience within a Chinese cultural context. Data was collected from face-to-face interviews in focus groups. A total of eight focus groups was invited for interview which comprised experienced social workers, novice social workers and volunteers working in four different service settings. These eight focus groups included one group of experienced and one of novice social workers in each of the following work settings: elderly, youth, and family work; and one group of experienced and one of novice volunteers working in hotline counselling services. The findings highlighted the importance of clients' age, gender, and cultural factors as well as social workers' working experience as crucial factors to influence the dynamics of emotional expression and its outcome effectiveness within the counselling process across various client groups. It gives some insights to counselling work training in future.

**Keywords:** emotional expression, age, gender, culture, counselling