

Clients' perceptions of the service offered by a public mental health clinic in the Western Cape

Underé Deglon and Prof Sally Swartz

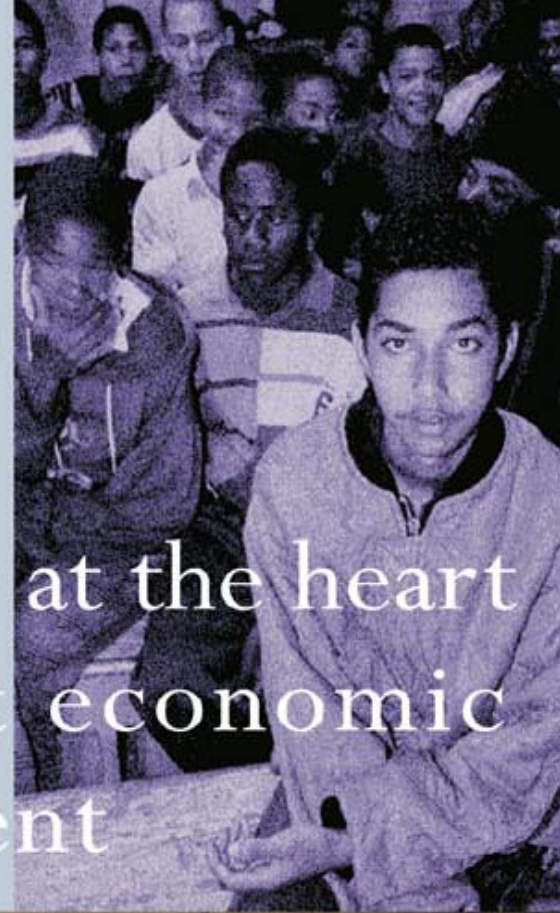
Child, Youth & Family Development
Human Sciences Research Council



Child, Youth & Family Development

AN HSRC NATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAMME

The people at the heart of social & economic development



HUMAN SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL

Social Science that makes a difference

Overview

- ❖ Background
- ❖ Statistics
- ❖ The aim of this study
- ❖ Model of the clinic
- ❖ Conceptual framework
- ❖ Methodology
- ❖ An illustration
- ❖ Key findings



Statistics

- Absence of statistics for SA
- Based on international statistics, the prevalence is likely to be 14% to 20% for children in the country (Dawes, 2003).
- Critical shortages of mental health services for children and families from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Cumulative effect of stressors associated with poverty



The aim of this study

- Evaluate clients' perceptions of the service
- Definition of perceive:
to obtain knowledge of (...) through the senses, to observe, to understand
- Deeply personal, individual and subjective



History taking format + Mental State Examination
teachers, other family members or other professionals



Assessment process

norm referenced tests
interviews
tests of ability

observations
formal assessments
personality tests

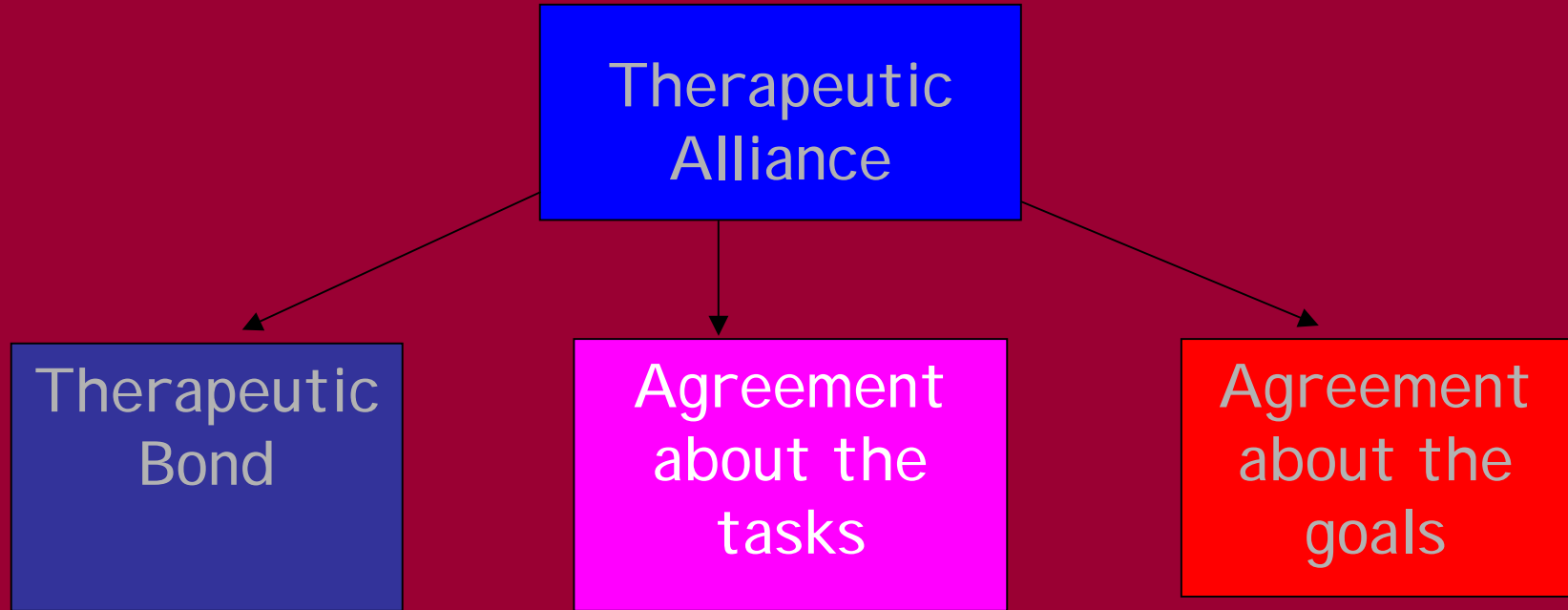


Conceptual Framework

The therapeutic alliance has emerged as the most consistent predictor of outcome.



Bordin (1979)



California Psychotherapy Alliance Scales (CALPAS)



Sample

- Purposive sampling
- Total 42 individuals and families
- 24 were available and willing



Measures

- semi structured telephonic interviews
- primary referral agent
- follow up within 18 months



Interviews

- Change in the nature and severity
- What brought about change
- Efficiency of the service
- Other practitioners
- Agreement and willingness to use or refer



Analysis

- Checklist Matrix
- Grouped according to themes
- Manifest - Content Analysis
- Direct quotes contextualised in case history



Limitations

- Retrospective design
- Poor recall
- Discomfort around disclosure of ongoing difficulties
- Lack of control over external factors



Findings

- ❖ Problem behaviours more frequent for children from single parent families
- ❖ Problem behaviours more frequent for boys than girls
- ❖ Girls more likely to internalise and boys more likely to externalise



Main Diagnoses

- Relational Problems
- Problems with Primary support groups
- Learning Disorders
- Depressive Disorders



The helpful

- ❖ cognitive skills to do things differently
- ❖ knowing what the problem is
- ❖ understanding of developmental needs



It helped me to clarify things and it gave me the confidence to change the things that I could change. I suppose, you know the philosophy, you change what you can and accept the things that you cant change.

The fact that I could go there once a week every week, and just talk about things that were bothering me; that in itself helps.



Relationship with therapists

What we found really useful was the therapist's approach to B's problem. When B had this problem at school, he went to the school and introduced himself as B's friend. Everybody thought wow he has a big friend. My son felt very special.

The therapist became a part of our family and we could speak to him openly about just about everything.



The not so helpful

- Too theoretical in its approach
- Reliance on psychometric tests
- No regard for the person's drive to succeed
- Too rigid in treatment formulation



When you read a business textbook it will tell you that before you can open a business you need capital. But in the real world you don't always have capital. So the textbook should actually teach you ways of manufacturing capital.

So what I'm telling you guys is that you should have a more practical approach. The life outside is cruel but you must live it.



Drop outs

- Travelling costs
- Disagreement about advice
- Need for referral
- Need for different theoretical model



Willingness to use or refer

You guys helped me even when I had no money. You do a great service -

Even though I didn't have money, you didn't turn your back on me. That time I had to borrow money from other people just to get to you. And when I got my son's R200 at the end of the month I had to give it back.

My son used to look forward to going to you because he knew that the auntie would make a fuss of him or say something nice to him. I recommend everyone to you. At the hospital, in the street. I tell everyone about you.



Trust and helpfulness of the s p

Utility of approach and activities

Technical skills

Level of the client's motivation

Use of the learned skills or beliefs

Tolan et al (2002)



“we only know some of the opening and closing moves; for the rest we have only intuitively applied guidelines.

Therefore, this gap in instruction can only be filled by a diligent study of games fought out by masters” (Freud, 1913)



Questions?

