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Title	COUNSELLING COMPETENCIES FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER CLIENTS: A GROUNDED THEORY RESEARCH
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Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) psychology has been studied and has evolved significantly since 1980. However, appropriate strategies for effective counselling with the LGBT community is still in the developmental phase. The purpose of this research was to study LGBT counselling competencies in Thai counsellors. The qualitative research used a constructivist grounded theory method was the technique used to collect rich data from intensive interviews with thirteen participants, to gather approaches, abilities, values, beliefs, perspectives, and attitudes. The research results showed that the capacities of LGBT counsellor, the awareness of LGBT issues and challenges, the advocacy and supports of LGBT individuals, and ongoing self-development are the main categories for competencies. These constructed competencies for LGBT clients have shown that Thai counsellors focused more on building an emotional connection and thinking of their clients as a part of their family. The recommendations collected in this research represented the more humanistic client-centred approach that is common among Thai counsellors. These emerged competencies were then synthesized to construct Guidelines for Counselling Providers to support LGBT clients, which aimed to be used as primary resources to assist counsellors to enhance their effectiveness in the counselling journey with their clients. The guidelines were drafted, then reviewed after suggestions by counselling professors, implemented with psychology counselling students before being modified in the final version. The limitations of research revealed that the majority of the participants do not have an academic degree in counselling, but rather attended short courses to learn counselling skills before first working as an intern and then later as a full-time professional counsellor. If the interviews were conducted by psychiatrists or clinical counsellors the results may vary. While the participants may tend to use their feelings, emotions, or in their own words, "heart" to deal with the issues of clients and may not be familiar with formal counselling approaches, they all showed the capacity to understand the counselling process. Therefore, an academically certified counsellor or psychologist should interpret these works and apply them accordingly.

Keyword : Counselling competency LGBT individuals Grounded theory, Guidelines